

DEPUTY HEAD OF STRINGS (UPPER STRINGS)

Strings Faculty

Grade 9, Part time (0.6FTE), Permanent

Job reference number: 309-26



Applicant Information Pack

Closing date

9am Friday 21 August 2026

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

Interview date

Wednesday 9 & Thursday 10 September 2026

Contents

- Job Description
- Person Specification
- Terms & Conditions
- Staff Benefits
- About Us
- How to Apply

Job Description

Job title	Deputy Head of Strings (Upper Strings)
Department	Strings
Grade	9
Hours of work	Part Time (0.6FTE/ 3 days per week)
Contract type	Permanent
Responsible to	Head of Strings
Responsible for	n/a
Liaises with	<p>Internal Artistic Director; Heads of Faculty; Performance, Programming & Faculties team; students; Professional Services Heads/Managers</p> <p>External International performers and orchestras; Equivalent colleagues in national and international conservatoires</p>
Job overview	<p>The Deputy Head of Strings (Upper Strings) will play a key role in orchestral and ensemble string playing at the RCM through leading auditions and student placements, coaching and mentoring. They will be recognised for their experience at the highest levels of orchestral performance and as a respected violin teacher.</p> <p>The RCM has a distinguished tradition of String teaching, and alumni are found internationally throughout the profession in orchestras, chamber groups and performing as soloists. The large Strings 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 Deputy Head of Strings is an important role in the College, and the post-holder is expected to support the Head of Strings & Assistant Head of Strings (Lower Strings) to continue to develop the world-leading teaching and learning of the faculty.</p>

Key Responsibilities

Faculty Support & Management

- To support the activities of Strings faculty at a national and international level.
- To assist the Head of Strings in the day to day running of the faculty, in particular orchestra and ensemble activities.
- To support the Head of Strings in the mentoring and pastoral care of the violin and viola student cohort (Lower Strings supported by Assistant Head of Strings), and be a source of knowledge, career advice and guidance for the students of the Faculty.
- To assist in annual external and internal audition process as directed by the Head of Strings.
- To assist in the recruitment, support and development of teaching staff within the faculty.
- To collaborate with Heads of Faculty and Performance & Programming to ensure effective delivery of courses, performances, and College-wide priorities
- Deputise in meetings from time to time when the Head of Strings is unavailable

Orchestral / Ensemble Activities

- Undertake orchestral auditions as required at the start of the academic year and decide on strings placements, in consultation with P&P and the Head of Strings
- Review and decide orchestral seat placements throughout the year in consultation with P&P and the Head of Strings
- Decide strings section leaders in consultation with P&P and the Head of Faculty
- Undertake orchestral coaching and sectionals as required in conjunction with visiting conductors during RCM Symphony and RCM Philharmonic rehearsals
- Lead the violin L7 Orchestral Performance seminars
- Provide regular Orchestral 'sign up' surgeries (and consultations by arrangement) to help students prepare orchestral excerpts for internal and external performances and auditions.

Teaching & Assessment

- Teach, develop and maintain a small class of 1:1 students. For the avoidance of doubt 1:1 teaching commitment will be agreed with the Head of Strings on an annual basis and will be paid separately at the standard Professorial hourly rate (currently Grade 8).
- Advise on 1:1 violin professorial allocations in consultation with the Head of Strings and RCM Registry and liaise with violin and viola professors to ensure effective communication and delivery of courses.
- To be a member of assessment and reassessment panels throughout the year, chairing where appropriate.
- Advise on suitable examiners and adjudicators for RCM examination panels and competitions as required, in consultation with the Head of Strings and RCM Registry
- Advise on visiting artists for violin masterclasses and select RCM performers, in consultation with the Head of Strings
- Arrange chamber music placements and undertake coaching as required for high profile internal and external RCM events, in consultation with the Head of Strings and the RCM Chamber Music Manager / P&P.
- Provide references for violin students and professors from time to time as required
- Advise on the annual updating and revision of course materials, audition requirements and instrumental syllabuses in consultation with the Head of Strings

Other duties

- To attend College performances as requested by the Head of Strings.
- To support the Head of Strings in representing 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 support and facilitate opportunities for cross-faculty and whole College collaborations, to enhance the student experience.
- Where appropriate and with the approval of the Head of Research, Head of Strings and the Artistic Director, the Deputy Head of Strings 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.

- To explore opportunities to diversify the breadth of repertoire and genre studied and performed, including representation in the teaching and student bodies
- To actively engage with initiatives that promote student wellbeing and encourage the fostering of a learning environment that is welcoming to all students
- To undertake such other duties as may be requested by the Head of Strings, Artistic Director and/or the Director.

1:1 teaching, recital examinations and entrance auditions to remain outside of the 0.6FTE element of the role, and are paid separately at the standard / prevailing RCM rate for such activities.

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	Master's degree in performance or equivalent professional experience	Essential	AF, INT
	Higher Education teaching qualification or HEA Fellowship	Desirable	AF, INT
Experience, Skills & Knowledge	International experience and profile as an orchestral musician	Essential	AF, INT
	A track record of success as a teacher of violin at undergraduate and postgraduate levels	Essential	AF, INT
	Detailed knowledge of repertoire with the ability to identify potential and make articulate, well-grounded judgements and assessments	Essential	AF, INT
	Detailed knowledge of orchestral repertoire and ability to lead violin sectionals and if appropriate tutti strings sessions.	Essential	AF, INT
	Demonstrable experience of teaching or coaching in higher education and knowledge of the conservatoire learning environment	Essential	AF, INT
	A strong understanding of professional performing contexts, including industry organisations, networks and opportunities	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 as an examiner, especially at HE level	Essential	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
Ability to take a strategic overview		Essential	AF, INT
Ability to work well as a member of a team		Essential	AF, INT
Ability to cope well under pressure		Essential	AF, INT

AF = Application Form INT = Interview

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

Terms & Conditions

Availability	The post is available from January 2027.														
Contract type	Permanent														
Hours of work	<p>This role is offered on a part time (0.6FTE) 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.</p>														
Salary	<p>RCM Pay Scale Grade 9, incremental points 39 – 44:</p> <table><thead><tr><th>Spine points</th><th>Full-time salary*</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>39</td><td>£55,911</td></tr><tr><td>40</td><td>£57,444</td></tr><tr><td>41</td><td>£59,025</td></tr><tr><td>42</td><td>£60,649</td></tr><tr><td>43</td><td>£62,325</td></tr><tr><td>44</td><td>£64,048</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>*inclusive of London Weighting allowance **as this is a part-time post, the postholder will receive a proportion of the full-time salary</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*	39	£55,911	40	£57,444	41	£59,025	42	£60,649	43	£62,325	44	£64,048
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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 not a role for which the RCM will act as a sponsor for the Skilled Worker.</p>														
Immigration Advisors	<p>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.</p>														

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. Part time staff will receive a pro rata entitlement for annual leave.</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 21 August 2026</p> <p>Applications received after the stated closing date will not be considered.</p>
Interview date	<p>Wednesday 9 & Thursday 10 September 2026</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> <p>We encourage applications by email however if you wish to post your application you must ensure this reaches us by the closing date.</p> <p>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.</p>
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, master's 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 amateurs. The RCM was ranked as the No. 1 institution in the UK and Europe, and second globally, for both Music and Performing Arts in the 2026 QS World University

Rankings by Subject. The College has held global first and second positions in Performing Arts for five 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 100 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.

The Royal College of Music is an Equal Opportunities employer.

Gary Ryan
Head of Strings
July 2026

