

HEAD OF VOCAL & OPERA

Vocal and Opera

Grade 11, Full time, Permanent

Job reference number: 301-25



Applicant Information Pack

Closing date

9am Friday 30 May 2025

Late or incomplete applications will not be submitted to the Shortlisting Panel

Interview date

Monday 16 and Wednesday 18 June 2025 (First round)

Thursday 26 June 2025 (Second round)

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Job Description

Job title	Head of Vocal & Opera
Department	Vocal & Opera Faculty
Grade	11
Hours of work	Full Time
Contract type	Permanent
Responsible to	Artistic Director
Responsible for	Director of Opera; Deputy Head of Vocal & Opera; Manager of Vocal & Opera; Vocal & Opera professors and coaches
Liaises with	<p>Internal</p> <p>Students</p> <p>Heads of Faculty and Performance & Programming</p> <p>Director of Programmes</p> <p>Registry</p> <p>Development & Alumni Engagement Team</p> <p>Professional Services Heads/Managers</p> <p>External</p> <p>International artists</p> <p>Casting Directors and Concert Promoters both in the UK and internationally</p> <p>Equivalent colleagues in national and international conservatoires</p>
Job overview	<p>The RCM has a distinguished tradition of Vocal & Opera teaching, and alumni are found internationally throughout the profession. The large Vocal & Opera faculty attracts students and professors from around the world, and is central to the learning, teaching and musical life of the College.</p> <p>The position of Head of Vocal & Opera is a critical role in the College, and the post-holder is expected to continue to develop the world-leading teaching and learning of the faculty. They will be recognised for their experience at the highest levels of performance and teaching, breadth of outlook, and outstanding leadership.</p> <p>The Head of Vocal & Opera oversees all teaching of Vocal & Opera students from Undergraduate through to Artist Diploma level. Principal responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading and managing the faculty, professors and students, in its teaching, performing, support, assessment and recruitment • Maintaining and developing Vocal & Opera performance standards and outlook in the College to the foremost international standards • Acting as an advocate for the RCM nationally and internationally to generate, encourage, and nurture student applications of the highest quality • Seeking and developing partnerships with external organisations and creating opportunities for RCM students • Reviewing and developing courses for Vocal & Opera students at the RCM to the highest international levels, ensuring faculty teaching and learning aligns with the approved curriculum frameworks at Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Artist Diploma levels.

- Supporting, through membership of Artistic Planning Committee, the performance programme at the RCM

Key Responsibilities

These include:

Leadership and management

- To provide strategic leadership and vision for the Vocal & Opera Department: line managing the Deputy Head of Vocal & Opera; Director of Opera; Manager of Vocal & Opera; and professors of the Vocal & Opera Department, inducting them, conducting appraisals and supporting their professional development and research activities
- To ensure that the Faculty provides a creative, inclusive and supportive environment for all students to flourish and develop their own distinctive performing voice.
- To lead the recruitment of new professorial staff within the department.
- To curate a programme of inspirational and diverse visiting professors and artists of the highest international standing, supported by the Artistic Director and Director.
- To recommend and, where authorised to do so, to make offers of student places and to recommend scholarships
- To decide and manage the allocation of students to professors and to decide and manage the allocation of professors for examination and audition panels
- Overall responsibility for Vocal & Opera and Opera Studio artistic decisions (subject to discussion with, and approval by, the Artistic Director) and choices including repertoire and personnel
- To maintain detailed oversight of Faculty teaching and other budgets (including opera scenes and productions), and inform the Artistic Director of any issues likely to impact on financial planning; where necessary manage resources in order to enhance the experience of students
- To lead communication within the Vocal & Opera Faculty
- To chair Faculty meetings and working groups, setting agendas, checking minutes and following up items raised in a timely manner.
- To represent the Vocal & Opera Faculty on College committees, including the College's Senate and Senate Executive Committee
- To support and facilitate opportunities for cross-faculty and whole College collaborations, to enhance the student experience
- Contribute to the wider artistic programme of the College through membership of the Artistic Planning Committee.

