



Royal Conservatoire  
*of* Scotland

# Artist Diploma in Music

Programme Handbook

September 2025

# Programme specification

## Summary details

### **Programme title**

Artist Diploma in Music

### **Duration and modes of study**

One year (three terms) full-time. Part-time study is not available.

### **Awards by level**

The Artist Diploma is at SCQF Level 11.

No exit award is available to students who do not complete the full programme.

### **Credit framework**

120 credits at level 11

### **Date of validation**

March 2020

### **Start date**

September 2020

### **Next review date**

2026

**The Conservatoire curriculum:**

1. Develops excellence alongside high levels of reflection in all of our disciplines.
2. Fosters the creative attitudes and skills needed for collaborative learning in and through practice.
3. Enables students to take responsibility for managing and evaluating their own learning.
4. Provides students with insight into a diversity of artistic fields and experience of what is required to succeed in their individual arts practice.
5. Develops the ability to use theoretical understanding to inform practice and practice to inform theory.
6. Enables students to make a contribution in the world as artists, educators, advocates and active citizens.

**The Conservatoire graduate:**

Is an excellent and reflective arts practitioner and leads, creates, achieves and innovates. Conservatoire Graduates understand that the highest level of risk and daring offers the greatest potential for achievement and fulfilment.

Has the creative attitudes and skills needed for collaborative learning and has sophisticated skills in leading, building and working in teams. As adaptable and confident people, Conservatoire graduates are used to taking risks and working positively with ambiguity and unpredictability.

Takes responsibility for managing and evaluating their own learning and is resourceful, independent and effective in their approach to managing their life and work.

Has insight into a diversity of artistic fields and experience of what is required to succeed in their individual arts practice and can respond quickly to a fast changing and dynamic world. Conservatoire graduates have a professionally-orientated, entrepreneurial outlook and respond positively to new opportunities and challenges.

Uses theoretical understanding to inform practice and practice to inform theory and combines sophisticated aesthetic and emotional intelligence, integrity and insight with an ability to think analytically and critically.

Makes a contribution in the world, as an artist, educator, advocate and active citizen and uses highly developed skills to communicate a profound appreciation of how their artistic discipline connects with the real world.

## Programme aims

**The Artist Diploma in Music is designed to:**

- Encourage the development of a distinctive musical personality
- Offer a rich learning environment that nurtures the individual artist in relation to the wider context of their practice
- Provide opportunities for performance and composition, and support students in creating their own opportunities
- Promote professional autonomy and resilience through a confident, reflective and critical approach to their musicianship
- Support students in articulating clearly the questions and insights that form the basis of their artistic practice

## Programme learning outcomes

**On the completion of the ArtDip you are expected to be able to:**

**PL01** Realise, recreate, create, manipulate and/or produce music to a high professional level, expressing your artistic concepts in a well-developed musical personality

**PL02** Evidence sophisticated craft skills at the forefront of the discipline, creating

coherent musical experiences across a range of repertoires, styles, forms and genres

**PL03** Take responsibility for engagement between context, audience and musical material, projecting your ideas fluently and with confidence in a range of contexts

**PL04** Demonstrate sophisticated knowledge of practices, languages, materials, technologies and techniques relevant to your discipline, and their associated texts, resources and concepts

**PL05** Engage with a significant level of critical self-reflection in relation to your artistic practice

## **Admission criteria**

### **Academic entry requirements**

Candidates are normally expected to hold an existing Masters degree or its overseas equivalent in a subject area relevant to the demands of the programme.

### **Language of study**

The language of study is English. Applicants whose first language is not English will be required to provide evidence of proficiency in English. We accept the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Level 6.0 (with a minimum score of 5.5 in each component) is required of applicants to the School of Music.

### **Target numbers**

Minimum cohort: 0

Maximum cohort: 10

# Programme structure

Module	Level	Credits
Principal Project	11	80
Supporting Project	11	40
Total		120

## Programme content

### Principal Project

- 80 credits, 800 hours
- 27 weeks one-to-one tuition @ 0.75 hours per week = 20.25 hours
- independent study (over 30 weeks) ~26 hours per week

### Supporting Project

- 40 credits, 400 hours
- 22 weeks, 6 hours of supervision
- independent study (over 30 weeks) ~13 hours per week

# Learning outcomes by module

Module	PL01	PL02	PL03	PL04	PL05
Principal Project	•	•	•		
Supporting Project			•	•	•

## Benchmarks

The learning outcomes of your programme are aligned with a number of local, national and international standards. The *UK Quality Code for Higher Education* (UKQCHQ, QAA 2018) lays out a series of formal 'expectations', including that 'the academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework'. In Scotland, these comprise the *Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework* (SCQF 2019) and *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland* (FQHEIS, QAA 2018).

In accordance with the SCQF/FQHEIS, the Artist Diploma meets the requirement that a Postgraduate Diploma in Scotland allocate a minimum of 120 credit points, of which at least 100 are at SCQF Level 11. The programme and module learning outcomes have been benchmarked against the *SCQF Level Descriptors* (SCQF 2015), while the programme as a whole meets the requirements of the *UKQCHQ Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7 on the FHEQ and SCQF level 11 on the FQHEIS: master's degree* (QAA 2018).

In addition to these fundamental standards, the programme aims and learning outcomes also take account of:

- the relevant sections of the Conservatoire's Postgraduate Academic Framework, that are themselves based upon FQHEIS
- the *Characteristics Statement: Master's Degree* (QAA 2015)
- the Dublin descriptors for second cycle awards (EHAA 2005)
- the 'Polifonia'/Dublin Descriptors for second cycle awards in higher music education (AEC 2007)
- the AEC Learning Outcomes 2017 (AEC 2017)

The Conservatoire – then the RSAMD – became in 1993/4 the first UK institution of its kind to be granted degree-awarding powers. We take pride in the care and rigour with which we design our degrees: you can be fully confident in the academic standing of the Artist Diploma.

## Areas of study

The ArtDip is available to performers in the following disciplines:

- All string, woodwind and brass instruments, solo, chamber or orchestral
- Guitar and harp
- Timpani and percussion, including marimba
- Piano solo and ensemble, harpsichord, organ, accordion
- Vocal performance
- Traditional performance
- Jazz performance

It is not available for Conducting, Composition, Historically Informed Performance Practice, Piano for Dance, or Repetiteurship.

Singers accepted onto this programme will normally work within the Department of Vocal Performance: any work with the Opera department will be exceptional and by negotiation.



# Learning and teaching

## Principal Project

In this module, you will work with your principal tutor to identify one or two significant artistic outputs as a focus for your studies. These will typically be performances, but may also be compositions, recordings, or documented research. As well as offering an artistic vehicle, it is expected that you will seek opportunities that will support your future professional development: examples might include: entering competitions; freelance work; professional recitals; and/or high quality audio and/or video recordings.

