



# EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING POLICY

2025



## Our Shared Vision

**Together** we will work to nurture a community where diversity is recognised, valued and celebrated as strengthening our excellence.

**Together** we will pro-actively advance equitable and inclusive practices in all areas of our work. This includes our staff and student recruitment and admissions processes, our teaching and our artistic programme, our research and knowledge exchange activity, and the College's working environment.

**Together** through effective, collaborative action, we will create a welcoming and supportive culture of belonging, in which students, staff and visitors give due respect to other people and their work or ideas, and each of us can thrive as individuals.

While the College's EDIB Committee maintains oversight of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging initiatives at the College, the realisation of this policy in practice, in our daily work and study, is the collective responsibility of all members of the RCM community.

**RCM EDIB Committee**

**RCM Students' Union**

**RCM Directorate**

**RCM Council**

**2025**

Described at its foundation as an institution whose doors were to be 'thrown open to the whole world', the Royal College of Music is a supportive international community which aims to ensure that each individual is treated with respect and dignity, and that no student, member of staff or visitor is subjected to direct or indirect discrimination.

## Our values and principles

As well as being integral to the RCM's strategic plan, this policy is underpinned by the belief that practices rooted in EDIB values enhance our College culture artistically, intellectually, and socially.

To ensure this we will:

- demonstrate visible senior leadership on equity, diversity and inclusion matters
- align and embed the strategy with other key College policies and strategies including: Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy; Artistic Strategy; Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy; the Student Codes and Procedures; HR Policies; the College's Access and Participation Plan and Admissions policy
- engage and involve our own students, staff and RCM Council, as well as working with wider networks across education and the performing arts industries, to enhance and embed inclusive practices in all areas of our work
- ensure that our objectives and actions are led by our own ambition to play a leading role in shaping a more diverse and inclusive music profession
- engage in an annual process of review and reflection, using data and external insights to refresh our EDIB goals

## What we mean by:

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Equity</b>    | Equity is different from equality, which is the idea of treating everyone the same. Equity recognises that everyone is not the same and provides the appropriate resources and opportunities to address inequality. |
| <b>Diversity</b> | Recognising that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non-visible ways, and that those differences are to be recognised, respected and valued.   |
| <b>Inclusion</b> | The active creation of a learning, working and social environment that is welcoming, which recognises and celebrates difference, and this is reflected in its structures, practices and attitudes.                  |
| <b>Belonging</b> | Belonging is a feeling of being accepted, valued, included and encouraged within a group or community.  |

# Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging: Strategic Objectives

## 1. Culture

We will be an institution that leads by example; we will raise awareness and promote equity in a way that informs our culture and practices, is inclusive and removes any form of less favourable treatment or harassment.

We will do this by:

- ensuring everyone understands their responsibilities to foster an inclusive learning, working and social environment and are aware of relevant good practice policies, guidance, and support services
- ensuring diversity is reflected in our decision-making bodies and committees, and that they actively contribute to promoting equitable and inclusive practice
- embedding structures and resources to support EDIB activity across all areas of the RCM's learning, teaching, research and artistic activities, and its support services
- Collaborating and learning from networks/external organisations to continually enhance our EDIB work

## 2. Community

We will attract, retain, and develop a diverse College community and strive to ensure that everyone can attain and succeed to the best of their abilities.

We will do this through:

- proactively engaging and encouraging applications for all staff roles where we know there is under-representation; we will pursue this through structured advertising, employment, career progression and leadership development opportunities
- ensuring we engage and inspire students from diverse backgrounds to apply to the RCM at junior, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Students are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, and we will make sure our admissions processes are fair and inclusive
- ensuring we monitor and address differences in outcomes and opportunities for our diverse student community while they are studying by promoting equality in participation and progression
- Regular and robust monitoring of internal datasets and sector-wide research to understand barriers to access and inform areas of focus

### 3. Support

Be adaptive to the needs of our diverse RCM community, supporting flexible ways of learning and working that recognise potentially exclusionary factors in people's lives such as disability, caring responsibilities or economic disadvantage.

We will do this by:

- ensuring we promote equity and inclusion within all our working policies and practices, and through the work of all RCM committees
- applying inclusive principles to the design and delivery of learning, teaching, assessment, and performance opportunities, benefitting all students
- demonstrating best practice in our communications and support for disabled applicants, students, and members of staff
- ensuring we embed inclusive and ethical practice to support research excellence

### 4. Environment

Provide an inclusive and supportive environment for all members of the RCM community.

We will do this by:

- creating an environment where students and staff work in partnership to build an artistic community underpinned by trust and dialogue
- promoting brave spaces where all members of the RCM community have a voice and where respectful debate and disagreement can take place without threat or abuse
- providing clear and accessible methods for inappropriate or disrespectful behaviour to be reported safely and anonymously, in the knowledge that reports will be taken seriously and acted upon
- providing accessible and inclusive facilities to accommodate the needs of all staff, students, applicants, and visitors. This includes a commitment to uphold best practice in accessibility in all future campus developments
- committing to promoting a culture based on the principles of respect, dignity and inclusion for everyone

To ensure that these key objectives are realised, we will implement and monitor detailed actions that will specify targets, timescales and responsibilities. These actions will not be static but will be reviewed and reported annually to Senate and Council by the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee to ensure they remain relevant. While the EDIB Committee maintains oversight of EDIB monitoring and evaluation, the realisation of this policy in practice is the collective responsibility of all members of the RCM community.

## **Commitments**

The College remains committed to not discriminating unfairly on the grounds of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership (all of which are 'protected characteristics' under the law); nor does it discriminate on the grounds of class or any other unjustifiable cause. The RCM has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance [working definition of antisemitism](#) as a commitment that antisemitic behaviour will not be tolerated.

## **Monitoring**

We will regularly collect, evaluate and publish data relevant to our EDIB commitments. This will be reported annually through the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee to Senate and Council and published on the College's website.

## **Policy review**

We will regularly review our policies and practices to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment of those who are, or seek to be, our students, employees or visitors. We will also consider, at the highest levels of the College, the resources we need to invest in to support our EDIB work.

The College will also, where appropriate, initiate new policies and practices, informed by external perspectives and best practice.

## **Awareness**

Working closely with the RCM Students' Union, the College will encourage greater awareness of its aims, policies and procedures in EDIB and provide appropriate information and training as required.

## **Failure to adhere to the policy**

The Royal College of Music aims to ensure that every individual is treated with respect and dignity and that no student, member of staff or visitor is subjected to unfair discrimination. The College will do its utmost to protect students, staff and visitors from all forms of discriminatory and unacceptable behaviour by any individual or groups within the institution, whether in person, online, or in any other way. Allegations of discriminatory behaviour on the part of students or staff will be dealt with promptly under either the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure, or the Staff Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures, as appropriate.

### **Policy reviewed by**

EDIB Committee  
February 2025

### **Approved by**

Senate  
May 2025

### **Approved by**

Council  
July 2025