

RCM Strategic Plan 2007-17

Revision 2012

Mission statement

The Royal College of Music provides specialised musical education and professional training at the highest international level for performers and composers, within an environment that stimulates innovation and research. This enables talented students from all backgrounds to develop the musical skills, knowledge, understanding and resourcefulness which will equip them to contribute significantly to musical life in this country and internationally.

Objects of the Royal College of Music

The Mission Statement supplements the objects of the Royal College of Music as set out in the 1883 Charter:

(a) the advancement of the Art of Music by means of a central teaching and examining body charged with the duty of providing musical instruction of the highest class, and of rewarding with academical degrees and certificates of proficiency and otherwise persons, whether educated or not at the College, who on examination may prove themselves worthy of such distinctions and evidences of attainment; and

(b) the promotion and supervision of such musical instruction in schools and elsewhere, as may be thought most conducive to the cultivation and dissemination of the Art of Music in the United Kingdom; and

(c) generally the encouragement and promotion of the cultivation of music as an art throughout the world.

Extracts from speech of HRH The Prince of Wales at the opening of the Royal College of Music, as reported in *The Times*, 8 May 1883:

'Fifty scholarships have been established, of which twenty-five confer a free education in music, and twenty-five provide, not only a free education, but also maintenance for the scholars. Of these scholarships, half are held by boys and half by girls. I observe with pleasure that the various districts from which the scholars are drawn indicate the wide-spread distribution of a taste for music, and an adequate cultivation of music throughout the United Kingdom. London, with its vast population, sends only twelve out of the fifty. The remaining thirty-eight come as follows: twenty-eight from fourteen different counties in England, two from Scotland, six from Ireland, one from Wales, and one from Jersey. The occupations of the scholars are as various as the places from which they come. I find that a mill girl, the daughter of a brickmaker, and the son of a blacksmith, take high places in singing, and the son of a farm labourer in violin playing. The capacity of these candidates has been tested by an examination of unusual severity.'

The Royal College of Music is '... to be to England what the Berlin Conservatoire is to Germany, what the Paris Conservatoire is to France, or the Vienna Conservatoire to Austria – the recognised centre and head of the musical world. Why is it that Germany, France, and Italy have national styles of music? Why is it that England has no music recognised as national? It has able composers, but nothing indicative of the national life or national feeling. The reason is not far to seek. There is no centre of music to which English musicians may resort with confidence, and thence derive instruction, counsel and inspiration'.

RCM 2012 – delivering an inspirational learning experience

Learning and teaching continue to be at the heart of the RCM's mission. During the period 2007-2012, a new Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy was established, which taken together with revisions to the RCM's Royal Charter in 2009, has enabled the RCM to offer a wider range of degree qualifications. From 2010-11 the new MPerf and MComp professional degrees became available as alternatives to the MMus. In 2011-12 the MSc in Performance Science was introduced. The 2012 Doctoral Review added the degree of PhD to the portfolio. A new post of Director of Programmes & Research has made these developments possible. The College achieved an extremely positive QAA Institutional Review in 2012. Plans are in hand for a more integrated pre-18 agenda across the new *Junior Sparks* programme, *Sparks* and the Junior College.

The College's artistic programme has been developed further, with particular emphasis on balancing showcase activity with the individual student experience. During the period 2007-12 the new post of Artistic Director was created and a new Artistic Strategy was prepared. The RCM continues to offer an ambitious public performance programme that increasingly includes activities outside the building – in London, the UK and internationally.

Successful partnerships and collaborations are as central to the work of the College as they are to the working lives of most musicians. The College's strategy for developing partnerships/collaborations is to focus on: working across theory and practice; strengthening partnerships in the USA and the Far East; and shared services that improve efficiency. The BBC Pre-Proms events each summer now bring over 10,000 visitors each summer. RCM *Sparks* is part of a new Music Education hub, together with the Royal Albert Hall and three neighbourhood boroughs.

The College has sought to enhance its global standing and recruitment strategy. From 2011-12 the RCM BMus degree has been taught at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in Singapore. Other significant international partnerships which support the artistic and academic work of the College include Princeton University and the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory.