This module is supported by 20.25 hours of one-to-one lessons from a specialist tutor, typically delivered as a 90 minute lesson every fortnight across 27 weeks. The choice of tutor is made by negotiation with your Head of Department, who will seek to match your individual needs with the expertise of particular teachers. A student may if necessary be re-assigned to an alternative teacher: it may also be appropriate for your principal study to be shared between a number of teachers.

We expect you to exercise a significant degree of autonomy both in identifying suitable projects and undertaking the individual work necessary to bring them to fruition.

## Supporting Project

In the Supporting Project module, you will receive support and mentoring from a personal supervisor, who will help you to create an individual portfolio of supplementary activities to complement your main artistic projects. You will be encouraged to draw upon learning opportunities within your Department, the School of Music, and the Conservatoire as whole. Examples might include: performance classes and masterclasses; departmental classes and ensembles; attendance at concerts; critical reflection on performances recorded on video; peer mentoring; research department events, including the Exchange; auditing classes and modules either close to or far from your discipline; and/or creative

interdisciplinary projects in collaboration with students from other programmes.

Your supervisor will also assist you in undertaking research into the works being prepared for your principal project, drawing on written and audiovisual resources available to you through the Whittaker Library and other print and online sources.

# Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning, forming part of the cycle of performance, evaluation, and reflection that underpins your artistic development. It is also the mechanism which allows for a judgement as to whether you have completed the requirements of the programme, and, in the case of modules which carry a grade, to what standard. Assessment involves gathering, measuring and judging information about your progress.

Each module in the programme states learning outcomes, describing the knowledge, skills and understanding that must be demonstrated in order to pass the module. Each learning outcome is accompanied by assessment criteria, that indicate the factors which examiners will look for in order to determine whether a learning outcome has been met. The quality of the work is judged against an assessment matrix (or 'rubric'), which, in conjunction with the professional experience of the examiners, is used to determine whether the work is a pass or a fail and, in the case of assessments that carry a grade, to calibrate the level of the achievement according to the common assessment scale.

The module descriptor states the types of assessment that will be used. In cases where there is more than one graded assessment a weighting is assigned to each in order to calculate an overall module grade. All learning outcomes must be met in order to pass a module, and all summative assessments must be passed in order to pass a module.

Although the overall award carries no classification, grades for the Principal Project module will appear on your transcript, offering evidence to other educational institutions and potential employers of the level of your achievement.

# Assessment modes

Module	Mode of Assessment	Outcome
Principal Project	Negotiated: one or two performances (or other creative outputs)	Graded
Supporting Project	Viva	Pass/ Fail

## Feedback on assessment

Feedback is central to learning: its nature and purpose is related to the two main types of assessment, formative and summative:

- **Formative** assessment is concerned with your development during the course of learning: it *informs* you about your progress.
- **Summative** assessment usually takes place at the end of a programme of work and, in the Artist Diploma, often takes the form of a performance, portfolio, or other culmination of learning. It *sums up* your achievement, providing a clear statement of success or failure in meeting the learning outcomes of the module.

Feedback is inherent to both types of assessment. It may take many forms:

- **Verbal**, on an instantaneous basis, such as the informal feedback you receive in your one-to-one lessons or in a tutorial with your Head of Department.
- **Written**, as a comment on a performance, portfolio submission, or other summative outcome: you can expect detailed written feedback on all major summative

assessments.

- **Mutually Constructed**, where feedback is written collaboratively by the tutor and student.
- **Grades** are also a form of feedback

## Assessment scale

Assessment is recorded using the Conservatoire's Common Assessment Scale. The outcome of a module may either be noted as Pass/Fail, or graded alphanumerically:

Common Assessment Scale	Descriptor
A1	Excellent
A2	Excellent
A3	Excellent
A4	Excellent
A5	Excellent
B1	Very Good
B2	Very Good
B3	Very Good
C1	Good

Common Assessment Scale	Descriptor
C2	Good
C3	Good
D1	Satisfactory
D2	Satisfactory
D3	Adequate
PASS	
FAIL	
E1	Inadequate/Fail
E2	Inadequate/Fail
F	Serious fail
NS	Non-submission/Non-appearance

## Assessment regulations

Please read this section in conjunction with the Conservatoire *Regulations, Codes of Procedures and General Rules*.

You are required to attend all lessons, classes, rehearsals and performances as specified

in this handbook or negotiated and recorded on your Student Outcomes. Unauthorised absence is not permitted.

Normally you may progress on the programme of study provided that:

- You have attended classes in accordance with the requirements of programme regulations and have completed all of the work of the programme of study;
- You have met the appropriate assessment requirements to the satisfaction of the appropriate Progress Committee or Board of Examiners.

To obtain a pass in a module you must normally complete all prescribed assessments to the satisfaction of the Board of Examiners. Where a module has a final assessment, you shall be permitted to take that assessment only if there is evidence that you have attended classes in accordance with the requirements of the module and have completed the work of the module.

If you disagree with the outcome of an assessment, you should in the first instance discuss this with the Head of Programme. If you are still not satisfied then you should follow the Code of Procedure for Appeals that can be found in the *Regulations, Codes of Procedures and General Rules*.

## Plagiarism and academic misconduct

Academic misconduct includes cheating, collusion, and plagiarism. Essentially, all work submitted for assessment should be yours except in cases where group work is a specific requirement of an assignment.

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are serious disciplinary matters that will incur a £125 financial penalty. Further strictures may include:

- having to resit an assessment
- having to resit the module

- having to retake a year of study
- having to leave the Conservatoire

Further information, including the mechanism for appeal, may be found in the Conservatoire's *Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules*.

## **Recital conventions – programme notes and announcements**

It is usual practice in many music recitals to provide printed programme notes for the audience. Such practices differ between musical forms and communities – in jazz, for instance, formal programme notes are rare. Where programme notes are indeed expected, these should at a minimum give the name of all the performers, the composers, and full and accurate titles for all the works. You may also wish to include brief contextual notes on each piece. In Traditional Music recitals, such contextual notes are expected.

For vocal classical recitals, it is usual to provide the text of all of the works to be sung, with accompanying English translations where needed. However this is not usual practice for Scots or Scottish Gaelic Song recitals.

In all recitals it is also good practice to plan to address the audience briefly at some point. In Jazz and Traditional Music, always plan to introduce your music and accompanists at some point during the recital. It is not enough to state the title, composer, and musicians' names alone; practice stagecraft and carefully consider how to engage your personality with the audience.

If you are not sure about how to present yourself during an assessed performance, you should seek guidance from your Department.



## **Graduation costs**

There is no fee to graduate and attend the Graduation Ceremony. However, there is a fee to hire a gown which is compulsory. A fee of approximately £50 is payable to an external gown supplier and you will be advised of how to do this as part of the graduation registration process.

## **Non-submission**

Resits due to non-submission or non-attendance will be subject to a fee of £125 per component per resit within a module. Resits due to cheating or plagiarism shall also be subject to a fee of £125 per component per resit within a module.

## **Repetition of repertoire**

Repertoire cannot normally be repeated across assessments unless there is a clear rationale negotiated and agreed with the Head of Department.