Maintaining and enhancing standards, including teaching and examining

- To make an active contribution to the work of the College's Senate Executive Committee, which oversees all aspects of programme delivery, including recruitment, curriculum design, teaching, assessment, and regulatory aspects.
- To conduct an annual review of examination requirements (syllabuses) within the department, ensuring that these continue to meet professional expectations
- To teach, mark and examine, operating as one of the College's trained panel Chairs. Annual teaching loads will be agreed with the Artistic Director
- To act as panel member for entry auditions both in London and internationally as required
- To monitor quality and standards through concert and performance attendance and observation of teaching
- To contribute to curriculum development at undergraduate and postgraduate level including participating in

Advising/supporting students

- To provide support, guidance and direction to students in the Vocal & Opera Faculty, particularly in balancing artistic and academic objectives.
- To actively monitor student progress and engagement with their programme of study
- To work in partnership with faculty student representatives, listening and responding to student feedback
- To provide careers advice and provide references for students/former students
- To collect information, through the department, on the activities/achievements of present and former students (alumni), communicating this, as appropriate, to College departments and/or outside agencies

Promoting the College

- To represent the College at home and internationally (including external concerts, competitions, seminars, conferences, committees, involvement in professional bodies, liaison with specialist music schools, liaison with partner institutions), seeking opportunities for contacts, collaborations, recruitment and other events that enhance the student experience and support the reputation of the College
- To establish and maintain contact with those leading equivalent departments and Faculties in other institutions and to contribute, where appropriate, to the development of ideas relevant to the department across the sector
- To maintain strong links with Casting and Young Artist Programme directors at major opera companies in the UK and internationally
- To keep in contact with best practices and emerging ideas in performance teaching and curriculum design appropriate to the Vocal & Opera Faculty

Research and/or knowledge exchange activity

- Where appropriate and with the approval of the Head of Research and the Artistic Director (through the annual appraisal process), the Head of Vocal & Opera may undertake 35 days (pro-rata) per annum of research or knowledge exchange as part of their activity plan. This time should be used to produce research (which may include artistic outputs) at a level that is likely to lead to the production of world-leading or internationally excellent research outputs in the REF

Advising/supporting RCM Development

- To take an active role in supporting the Development aspirations and needs of the College, including by participating in fundraising activity organised by the Development team

Encouraging and developing equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging through the faculty and its activities

- To promote diversity in the Faculty, including representation in the teaching and student bodies, and through breadth of repertoire and genre studied and performed
- To support wider College EDIB initiatives in support of the EDIB Strategy

Other duties

- To undertake such other duties as may be requested by the Artistic Director and/or the Director

Person Specification

- Applicants should demonstrate in their supporting statement how their qualifications, experience, skills and training fit each of the criteria below.

Criteria	Description	Essential / Desirable	How Criteria Are Tested
Qualifications	Masters degree in performance or equivalent professional experience	Essential	AF, INT,
	Higher Education teaching qualification or HEA Fellowship	Desirable	AF, INT,
Experience, Skills & Knowledge	Significant international experience and profile as a performer or coach at a high professional level	Essential	AF, INT
	An open-minded approach that recognises and advocates for a broad range of teaching styles, across a variety of repertoire and genres	Essential	AF, INT
	Detailed knowledge of voice types and vocal development with the ability to identify potential and make articulate, well-grounded judgements and assessments	Essential	AF, INT
	Extensive knowledge of the opera, oratorio and song repertoire	Essential	AF, INT
	Demonstrable experience of teaching in higher education and knowledge of the conservatoire learning environment	Essential	
	A strong understanding of professional performing contexts, including industry organisations, networks and opportunities	Essential	AF, INT
	Experience of developing innovative approaches to performance, programming and teaching to respond to the evolving world	Essential	AF, INT
	Proven organisational and people management skills, recognised as an inspirational, effective and emotionally intelligent leader	Essential	AF, INT
	Efficient and deadline focused administrator	Essential	AF, INT
	Strong IT skills	Essential	AF, INT
	Excellent communication, orally and in writing	Essential	AF, INT
	Experience of course management and curriculum enhancement in HE	Desirable	AF, INT
	Experience as an external examiner, especially at HE level	Desirable	AF, INT
	Ability to contribute to the research profile of the RCM	Desirable	AF, INT
Personal Attributes	Ability to relate well to students and colleagues	Essential	AF, INT
	Ability to take a strategic overview and to delegate effectively	Essential	AF, INT
	Ability to work well as a member of a team	Essential	AF, INT
	A commitment to recognising, valuing and celebrating diversity and to proactively advancing equality and inclusive practice in all areas of College life.	Essential	AF, INT

AF = Application Form INT = Interview ST = Selection Test

The duties and responsibilities assigned to the post may be amended by the Artistic Director within the scope and level of the post.