Research across practice and theory plays a major role in the life of the RCM. In the 2008 RAE, 50% of RCM submissions were rated 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'. The revised Research Strategy has set ambitious targets for external research income. Outstanding learning resources support study and research – library, special collections, including the RCM Museum of Music, and professional quality recording studios – and areas of research specialism all of which are run in ways which encourage beneficial flow-through to the curriculum. The RCM Museum was subject to a radical reconfiguration in 2011.

People are at the heart of the RCM – both students and staff. Supporting students' learning is the widely acclaimed Woodhouse Professional Development Centre - providing careers and professional development support for students and graduates - the world's only integrated service of this kind.

The RCM estate has been subject to continuous development, including a £5m transformation of the Concert Hall in 2008-9. The Kensington Square lease was discontinued from 2012, bringing all administrative services back to the heart of the RCM at Prince Consort Road. Ambitious plans for College Hall and for a new Courtyard development are now in place.

During the period 2007-12 financial planning and fundraising have been put on a more secure footing, with new Directorate appointments in both areas.

RCM 2017 - a ten-year vision for the Royal College of Music

Dynamic, contemporary and international

- RCM 2017 is a dynamic conservatoire that reflects and engages with modern life, a major player and cultural advocate on the local, regional, national and international stage.
- A range of global networks, underpinned by communications technology, have established it as pre-eminent on the world stage in performance, composition, teaching and research.
- It has become a prominent cultural centre where imaginative performance programming and practice demonstrate a commitment to professional excellence.
- Its schedule incorporates multimedia events and innovative presentations, together with artistic projects that take place outside the building regionally, nationally and internationally.
- RCM 2017 is recognised as the first port of call as the example of the modern conservatoire and centre of excellence

Balanced, confident and committed to excellence

- RCM 2017 is a place where vocational and artistic elements are held in balance.
- Its positive working environment inspires pride in all its members, making it a natural first choice for talented staff and students from a broad range of countries and backgrounds.
- Its reputation for student care and for the development of its staff is without equal, and its leadership in vocational guidance to students maintained and strengthened.
- Institutional confidence is driven by a competitive market edge reinforced by innovative PR and communication strategies.
- Whilst the Western Art Music tradition remains central to the vision, RCM 2017 has broadened its horizons to become a musical hub that welcomes a broad range of visitors, stimulating public engagement and widening participation.

An inspirational learning experience

- Students at RCM 2017 understand the nature of music as an art and a science, comprehend the position of music in cultural and spiritual life, demonstrating a love of music that can be readily articulated.
- They benefit from musical inspiration, receive a learning experience that is genuinely transformative and undertake academic courses that add value, nourish creativity and recognise the pre-eminence of sound within musical experience.
- They are encouraged to become self-critical, independent musical leaders, showing initiative, taking musical risks and solving problems.
- Integrated approach to artistic planning and performance leads to enhanced learning experiences and opportunities
- Opportunities for lifelong learning and a vigorous outreach programme invite as wide as possible a range of individuals to benefit from this inspirational learning experience
- The junior programme is integrated into RCM 2017 as part of its broader access agenda.

Delivering excellence in fitting surroundings

- RCM 2017 offers up-to-date physical access and circulation, with concert and practice facilities that reflect contemporary standards of sound insulation and lighting.
- Research and innovation across theory and practice involve exploitation of digital technologies and a Centre for Performance History and library resources that provide an interactive experience for students, staff and the general public at home and abroad.
- Community, catering and residential spaces support this, as does a concern for environmental issues, internally and externally.

Financially secure and sustainable

- The scholarship programme of RCM 2017 stands comparison with that of any global competitor, to allow the RCM to recruit the most talented students from anywhere in the world.
- A robust financial sustainability programme with targets for surpluses, cash holdings and infrastructure investment in order to secure a sustainable long-term future for the College.
- Well-established fundraising strategies continue to address the development of the RCM estate, taking account of the potential for generating commercial income.
- A wide circle of supporters, linked to varied projects, events and access opportunities, expedites innovation and gradually decreases dependence on individual funders.

Priority areas for the period 2007-17

– enhancing an inspirational learning experience

The College aims to provide an inspirational learning experience by offering artistic and educational opportunities at the highest international level. The Vision Statement sets a comprehensive set of challenges for the coming planning period. To realise these, the College will focus on the following eight interrelated areas, all of which are essential to the delivery of the overall Vision. The first three represent the College's core business, the final five support this. Each area is supported by its own strategy document.