# Grading Matrix

For the postgraduate programmes in music the descriptors used in the Common Assessment Scale are supported by an Assessment Matrix (or 'rubric') that outlines what is meant at this level by 'excellent', 'very good' and so on.

	Performance	Creativity	Collaboration	Research
Excellent: A1-5	Technically assured, highly expressive, fully focused, highly detailed, articulate, effective, imaginative, original	Boldly original, creative and intelligent work drawing on a well-founded practical and theoretical perspective	Generous, imaginative, decisive and original contribution to the ensemble, project or class; sensitive collaboration with other disciplines	A thorough command of the research area providing insights into complex issues. Original in its synthesis and an identifiable contribution to scholarship in the field
Very Good: B1-3	Technically skilful, very expressive, well focused, detailed, articulate, effective and imaginative	Creative, original, and intelligent work, securely rooted in practice and theory	Active, co-operative, sustained contribution to the ensemble, project or class;	A deep understanding of the research area with evidence of originality in a clearly focussed

	Performance	Creativity	Collaboration	Research
			openness in collaboration with other disciplines	argument, supported by detailed reference to appropriate scholarship
Good: C1-3	Technically sound, consistently expressively focused, coherent, some imagination	Imaginative work with some originality, supported by a practical and theoretical understanding	Clear contribution maintained, co-operative relationship with other disciplines	A clear understanding of the research area with evidence of independent thinking rooted in appropriate scholarship
Satisfactory: D1-3	Technically sound, expressive, mainly consistent focus	Evidence of originality, drawing on practical experience and basic principles	An identifiable contribution, minimal interaction with other disciplines	An understanding of the research area, with insights mostly drawn from existing scholarship
Unsatisfactory, Fail: E1-2	Technically insecure, limited	Limited evidence of originality and	Unsatisfactory interaction with little	Limited insight into research area and lack

	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Creativity</b>	<b>Collaboration</b>	<b>Research</b>
	expression, inconsistent focus	lack of insight into basic principles	contribution	of awareness of existing scholarship
Serious Fail: F	Technically inadequate, inexpressive, unfocussed	Unoriginal, lacking in basic understanding	No useful contribution	No understanding of research area and existing scholarship

# Learning environment

## Student support

The main hub of student support is the Academic Administration and Support (AAS) team, managed by the Academic Registrar. The Registrar also administers the Appeals and Complaints procedures and can be contacted for advice in either of these areas. If you have a complaint about the service or information provided by the Royal Conservatoire you should consult the Complaints Handling Procedure, which is included in the Royal Conservatoire's Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules.

You can access a wide range of support services via the Portal:

- [Academic Administration and Support \(AAS\)](#) – lots of useful documents here from the AAS department
- [Accommodation](#)
- [Audiovisual Support](#) – The AV Store will lend out things like recorders, mics and cameras, as well as musical instruments
- [Counselling](#)
- [Copyright](#) – see also [portal.rcs.ac.uk/copyright](http://portal.rcs.ac.uk/copyright)
- [Disability Support](#)
- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [Erasmus and International Exchange](#) – vital information for overseas students: visas, immigration, the graduate route, brexit, employment, bank accounts etc
- [Ethics Committee](#) – see also [this moodle page](#)
- [Funding and Finance](#)
- [Guitar and Harp](#) – The Guitar and Harp department
- [Health and Safety](#)
- [Health Services](#) – support for your physical and mental health (see also [Counselling](#))

- [International Students](#)
- [IT](#) – Information Technology: Email, Eduroam wifi, Microsoft Teams, OneDrive for Business, Office365, Zoom
- [Key Documents](#) – handbooks, rules and regulations
- [Learning Technology](#) – how to submit an assignment on moodle, how to use WordPress
- [Library](#) – also, here's a direct link to the [library catalog](#) and also to [Oxford Music Online](#)
- [Student Union](#)
- [Opportunities](#) – very useful indeed: jobs, courses, funding opportunities, competitions...
- [Programme Committees](#) – including the PG Music Programme Committee, which meets three times a year
- [Space Planning](#) – some information about rooming, risk assessments, using asimut
- [Strings](#) the String Department
- [Student Support](#)
- [UniDesk](#) – self-service help portal for information technology questions and problems, network and library technical issues, estates and more (also available at [www.rcs.ac.uk/help/](http://www.rcs.ac.uk/help/))

## Improving the programme

We value your opinions, and have put in place a number of systems that allow us to both gather feedback and ensure that it is acted on appropriately.

Each year at least two student representatives are elected as members of the Postgraduate Music Programmes Committee, which is responsible for monitoring, evaluation and reviewing how the Programme is being delivered. The Committee meets three times a year, with the third meeting being an Open Forum to which all students on

the programme are invited.

- [portal.rcs.ac.uk/prog-comms](https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/prog-comms)

Feedback on the programme can be made via the online [Postgraduate Music Student Suggestion Box](#).

Beyond the programme itself, all of the Departments within the School of Music have their own feedback mechanisms, and there are also Conservatoire-wide mechanisms, such as the Student Experience Forum co-chaired by the Student Union President and the Assistant Principal.

## Internationalisation

As musicians we are fortunate to inhabit a discipline that has the potential to transcend linguistic and cultural barriers while at the same time representing our various identities at the deepest level. The postgraduate programmes in the School of Music attract a diverse population of international students from many different countries across the world: in a typical year, roughly one third of the total cohort may be from outside the UK. The programme also offers a range of opportunities for students to take part in international exchange programmes.

As an institution, the Conservatoire is strongly committed to maintaining an international outlook. More information can be found on the portal sites noted below, or you can contact [international@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:international@rcs.ac.uk).

- [portal.rcs.ac.uk/international-students/](https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/international-students/)
- [portal.rcs.ac.uk/erasmus-and-international-exchange/](https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/erasmus-and-international-exchange/)

# Work-based learning

The programme has practice at its core and is delivered in a proto-professional environment. In a very real sense, therefore, all learning will be predicated upon (near) professional experience. Nevertheless, and in that context, external placements may also provide a valuable learning experience.

Placements connected with your core discipline will typically be available on a competitive basis through audition. Such placements may on occasion offer opportunities for assessment.

## Health and safety, safe space

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is fully committed to creating an environment where all staff and students treat each other fairly and with mutual respect, and to providing an environment where all students and staff are free from discrimination and intimidation.

The following **Safe Space Statement** applies to all activity happening within the Conservatoire, from early years classes to our Masters programmes.

Everyone working and learning together in this room is entitled to do so in a safe space: a space free of bullying and harassment of any kind. We will honour our differences and collaborate in the true spirit of ensemble, promoting creative challenge whilst retaining the utmost respect for each other. We will treat one another with courtesy and respect at all times, and if we are subjected to or witness bullying or harassment we will speak out knowing that our voices will be heard and we will be taken seriously. We will actively promote a positive, optimistic and mutually supportive approach to work and study. Together we can create a Safe Space.