Terms & Conditions

Availability	The post is available from September 2025 or as soon as possible thereafter.														
Contract type	Permanent														
Hours of work	<p>This role is offered on a full-time basis.</p> <p>Full time hours at the RCM are 35 hours per week and normal office working hours are 9.00am-5.00pm (with a one hour lunch break), Monday to Friday. It will be necessary to work outside of these hours to attend rehearsals and performances and to travel nationally and internationally as required.</p>														
Salary	<p>RCM Pay Scale Grade 11, incremental points 50-55:</p> <table><thead><tr><th>Spine points</th><th>Full-time salary*</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>50</td><td>£73,346</td></tr><tr><td>51</td><td>£75,405</td></tr><tr><td>52</td><td>£77,478</td></tr><tr><td>53</td><td>£79,779</td></tr><tr><td>54</td><td>£82,172</td></tr><tr><td>55</td><td>£84,637</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>*inclusive of London Weighting allowance</p> <p>Appointments will normally be made to the first point of the grade, in accordance with the RCM Pay Policy. Staff are entitled to an annual increment each year on 1 August (dependent on 6 complete months' service) until they reach the top of the grade.</p> <p>Payday is the 15th of each month or the last working day before this should the 15th fall on a weekend or bank holiday.</p>	Spine points	Full-time salary*	50	£73,346	51	£75,405	52	£77,478	53	£79,779	54	£82,172	55	£84,637
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Visas/ Right to Work in the UK	<p>If you have time limited permission to work in the UK you must provide full details on your Application for Employment form.</p> <p>If you do not have permission to work in the UK but would be eligible to apply for a Visa you must state the applicable route on your Application for Employment form. We suggest you use the online tool provided by the government to explore your eligibility and options relating to Visas. Visa Checking Tool</p> <p>Some applicants including prospective professors, may wish to explore the Global Talent Visa route. Further information about endorsement for this visa can be found on the Arts Council website.</p> <p>This is a role for which the RCM may act as a sponsor for the Skilled Worker route.</p>														

Immigration Advisors	The HR department cannot act as immigration advisors however if you are an international student studying in the UK you can seek guidance from the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) . Alternatively the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) which regulates immigration advisers maintains a list of approved Immigration Advisors .
DBS check	Not applicable for this post.
Probation	The post has a twelve month probationary period.
Notice period	The appointment will be subject to termination by not less than one clear term's notice. Notice during probation will be one month's notice by either party.
Pension	The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is available for all academic staff. Under the rules of the TPS, professorial employment is automatically pensionable unless a professor elects to opt out of the scheme. Full details of the scheme are available from the Teachers' Pensions website: www.teacherspensions.co.uk . Arrangements exist for members to make additional voluntary contributions (AVCs).
Annual leave	<p>Full time staff are entitled to 245 hours of holiday per annum, plus public holidays.</p> <p>The RCM is closed between Christmas and New Year each year, the three days in this week that are not bank holidays will come out of the postholder's annual leave allowance.</p>

How to Apply

Closing date	<p>9am Friday 30 May 2025</p> <p>Applications received after the stated closing date will not be considered.</p>
Interview date	<p>Monday 16 and Wednesday 18 June 2025 (first round)</p> <p>Candidates invited to first round interview will be asked to prepare a short verbal presentation, details of which will be notified to candidates in due course.</p> <p>Thursday 26 June 2025 (second round)</p> <p>Candidates invited to a second round interview will be invited to attend the performance of 'Love, Conflict, Renaissance', the RCM Summer Opera production, on 25 June at 7pm.</p> <p>Shortlisted candidates will be notified in due course.</p> <p>We communicate interview dates in advance to ensure candidates have adequate notice to make arrangements. Regrettably we are unlikely to be able to accommodate alternative interview dates.</p>
To apply	<p>To apply, please submit the following documents available on the RCM jobs page</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Form • Equal Opportunities Form <p>The above documents should be sent to recruitment@rcm.ac.uk by the stated closing date.</p>

We encourage applications by email however if you wish to post your application you must ensure this reaches us by the closing date.