Access to an inspirational learning experience

Drawing on the vision of Prince Albert for the advancement of the Arts and Sciences, the College will work collaboratively to provide access to an inspirational learning experience for the widest possible range of students. During the period 2007-17 the College intends to:

- Play a major advocacy role in promulgating the importance of music education at all ages through leadership and example
- Continue curricular innovation – developing new units each year and giving opportunities to make links between theory and practice.
- Ensure the programmes and other opportunities at the College are well communicated and marketed: in print on the web and elsewhere.
- Integrate the Junior College and the RCM's access and outreach work, within a strong and unified profile that is seamless with and supported by the College's HE work, developing a range of ways to bring the musically gifted and/or enthusiastic of all ages into involvement with the inspirational learning experience on offer
- Ensure that access to the research Collections is transformed through developments to the estate.
- Create the conditions through support and example to ensure teaching by staff and professors is inspirational and to the highest international standards

Artistic vision

During the period 2007-17 the College intends to:

- Foster a critical approach to musical endeavour and enable students to articulate their love of music in both sound and words.
- Create a strategic and integrated forward artistic planning process that enhances learning at all levels of engagement with the RCM
- Develop a touring profile for student performers that includes concerts and operatic performances in concert halls and opera houses within and beyond London as a regular feature
- Establish a distinctive focus on the music of the present to enhance the awareness for students of the needs and functions of music in contemporary society
- Establish opportunities for students to contextualise their performances across a range of styles by reference to earlier practice and practitioners
- Develop a transformative climate in which student initiative, experimentation and risk-taking are acknowledged as routes for exploring creativity and musical expression.
- Develop and establish partnerships with inspirational musicians and cultural organisations to enhance the student experience

Research and innovation

During the period 2007-17 the College intends to:

- Develop a dynamic and inclusive research environment which will be relevant to all RCM students and staff
- Create and disseminate examples of excellent research, both pure and applied, that will raise the RCM's national and international profile as a research-linked institution
- Develop coherent groupings of researchers (staff and doctoral students) in key areas of practice-led research as linked to faculties, the RCM Special Collections and the Centre for Performance Science (CPS)
- Sustain and enhance the RCM's research resources and infrastructure, including the Special Collections, CPS and the RCM's research office
- Develop the RCM's range of research partnerships and collaborations with a view to increasing the number of bids for large-scale external funding
- Increase the strategic impact of the RCM's knowledge exchange activity

People

During the period 2007-17, the College intends to develop the quality of its student and staff experience by:

- Developing strategies and opportunities to bring professors closer to the current workings and priorities of the College
- Ensuring that new professorial appointments enhance the RCM's reputation for quality teaching in a way that reflects all the markets in which the College needs to be competitive.
- Providing a supportive professional environment for students and staff that enables them to realise their full potential
- Offering an innovative and comprehensive programme of professional development and training
- Encouraging closer collaboration, understanding and equality of opportunity for academic and administrative staff
- Monitoring the development of the College's employment policies in order to recruit and retain the most appropriately qualified staff for each post

Technology

During the period 2007-17 the College intends to use technology to support learning, teaching and research and to realise its artistic vision by:

- Establishing an integrated approach to technology provision, led by the learning and teaching agenda, supporting innovation in e-learning, research and audience development.
- Creating a vigorous and carefully tailored environment for e-learning in all its forms, utilising portal technology and the real-time possibilities of video conferencing where appropriate
- Making audio and audio-visual recordings of RCM performances and to disseminate them through a variety of suitable media channels
- Establishing a sustainable ICT and recording studio infrastructure, which is continually refreshed to ensure compatibility with current industry standards
- Exploiting digital technologies to combine historical and virtual access to newly interactive research collections, thereby bringing the College's musical and archive resources to a wider public of all ages and backgrounds
- Developing the website as a marketing tool worldwide to strengthen the brand of the RCM worldwide

Communications

During the period 2007-17 the College intends to use technology to support learning, teaching and research and to realise its artistic vision by:

- Enhancing the public profile of the College at local, regional, national and international level in a way that coherently reflects the College's artistic and educational aspirations and achievements.
- Improving engagement with stakeholders in government, the music profession, partners, local community and alumni
- Focussing the College's marketing strategy on student recruitment globally
- Embedding the concept of 4D Music and the RCM's understanding of holistic art
- Implementing an enhanced internal communications strategy for students, performers, academics, and administrators.