The policies and procedures governing the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and



students are comprehensive and thorough:

- [portal.rcs.ac.uk/health-safety/](https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/health-safety/)

Within the School of Music we take particular care over the risks to hearing. All students are given free personal protection equipment in the form of high-quality earplugs suitable for musical use, as well as specific teaching and learning in this area as part of the programme of study.

School of Music Health, Safety and Wellbeing Action Group is convened by Alistair MacDonald, who will be happy to listen to any concerns raised by students.

[A.MacDonald@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:A.MacDonald@rcs.ac.uk)

## Equality and diversity

We welcome a diverse population of staff and students. Further, we are committed to promoting equality in all of our activities and we aim to provide a performing, learning, teaching, working and research environment free from unlawful discrimination against applicants, staff and students on the grounds of gender (actual or perceived), sexual orientation, disability, race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin, marital status, age and actual or perceived religious or similar belief.

The Conservatoire fosters a learning, teaching, research and working culture which not only supports diversity, inclusion and equity but indeed requires those principles. We are thoroughly committed to the promotion of equal opportunities across all of our functions and practices including those of learning and teaching, employment, representation, decision making, and procurement and partnerships.

The Conservatoire is committed to ensuring that those from all backgrounds feel able to apply to study with us. Applicants who have been looked after at home, in residential care, foster care or kinship care can access support via the International and Student Experience team at [welfare@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:welfare@rcs.ac.uk). Provisions are also made for Estranged Students

and Student Carers.

More information about the work of the School and the Conservatoire in these areas may be found on both the main RCS website and the Portal:

- [www.rcs.ac.uk/why-rcs/vision-and-governance/equalityanddiversity/](http://www.rcs.ac.uk/why-rcs/vision-and-governance/equalityanddiversity/)
- [portal.rcs.ac.uk/equality-diversity/](http://portal.rcs.ac.uk/equality-diversity/)

## Learning resources

The School of Music has access to a large number of purpose-built practice rooms and other rehearsal spaces that are available to students on the programme. You will have a personal quota of practice time that you can book through the Asimut timetable: larger rehearsal rooms may be booked through your Department.

There are three recording studios: studio A is staffed by a professional recording engineer, while studios B and C may be booked for student use following a short induction.

The Whitaker Library offers a comprehensive collection of material in support of the studying musician, including books, scores and audio and video recordings. The School of Music is supported by a dedicated music librarian, who will be able to assist with scores and parts for a wide range of works in the standard repertoire. A very large number of online study resources are also available through the library catalogue.

The AV store has a wide range of equipment available for students to borrow, including audio and video cameras, sound reinforcement equipment, and similar items.

Each of the instrumental Departments within the School of Music also maintains a stock of instruments of professional quality that may be borrowed and used by students.

Digital technology is not something that is bolted on to learning and teaching, but rather a part of the contemporary landscape that we all inhabit. During the first weeks of the

programme you will be introduced to a number of online tools that are in daily use at the Conservatoire for communication, collaboration, and the sharing of information. These include:

- your conservatoire email
- the password self-service facility
- OneDrive for Business
- the Asimut timetabling system
- moodle
- the Student Outcomes
- the Portal
- eduroam wifi
- your ePortfolio
- the library catalogue

Of particular interest to music students are the state-of-the-art camera systems that have been installed in the Stevenson Hall and Ledger Recital room. These can be used by students after a short period of training that can be organised on request.

# Staff

## Heads of Department

The principal responsibility for creating an individual learning journey through the programme rests with you the student, working closely with your Head of Department. They will negotiate with you your one-to-one tuition, your choice of assessments, and the range of activities to be undertaken.

As well as taking a close interest in your musical and professional development, your Head of Department will be at hand to offer support on any difficulties that may arise

during the course of the programme, either directly, by offering information and advice themselves, or by referring you on to one of the support mechanisms offered by the Conservatoire as a whole. In some large Departments there is an Associate Head and/or a Coordinator, who will also work to support you through the programme. You will also be in regular contact with your department's Programme Support Administrator who will, among other duties, manage your Asimut timetable.

## **Principal Study Tutors**

Your one-to-one lessons with your Principal Project tutor are of course at the heart of your programme. Your Head of Department will discuss and agree with you the best person for you to study with: in some cases, this may involve dividing your time between a number of tutors.

## **Head of Programme**

The Head of Programme has overall responsibility for academic leadership across the MMus/MA, AdvPGDip and ArtDip programmes. They work in liaison with the Heads of Department to negotiate the structure and content of your programme and offer general support and advice on your progress through the programme. You are encouraged to speak to the Head of Programme at any time, particularly if there is a matter that cannot be dealt with by your Head of Department. The Heads of Department and Head of Programme report to the Director of the School of Music, who will take up any issues that cannot be resolved by the Department or the Programme.

## **Copyright**

The Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules (Section F4) state:

It is the responsibility of all staff and students of the Conservatoire to ensure that they comply with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (‘the

Act'). Breach of copyright regulations is a criminal offence and may expose both the individual and the Conservatoire to prosecution.

In simple terms, copyright in a literary, dramatic, musical or artistic work exists during the author's lifetime and for a period of 70 years from the end of the calendar year in which the author dies. During this period, a work may not be copied without the permission of the rights or licence holder. Publishers, editors, artists, photographers and arrangers also have rights over a work. Advice on copyright issues is available from the Head of Information Services and all policies and guidelines are available on the Portal Copyright pages.

Further details can be found under Section 10 of the Conservatoire's *Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules*. Practical guidance for students may be found at [portal.rcs.ac.uk/library/copyright](https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/library/copyright) and [portal.rcs.ac.uk/copyright/](https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/copyright/).

## Insurance

It is your responsibility to ensure that your musical instrument/s are fully insured against loss or damage whilst on the RCS premises. The Conservatoire is unable to recommend a particular insurance provider. Check first whether your instrument/s are insured through a family home contents insurance policy, and compare premiums from multiple providers before arranging a new policy.

## Student outcomes

The [Student Outcomes](#) tab of your Student Outcomes is a mechanism that allows you to plan your personal, educational and professional development. It is a dynamic tool to help you navigate through the programme and record the choices agreed with your Head of Department and other members of the programme team.

In specific terms Student Outcomes will:

- Detail module and option choices within the programme
- Detail, where appropriate, assessment modes, placements, and work based learning
- Detail performance opportunities and other commitments that may be undertaken as part of the programme

Student Outcomes will encourage you to:

- Review, plan and take responsibility for your own learning
- Articulate your personal goals and evaluate progress towards their achievement
- Articulate personal choice and context
- Gain an holistic overview of your learning and its relationship to extra-curricular pursuits and career development
- Improve study and career management skills

You can access Student Outcomes at <https://matric.rcs.ac.uk/> – you should familiarise yourself with this tool at the start of your programme, and make regular reference to it throughout the period of your studies.

## Negotiation

This programme handbook and module descriptors make reference to matters which are 'negotiated' or 'discussed and agreed'. In the context of this programme, these phrases have important implications. One of the underlying principles of the programme – and one of the defining characteristics of 'mastersness' – is that you should take responsibility for your own learning: the starting point for decisions around such matters as assessment pathways and options is a consideration of your individual needs as a student.