Late Application Forms, incomplete Application Forms, Application Forms submitted in a format other than Word or PDF and CVs without an Application Form will not be accepted.

Alternative formats

If you need to receive our recruitment documentation in a different format, such as large print or are not able to submit an application electronically, then please contact us to discuss your requirements.

Interview process

Interviews will take the form of a panel interview, normally comprised of three staff members however more senior positions may have larger panels. Details of the interview panel will ordinarily be included in the interview invitation. We will be happy to make any reasonable accommodations as part of this process.

As part of the interview format you may be invited to take a brief tour of our facilities, details will be included in your interview invitation and we will be happy to accommodate accessibility requirements.

A test or presentation may form part of the interview process and details will be provided in the interview invitation. We will be happy to make any reasonable accommodations as part of this process.

Staff Benefits

Travel

Interest free season ticket loans are available to cover the cost of a 12 month season ticket between a member of staff's residence and the RCM. The loan will be repayable by deduction from salary over a period of 12 months or on leaving the employment of the RCM, if earlier.

We also offer a tax-free bicycle loan under a similar repayment scheme.

Events

There is a range of concerts taking place at the RCM throughout the weeks, staff are entitled to one free ticket per charged concert (excluding Opera and non-RCM promotions), and unlimited tickets for non-charged concerts.

Eye tests & hearing tests

The RCM will cover the cost of an annual standard eyesight test (normally up to £25) and contribute £50 towards the cost of glasses, provided that they are for use with VDUs. We will also cover the cost of hearing tests.

Employee Assistance Programme

All RCM staff can get free and confidential advice from Confidential Care (CiC). The service is open 24 hours per day, 365 days per year, by telephone or via the web.

Professional Development

The RCM is committed to the support of training and professional development for all members of staff and a range of opportunities are available.

About Us

The College

Opened in 1883 by the then Prince of Wales, the Royal College of Music (RCM) is a world-leading music conservatoire with a prestigious history and contemporary outlook. The RCM is a vibrant community of talented and open-minded musicians, with over 900 students from more than 60 countries studying at undergraduate, masters or doctoral level in the Senior College throughout the week and 300 students on a Saturday in the Junior Department. Former students of the RCM hold key roles in music and the arts in all parts of the world - as performers, teachers, composers, conductors and animateurs. The RCM was ranked as the global top institution for both Music and Performing Arts in the 2025 QS World University Rankings by Subject. The College has held this world-leading place in Performing Arts for four successive years, while Music is a new subject introduced to the rankings in 2024.

Staff

The RCM has over 250 members of professorial (teaching) staff and over 100 teachers in the Junior Department - the majority of whom are busy professionals with worldwide reputations, who include teaching among the various musical activities that they regularly undertake. Their work, and the work of the College as a whole, is supported by a team of over one hundred administrative staff.

Location

The RCM benefits from its particular location in South Kensington - one of the most attractive and interesting parts of central London. The area is well-served by public transport: South Kensington tube station is within ten minutes' walk; several bus routes pass the Royal Albert Hall. Kensington Gardens and the renowned museums of Exhibition Road, the Natural History Museum, the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Science Museum, are only a short walk away; Imperial College of Science, Technology & Medicine is next door; the Royal College of Art and the Royal Albert Hall are just across the road. The area, known originally as Albertopolis, emerged as a location for national institutions in the arts and sciences after the Great Exhibition of 1851 largely because of the enthusiasm of Prince Albert. Relationships with neighbouring institutions are friendly and supportive.

Faculty

The Vocal & Opera faculty consists of approximately 115-120 students, 24 singing professors and 8 repertoire coaches, alongside a number of other faculty class teachers and staff.

The Royal College of Music is an Equal Opportunities employer.

Andrew Moore
Artistic Director
April 2025