Development

During the period 2007-17 the RCM will establish effective ways to recruit and steward a wide 'family' of donors to support its core artistic and educational work by:

- Establishing effective communication and interaction with existing and potential donors to ensure they have a full picture of the RCM's achievements and potential in all areas, and providing every opportunity for donors to engage with the vibrant life of the RCM
- Maintaining meaningful and robust systems for stewardship of all gifts to the RCM, and encouraging a culture of gratitude amongst students and staff for support received
- Strengthening networks of influential senior volunteers and circles of major donors
- Increasing awareness of the potential for public use of the building, including for private hires
- Continuing its programme of seeking increased funding for scholarships with a target of achieving 60% of fees for the senior college by 2017, to be met from funds available through the Student Loans Company, the US Stafford loans and RCM scholarships.
- Undertaking a major fundraising campaign to support development of the Courtyard, in order to provide appropriate performance, practice, museum and break out spaces

Estate

During the period 2007-17 the College plans to develop the Blomfield and College Hall estates in order to support learning, teaching and research and to realise its artistic vision by. Developments will provide:

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- Concert, opera and other performance spaces that reflect contemporary standards of sound insulation and lighting;
- Well-resourced and comfortable teaching and practice rooms, appropriate to the needs of students;
- Space for specialist areas: e.g. musical instrument workshops, the RCM Museum of Music, halls of residence, library, recording studios, percussion rehearsal space, electronic keyboard skills lab and dedicated computer rooms for score writing and general IT;
- Flexible office space for academic and administrative staff;
- Good quality accommodation for the Students' Association, student social space, the senior common room, catering, cloakrooms and other central facilities;
- Attractive public areas designed to provide a welcoming environment to visitors;
- Events space that is maintained at a level which attracts clients from the music, educational, professional and commercial world.
- We aspire to be a centre of excellence in environmental management within higher education, and to promote environmental best practice.

Finance

During the period 2007-17 the College intends to support learning, teaching and research and to realise its artistic vision by:

- Integrating its infrastructure strategies and development plans into a robust financial sustainability strategy with clear targets for surpluses, cash holdings and investment infrastructure.
- Partnering with a suitable partner to develop the College Hall residential campus, in order to provide appropriate accommodation for RCM students and provide a source of funding for infrastructure investment at the Prince Consort Road campus.

Additional investment in infrastructure will be met by a combination of increased overseas students, new types of student, improved utilisation of College's assets and a value for money programme to ensure resources are used effectively, efficiently and economically. The College will aim for a surplus of greater than 3% of turnover. A vigorous fundraising programme will be essential to both the increased funding for scholarships and to the plans for the estate.

Realising the Plan: 2012-2017

The Strategic Plan is regularly monitored. The College sets out its specific priorities and targets for each year, and monitors and reports on progress. The monitoring of progress against the objectives set out in this Strategic Plan is undertaken by:

- Senate
- Council and its Finance & General Purposes Committee

The 'priority areas' are complemented by more detailed strategies for specific areas and by the operational plans for departments within the College. These strategies include:

- Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy
- Artistic Strategy
- Research Strategy
- Human Resources Enhancement Strategy
- ICT Strategy
- Estates Strategy
- Financial Sustainability Strategy

Major initiatives during the period 2012-17 will include:

- **Courtyard Development:** the museum and percussion suite will be demolished to make way for a new development including two new recital halls, a new percussion facility, integrated RCM Museum of Music and visitor concourse. There will be an associated programme of fundraising to raise the sum of £30m (£25m + £5m for scholarships).
- **College Hall Development:** a programme of new-build and refurbishment will extend and modernise College Hall, funded by means of appropriate commercial partnerships.
- A major review of pre-18 provision will take place, so as to integrate *Sparks Juniors*, *Sparks* and Junior College, thus enhancing the College's access and progression agenda.
- A review of marketing and communications will maximise the College's impact at national and international level, maintaining and enhancing its profile as a natural first choice for students and staff from around the world

Towards the end of the five-year planning cycle a new Strategic Plan will be devised for the period beyond 2017.