This does not mean, of course, that you have a completely free choice as to how to structure your programme. Both students and teachers are constrained on the one hand by both the need on the one to meet the learning outcomes of the programme, and the practicalities of delivery on the other.

In practice, the choices available to you will be made on the basis of an open and two-way discussion between you and your Head of Department.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of a discussion of your options with your Head of Department or other member of staff, then you should discuss the matter with the Head of Programme. If you are still not satisfied, you can approach the Director of Music. In all cases, whatever has been negotiated should be recorded on your Student Outcomes. It is the responsibility of the both the student and the Personal Supervisor to make sure that this is kept up to date.

## Transitions

'Transitions' is a term used to represent two phases of your studies: firstly, when you move into your studies, also known as 'induction'; secondly, when you leave the programme and move into either further study or the wider world.

In the induction phase you will meet your Head of Department and Head of Programme, and begin to negotiate your individual programme of study through your Student Outcomes.

As you approach the end of the programme, you will have the opportunity to meet with your Head of Department to discuss your future plans, either for moving into the profession or further study.

## Communication

After face-to-face communication, the most widely used mode of communication is email, which is used for all official correspondence. While in other spheres you may be used to communicating via chat platforms, direct messaging, or social media, it is important that you recognise that, during your studies on the programme, all of your electronic communication with your tutors will come via your Conservatoire email address. Neither

staff nor students should use their private email address for matters relating to Conservatoire business.

There are a number of useful email addresses that you might wish to be aware of:

- [aas@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:aas@rcs.ac.uk) – Academic and Administrative Support
- [academicappeal@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:academicappeal@rcs.ac.uk) – Overseen by the Deputy Registrar (Student Experience) and the Assistant Registrar (Secretariat)
- [artisticplanning@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:artisticplanning@rcs.ac.uk)
- [AVSupport@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:AVSupport@rcs.ac.uk) – AudioVisual Support (to borrow instruments, cameras etc)
- [c.client1@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:c.client1@rcs.ac.uk) – Client Services
- [complaint@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:complaint@rcs.ac.uk) – overseen by the Deputy Registrar (Student Experience) and the Student Community Conduct Officer
- [counselling@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:counselling@rcs.ac.uk)
- [covidsafe@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:covidsafe@rcs.ac.uk) – anonymous email to report covid related concerns
- [els@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:els@rcs.ac.uk) – Effective Language Services, help with written assignments and English
- [disabilityservice@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:disabilityservice@rcs.ac.uk)
- [domesticservices@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:domesticservices@rcs.ac.uk)
- [ethics@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@rcs.ac.uk)
- [graduation@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:graduation@rcs.ac.uk)
- [healthandsafetydepartment@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:healthandsafetydepartment@rcs.ac.uk)
- [international@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:international@rcs.ac.uk)
- [ithelpdesk@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:ithelpdesk@rcs.ac.uk)
- [venuesmain@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:venuesmain@rcs.ac.uk) – raises a help ticket with the Venues department.
- [library@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:library@rcs.ac.uk)
- [maintenance@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:maintenance@rcs.ac.uk)
- [pianotuner@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:pianotuner@rcs.ac.uk)
- [printerquestions@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:printerquestions@rcs.ac.uk)



- [psa@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:psa@rcs.ac.uk) – generic email that goes to all of the Programme Support Administrators
- [spaceplanning@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:spaceplanning@rcs.ac.uk)
- [studentabsences@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:studentabsences@rcs.ac.uk)
- [studentfinance@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:studentfinance@rcs.ac.uk) – enquiries about fees
- [studentpractice@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:studentpractice@rcs.ac.uk)
- [susupport@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:susupport@rcs.ac.uk) – Student Union
- [welfare@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:welfare@rcs.ac.uk) – help with financial issues

## Calendar

The School of Music calendar can be viewed in a browser:

[School of Music Calendar – web view](#)

You can also subscribe to this calendar in another application such as your Microsoft 365 calendar, Apple calendar or Google calendar:

[School of Music Calendar – subscription link](#)

(There is currently a limitation, in that only the next 12 months are displayed: we are working to resolve this!)

A printable two-page .pdf version of the calendar is available here:

[SoM\\_calendar\\_25-26.pdf](#)

## **Notable weeks**

### **Welcome and transitions week (w/b Mon 22 Sep 2025)**

During this week new students will be involved in induction activities, with normal teaching beginning in week 2. Returning students start back this week.

### **Undergraduate reading Week (w/b Mon 03 Nov 2024)**

For undergraduate students only, this is a week in which no classes or rehearsals are timetabled: it is also used as an auditions week by the School of Music. For this reason, some classes and many option modules will not run during this week. You should check your Asimut calendar for that week on to confirm your schedule. If you are still not sure, please check with your Head of Department, Head of Programme, or, in the case of an option module, the Module Coordinator.

### **Performance week (w/b Mon 01 Dec 2024)**

Priority given to performances; some classes and option modules may not run. You should check your Asimut calendar for that week to confirm your schedule. If you are still not sure, please check with your Head of Department, Head of Programme, or, in the case of an option module, the Module Coordinator.

### **IXP Winter School (w/b Mon 08 Dec 2024)**

Interdisciplinary and Extended Practice (IXP) modules run during this week: regular undergraduate teaching and performance ceases.

### **Mid-Session performance assessments (w/b Mon 2 Feb and w/b Mon 9 Feb 2025)**

All undergraduate mid-session assessments take place during these two weeks, as will all masters B assessments that are in the nature of recitals. Where there is a clear rationale, B assessments that are not recitals may by negotiation take place at other points in the

year, for instance: studio recordings; large ensemble performances; negotiated projects; composer collaborations; and external performances.

Many regular classes will not run during this week: please check your schedule.

### **IXP Spring School (w/b Mon 23 Mar 2025)**

Interdisciplinary and Extended Practice (IXP) modules run during this week: regular undergraduate teaching and performance ceases.

### **Final performance assessments (w/b Mon 25 May - w/b Mon 8 Jun 2025)**

The majority of A column recitals for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes will take place during these weeks. This is a busy time of year: some assessments may also be scheduled in the previous and following weeks, and over weekends. In certain cases, postgraduate students may take these examinations at another point in the year.

### **Bridge week (w/b Mon 15 Jun 2025)**

In this final week of term 3 there is unlikely to be teaching or performance activity: some assessments may still be taking place, however. During this week, all students have the opportunity to pitch for self-directed collaborative projects, with successful pitches being resourced by the Conservatoire.

### **August performance assessments (w/b Mon 17 Aug 2025)**

Postponed first-sit assessments, resit assessments, and resubmissions of failed modules typically take place during this week.

### **MA performance assessments (w/b Mon 7 Sep 2025)**

Performance assessments for the MA programme typically take place during this week.

# Independent learning, autonomy and resilience

In choosing to undertake an Artist Diploma, you have embarked upon a programme that offers you substantial scope to identify your own artistic aims. It will also require you to undertake a great deal of independent work, both in the practice room and in thinking critically about the work that you wish to produce. As well as working towards your chosen outputs for the Principal Project module, the Supporting Project module is designed to open up to you a range of learning opportunities within the School of Music and the Conservatoire as a whole. This balance of autonomous and collaborative work within a rich performing environment is intended to help you to develop the resilience to deal with challenges as they arise, both during the course of the programme and after you graduate.

# Attendance

You are expected to attend all classes and rehearsals. Poor attendance and/or poor timekeeping will have a detrimental impact on your learning and the learning of other students. It can also lead to disciplinary action in line with the Conservatoire's Rules and Regulations.

## Illness

Unforeseen absence due to illness should be logged on Asimut no later than 9:30am. You must not declare illness unless you are actually ill.

If you are involved in a large ensemble activity that day then you should:

- declare illness on Asimut and
- contact Artistic Planning by email ([artisticplanning@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:artisticplanning@rcs.ac.uk)) or telephone (0141 270 8240) and
- inform your Head of Department

If you are absent from classes due to illness for five consecutive weekdays then on your return you must submit a medical certificate to the AAS Office.

If you are absent from an assessment or unable to submit coursework on time due to illness then you should email the relevant Programme or Departmental PSA. In addition, to avoid a penalty you should submit a PMC (Personal Mitigating Circumstances) form with a medical certificate. The PMC form can be found on the landing page when you sign in to your Student Outcomes.

## Absence requests

Pre-arranged absence for attending external activities, for instance a scheduled medical

appointment or external concert engagement, should be requested at least seven days in advance using the absence request form on your Student Outcomes. You must use this system to request absence: it is not sufficient to speak informally to a member of staff about the request.

We strongly advise that you apply for authorised absence for all term-time external engagements, even if you have no Conservatoire activities listed in your Asimut timetable at the time of checking. Classes and rehearsals may change, and practical assessments may not be confirmed until three weeks before the exam. If your absence request has been approved, then we will not schedule any activities or assessments during that time.

It is your responsibility to list all affected classes, activities and assessments on the absence request form. Once the request is reviewed, your Head of Programme and Head of Department will make a decision on the outcome (approved, conditionally approved or rejected), which is then posted on your Student Outcomes. Not all requests will be approved, especially if assessments would be affected by the absence. For this reason, you should not make any travel plans until you have received written notification that your request has been approved.

## **Unauthorised absence**

Continued unauthorised absence, including unexplained illness, will have a detrimental impact on your learning and may result in investigation and disciplinary action.

In line with the Conservatoire's Rules and Regulations, students who fail to meet attendance requirements and who fail to respond positively to written warnings on the matter may lose the right to present for examination. In this case you will not be permitted to submit work or attend the examination and the outcome will be recorded as a fail.

## **Extension requests**

It is expected that you will manage your time to ensure that all assessment deadlines are

met. Work submitted late will not be accepted, resulting in the assessment being failed due to non-submission. You will also incur the associated financial penalty of £125 per assessment.

The following are examples of circumstances which the Conservatoire would expect you to manage:

- minor illness or ailment (unless they resulted in you being unable to perform);
- personal/domestic events that could have been planned for;
- choices in personal life (eg attending weddings, holidays etc);
- transport or travel problems (unless caused by a recorded local/national crisis or a natural disaster);
- failure or theft of your computer or other equipment being used to produce the work to be assessed, including work not being backed-up;
- programme demands or misunderstanding of deadlines/dates (including failure of others to submit group assignments).

If you know in advance that you will be unable to meet the submission deadline through good cause, you may apply for an extension to the deadline, using an Extension Request Form. Extensions should normally be requested a minimum of 48 hours in advance of the deadline. Extensions are usually only granted for 1 or 2 working days, exceptionally for a maximum of 7 calendar days.

## **Personal Mitigating Circumstances**

Where a significant and unexpected circumstance beyond your control has affected your studies and temporarily prevents you from undertaking an assessment or significantly impairs your performance in an assessment, you may submit a Personal Mitigating Circumstances Form. The following are examples of circumstances that would be considered as mitigating circumstances:

- serious or incapacitating injury, illness or medical condition or emergency operation.

- a significant family or personal crisis (eg bereavement or a serious illness affecting a close family member).
- unforeseen, unpreventable events (eg being a victim of a criminal act, natural disaster, including severe weather affecting travel).

The Extension Request form and Personal Mitigating Circumstances form can be found on the Student Portal.

## **Timetabling of Music Ensembles**

Many of the ensemble activities within the School of Music are too complex to be captured in detail using Asimut. These are instead timetabled by the Music Ensembles Manager, including:

- Symphony Orchestra
- Chamber Orchestra
- Wind Orchestra
- Opera Orchestra
- MusicLab
- Contemporary Ensembles involved in the Plug Festival
- Jazz Orchestra
- Ballet Orchestra
- Musical Theatre Pit Orchestras and Pit Bands
- Conductors Ensemble
- Repertoire Orchestra

Asimut should only be used as a guide with regards to these rehearsals. The main point of reference is the Orchestra and Ensembles folder on One Drive. The link to this will be sent to you via email and you can save this to your favourites to reference daily. If you are involved in any activity, you should carefully take down all rehearsal and performance details in your diary. It is compulsory that you attend all rehearsals. If you do not come to a



rehearsal because it isn't on Asimut, but is on One Drive, that will not be accepted as an authorised absence.

# Graduate destinations

You will graduate from the programme as a highly skilled and well rounded musician. Whatever your discipline, the programme will have equipped you with the skills and abilities needed to take on high-level professional work. You will have developed a critical and autonomous approach to your principal study, which will enable you to continue to develop your musicianship as your career unfolds. Statistically, the prospects are good, with the great majority of graduates from postgraduate programmes in music progressing either to employment or further study.

It is important to remember, however, that the profession of music is continually changing and evolving. For classically trained instrumentalists in particular, the outlook is challenging, with large numbers of extremely well-qualified musicians from around the world chasing a dwindling number of traditional positions.

## The portfolio career

'There is no such thing as a typical musician. The blend of roles, patterns of paid and creative work, employment status and working hours vary across musicians and across different periods in their careers. Developing a portfolio career, made up of a number of different jobs, is a necessary characteristic of many musicians' careers; this invariably involves developing non-music skills such as business, marketing, teaching and community engagement.'

*The Working Musician* Musician's Union 2012

The quote above is one of the key findings of an extensive research project recently undertaken by the Musicians' Union. It accords well with the experience reported to us by our recent graduates, and is a realistic picture of the lives of many of the part-time staff who teach on the programme.

## **Further study**

After completing our programme you may decide to proceed to further study, either here or at another institution. Many students choose to deepen and enrich their artistic practice by further study at a higher level, perhaps through the DPerf offered by the Conservatoire in association with the University of St Andrews. You may also be interested in pursuing research at PhD level, perhaps as a route to an academic career.

# Modules

- [Principal Project](#)
- [Supporting Project](#)

# Principal Project

In this core module you will work towards an individually negotiated programme of high-level artistic outputs, such as performances, compositions, recordings, or documented research, according to the discipline. This module is supported by 20.25 hours of one-to-one lessons from a specialist tutor.

## Aims

This module is designed to:

- Encourage the development of a distinctive musical personality
- Provide opportunities for performance and composition, and support students in creating their own opportunities

## Learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module you will be able to:

- **L01** Realise, recreate, create, manipulate and/or produce music to a high professional level, expressing your artistic concepts in a well-developed musical personality
- **L02** Evidence sophisticated craft skills at the forefront of the discipline, creating coherent musical experiences across a range of repertoires, styles, forms and genres
- **L03** Take responsibility for engagement between context, audience and musical material, projecting your ideas fluently and with confidence in a range of contexts

# Assessment 1

You will be assessed through one or two negotiated assessments (100% or 50% + 50%)

The negotiated assessments for this module will typically be performances, but may also be compositions, recordings, or documented research. As well as offering an artistic vehicle, it is expected that you will seek opportunities that will support your future professional development: examples might include: entering competitions; freelance work; professional recitals; and/or high quality audio and/or video recordings. At least one of these assessments will be assessed by an external panel, comprising a Specialist External Examiner, an internal specialist, and a generalist convener. Where there is a second assessment it will usually be carried out by a panel comprising two internal specialists.

## Assessment criteria

Assessors will look for:

**L01** – Realise, recreate, create, manipulate and/or produce music to a high professional level, expressing your artistic concepts in a well-developed musical personality

- performances which can challenge both the artist and audience
- originality and creative imagination
- fine understanding of style and idiom
- committed and engaging response to the music

**L02** – Evidence sophisticated craft skills at the forefront of the discipline, creating coherent musical experiences across a range of repertoires, styles, forms and genres

- textual accuracy

- consistency and concentration in performance
- confident leading and sympathetic support in collaborative and ensemble contexts
- technical control and freedom to fully realise musical intent

**L03** – Take responsibility for engagement between context, audience and musical material, projecting your ideas fluently and with confidence in a range of contexts

- confident stagecraft
- effective communication
- rapport with the audience
- awareness of context and trend
- knowledge of the repertoire

## Alignment of assessment

	Assessment 1
L01	x
L02	x
L03	x

## Recommended resources

## Other relevant details

## Next steps

## Summary details

<b>Module Title</b>	Principal Project
<b>Module Coordinator</b>	Head of Department
<b>Credit Rating</b>	80 SCQF (40 ECTS)
<b>Status</b>	Core
<b>Pre-requisites</b>	None
<b>Co-requisites</b>	Supporting Project
<b>Anti-requisites</b>	None
<b>Minimum and maximum number of students</b>	1-10
<b>Learning modes</b>	<b>Indicative hours</b>
<b>Scheduled study</b>	20.25



<b>Independent study</b>	779.75
<b>Total notional student effort</b>	800

# Supporting Project

Working with your supervisor, you will identify a range of activities to undertake in support of the development of your principal project. You will be encouraged to draw upon learning opportunities within your Department, the School of Music, and the Conservatoire as whole. Examples might include: performance classes and masterclasses; departmental classes and ensembles; attendance at concerts; critical reflection on performances recorded on video; peer mentoring; research department events, including the Exchange; auditing classes and modules either close to or far from your discipline; and/or creative interdisciplinary projects in collaboration with students from other programmes.

You will also be expected to undertake your own research into the works being prepared for your principal project, drawing on written and audiovisual resources available to you through the Whittaker Library and other print and online sources.

## Aims

This module is designed to:

- Develop of a range of skills that support your artistic development
- Enable you to take responsibility for your own learning
- Foster a critical and reflective attitude towards your artistic practice
- Recognise the relationship between your work and broader social and historical contexts

## Learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module you will be able to:

- **L01** Take responsibility for engagement between context, audience and musical material, projecting your ideas fluently and with confidence in a range of contexts
- **L02** Demonstrate sophisticated knowledge of practices, languages, materials, technologies and techniques relevant to your discipline, and their associated texts, resources and concepts
- **L03** Engage with a significant level of critical self-reflection in relation to your artistic practice

# Assessment 1

You will be assessed through:

- Viva – Pass/Fail

The viva examination will be carried out in association with one of your assessed Principal Project outputs, and will cover two main areas. You will be asked to outline the supporting activities that you have carried out during the course of the programme and reflect upon the way in which these activities have supported your development as a musician.

Further to that, the examiners will invite you to put the project under consideration into context, for instance:

- What were your artistic intentions?
- In what ways does your work sit alongside canonic interpretations, and in what ways are you breaking new ground?
- What technical and musical challenges did you face in completing the project, and to what extent did you overcome these?
- What future directions do you intend to explore?

# Assessment criteria

Assessors will look for:

**L01** – Take responsibility for engagement between context, audience and musical material, projecting your ideas fluently and with confidence in a range of contexts

- rationale for supporting activities undertaken
- informed and creative engagement with a range of study pathways
- awareness of the role of the musician in a range of contexts

**L02** – Demonstrate sophisticated knowledge of practices, languages, materials, technologies and techniques relevant to your discipline, and their associated texts, resources and concepts

- articulation of a rationale for chosen areas of study and performance
- contextual and historical knowledge of selected repertoire
- awareness of relevant literature and other sources of information

**L03** – Engage with a significant level of critical self-reflection in relation to your artistic practice

- depth of reflection
- effective communication
- fresh insight

## Alignment of assessment

	Assessment 1
L01	x
L02	x
L03	x

## Recommended resources

## Other relevant details

## Next steps

## Summary details

Module Title	Supporting Project
Module Coordinator	Head of Department
Credit Rating	40 SCQF (20 ECTS)

<b>Status</b>	Core
<b>Pre-requisites</b>	None
<b>Co-requisites</b>	Principal Project
<b>Anti-requisites</b>	None
<b>Minimum and maximum number of students</b>	1-10
<b>Learning modes</b>	<b>Indicative hours</b>
<b>Tutorials</b>	6
<b>Supervised/taught group activity</b>	20
<b>Independent study</b>	374
<b>Total notional student effort</b>	400

# Appendices

- [Performance Opportunities and Commitments Policy](#)
- [Change of Teacher Policy: Student Version](#)
- [Acceptable use of generative artificial intelligence at the RCS](#)
- [Recording and streaming policy](#)
- [Referencing and bibliography](#)
- [Student-led performance](#)

# Performance Opportunities and Commitments Policy

Productions and performances are central to your learning as a musician, and a vital part of the learning experience offered by the School of Music. This document is a comprehensive statement of the School's policy on the allocation of such opportunities and commitments, the principles that underpin the allocation process, the relationship between such performances and your work towards the award you are registered for, and the contribution of staff across all departments towards creating for you a balanced and individual learning journey.

It also sets out the School's expectations of you as a student and the means whereby you may appeal allocation decisions.

This policy covers a wide range of activities including, but not limited to:

- the role of singers in opera
- orchestral performances
- composing for visiting ensembles
- chamber groups
- masterclasses

## The School's expectations of you

It is a basic expectation that all students will contribute to the musical life of the School by participating in Conservatoire performances and productions. As a student you are expected, from the outset, to show comprehensive professionalism in your approach to these opportunities and commitments by being:



- present
- on time
- prepared
- focussed
- courteous of colleagues
- active and generous in collaboration

Conservatoire performances and productions represent both an opportunity for you to learn, and a commitment that comes with becoming a member of the Conservatoire's community of artists. You are therefore expected to contribute to Conservatoire performances and productions as agreed with your Head of Department.

## **Principles underpinning the allocation of experiences**

Two principles underpin the allocation of performance opportunities and commitments. Opportunities are allocated in such a way as:

- to enhance your own learning
- to maintain the vibrancy of the Conservatoire's musical community and therefore, by extension, enhance the learning of the community

Heads of Department, working in collaboration, will reach a decision on the allocation of roles for Conservatoire performances. Taking into account the diversity of opportunity that resides across both Schools, they will consider:

- Your individual learning journey, including assessment requirements
- Your readiness to learn from the experience
- The best role for you within an individual performance or production, given the personnel required
- The needs of other students
- The placing of the performance or production within your wider studies

- Equity of experience across departments and programmes.

The same considerations will apply for performance experiences outwith the Conservatoire, whenever Conservatoire staff are involved in the selection of student performers.

## Resolving Concerns

If you feel that a particular allocation of a performance experience is disadvantaging your learning, you should, within 48 hours of receiving the allocation, contact your Head of Department explaining why, in your view, the particular allocation is inappropriate. Similarly, if you feel that you are being disadvantaged by a lack of opportunities you should, in the first instance, raise this with your Head of Department. The Head of Department, mindful of the principles and considerations set out above, will re-evaluate the situation and, if possible, resolve your concern.

If, after discussion with the Head of Department, you do not feel that your concern has been satisfactorily resolved, you may appeal the allocation by writing to the Head of Programme (Undergraduate or Postgraduate), who will liaise with the Head of Department and the appropriate Programme Board to seek a resolution. The result of this discussion, and a rationale for the resulting decision, will be given to you in writing. If, at this stage, you feel that this decision does not provide a satisfactory resolution, you may appeal in writing directly to the Director of Music according to the process set out in Conservatoire's *Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules*.

## Performance Ethics

The Performance Opportunities and Commitments Policy operates in tandem with the Conservatoire's Performance Ethics Policy that can be found on the Ethics moodle page <https://inspire.rcs.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=6488>.

If you have a concern about the ethics of a performance in which you are involved, please speak in the first instance to your Head of Department or Head of Programme.

# Change of Teacher Policy : Student Version

This policy is about situations where you would like to change your 1:1 teacher. This is a short, student-facing version of the [full policy](#).

## Background

When you begin studies in the School of Music, you are allocated to a 1:1 Principal Study teacher by your Head of Department (HoD). We do our best to accommodate requests to study with a particular teacher, where we have advance notice, but we can't promise to fulfil all requests.

You have the option to share your annual allocation of 1:1 lesson time between different teachers – this can be beneficial where you are studying complementary or highly specialised techniques or genres, for example. Sharing of lesson time has to be done with the agreement of your Head of Department.

## Our Policy

It is School of Music policy to support requests to change teacher, or to share lesson time between different teachers, so long as your HoD believes that to be in your best interests.

## What should I do if I'd like to discuss my progress?

You should speak to your 1:1 teacher in the first instance. If you don't feel able to discuss concerns about your progress directly with your teacher, then speak to your HoD.

Concerns about progress do not always result in changing teacher. It's good practice to discuss your progress with your HoD at least once a year, usually after the end-of-year

assessments: your HoD may use this meeting to ask you to confirm that you're happy to continue with your current teacher.

## **I just want an occasional lesson from a different teacher**

If you would like the occasional lesson with a different teacher, simply discuss this with your HoD.

## **But what if I want to change my 1:1 teacher or to share lesson time with another teacher?**

The process that follows is for situations where you would like to change teacher, or to share lesson time with another teacher on an ongoing basis.

Here's what to do if you'd like to change teacher or share lesson time on permanent basis:

### **1. Talk to your Head of Department**

- explain why you'd like to change teacher
- talk about your progress to date and your ambitions
- your HoD will also take account of your stage in your studies, your length of time with your current teacher and the availability of other teachers
- your HoD may decide that a change of teacher is not in your best interests at this time. In this case, you should meet with your HoD again after, say, another 4 weeks to review the situation.
- if you are unhappy with this outcome, you can appeal the decision to the Director of Music.

### **2. You (or your HoD) meet with your current teacher**

- if your HoD thinks that changing teacher is in your best interests, they will encourage you to discuss the request directly with your current teacher

- if you feel unable to discuss your request directly with your teacher, tell your HoD and they will discuss the request with your teacher instead. They will explain fully to your teacher the reasons for your request
- your HoD will offer you support through this process, and give you a timeline for changing teacher

### 3. Approaching new teachers

- you must not approach a possible new teacher or have a consultation lesson with a new teacher until your HoD gives you permission. This is because it is courtesy for your current teacher to be aware that you are seeking to change teacher.
- when you approach a possible new teacher, the teacher will check with the HoD that you have permission

### 4. Conclusion of process

- once a new teacher has agreed to take you, the change needs to be confirmed by your HoD
- the change may be temporary or permanent
- the timing of the change should be made clear by your HoD. Normally, the change will coincide with a natural break in studies (e.g. beginning of a new academic year or a new term)
- it may not always be appropriate for lessons with your current teacher to stop immediately – your HoD may judge that it is best for you to continue with your current teacher for a few more lessons.

## **What happens after I change teacher?**

We will do our best to avoid situations where you might be examined by a former teacher. Teachers are expected to maintain professional objectivity at all times in relation to former students, and to make this clear by their actions, words and conduct.

## What if my teacher suggests that I move to a different teacher?

This doesn't happen very often; if it does, your teacher or your HoD will explain the rationale.

## Where can I go for support?

If you need support through this process, please contact:

- your Head of Department
- your Head of Programme
- the Students Union [susupport@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:susupport@rcs.ac.uk)
- the Deputy Registrar [m.green@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:m.green@rcs.ac.uk)
- RCS Counsellors <https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/counselling/>

## Notes

- References to 'Principal Study' also include 'Additional Performance Study' and 'Second Study' etc.
- If your 1:1 teacher is your HoD, and you don't feel able to discuss the request directly with them, you should contact the Associate HoD, or Head of Programme, or the Director of Music.
- The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland subscribes to the '[Principles of Best Practice in Conservatoire Teaching](#)', which has been adopted by Conservatoires UK. The Conservatoire's [Dignity at Work and Study Statement](#) is also relevant in the context of this Policy.