

Royal College of Music Human Resources Enhancement Strategy 2011-17



Wider strategic context

The 'People' section of the RCM Strategic Plan 2007-17, sets out broad strategic goals for the College to develop the quality of its student and staff experience by:

- 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
- Monitoring the development of the College's employment policies in order to recruit and retain the most appropriately qualified staff for each post
- Encouraging closer collaboration, understanding and equality of opportunity for academic and administrative staff
- 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.

The Vision Statement for the College in 2017, which is part of the Strategic Plan 2007-17, also includes points directly relevant to Human Resources Enhancement Strategy:

- 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.

This Human Resources Enhancement Strategy aims to set out the specific actions that are intended to deliver the HR aspects of each of these areas with the overarching aim of recognising that its staff are the RCM's most important resource.

Current and continuing approach and achievements

Recruitment and retention

- Permanent academic and administrative posts are usually publicly advertised
- Search consultants and other direct approaches are used for key appointments
- All members of staff are offered professional development opportunities
- Closer collaboration between the academic and administrative professorial staff is encouraged through the provision of joint events and shared professional training
- RCM has high staff retention – of both administrative staff and professors – reflecting a holistic approach to good employment and management practice and an effective rewards policy reflected in the RCM Equal Pay Policy

Review of staffing needs

- The provision of accurate staff data on such areas as recruitment, appraisals and training is undertaken to inform current and future approaches to staffing needs
- The HR department works with academic and administrative line managers to ensure that projected skills needs are met within each department
- Plans to meet projected staffing needs in line with the College's future institutional plans (as set out in the Strategic Plan 2007-2017) are considered by the Directorate on a regular basis

Staff development and training

- Equal opportunities training is provided for all new staff by ACAS
- Management development training is provided for senior and middle managers
- A comprehensive induction programme is provided for all staff
- Access is provided for staff training in College-identified priority areas: - e.g. IT and equal opportunities training (e.g. disability awareness, racial equality and stress management)
- Regular training and/or ongoing support is provided for appraisers and appraisees
- Members of staff and young researchers are supported on award-bearing and professional training courses (e.g. PhDs and NEBOSH Health & Safety courses)
- The staff Professional Development Policy has been revised to include a Research Support Policy

Equal opportunities

- The effectiveness of Equal Opportunities policies is monitored and impact assessments are carried out on appropriate College policies
- The College's position against other UK conservatoires is benchmarked where comparative data have been provided by HEFCE
- The existing Equal Opportunities policy is monitored and reviewed on an annual basis to take account of recent legislation
- Mental Health Awareness training has been introduced
- Equality objectives relevant to the nature of the RCM's work have been established and are monitored on an annual basis
- Data on equality (including on ethnic monitoring) are discussed annually by the Welfare & Diversity Committee

- The HERA job evaluation scheme has been used to underpin the College's single pay spine (introduced in March 2007) and provides appropriate and transparent relativities between academic and administrative posts
- Role profiles arising from the use of a job evaluation scheme are used in job creation and adaptation
- An Age Equality Policy was introduced in 2006 to demonstrate College's commitment to equal opportunities for all and to ensure compliance with the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.
- A Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan was introduced in December 2006 and is reviewed on an annual basis
- The College has been awarded the Disability 'Two Ticks' symbol and reviews the associated five commitments annually
- A Gender Equality Scheme was introduced in April 2007 and is reviewed annually
- The College consults with staff representatives on a regular basis on matters concerning the employment and conditions of academic and administrative staff

Performance reviews of staff and addressing poor performance

- All salaried staff (and hourly paid staff working 0.6 FTE or over) receive an annual appraisal (performance review)
- Hourly paid teaching staff have the option of taking part in a voluntary appraisal system
- All line managers receive training before conducting appraisals
- The existing appraisal (performance review) scheme is reviewed on a regular basis
- A separate Staff Capability and Performance Procedure has been implemented

Priority areas for 2011-2017

Recruitment and retention

To be led primarily by HR

- Review and implement any changes to procedures following the Government review of the Vetting and Barring Scheme
- Based on UKBA guidelines, review procedure for checking the right to work in the UK for those carrying out work at the College on an occasional basis
- Implementation of additional elements of the HR database (recruitment module and the roll-out of self service functions) to maximize HR processes and streamline the work of the HR Department
- Develop a staff benefits scheme to bring together and publicise the range of benefits available to staff
- Introduce total rewards statements for staff, that includes employer contributions to pension schemes

Review of staffing needs

To be led primarily by HR and Directorate

- Undertake a review of staff wellbeing by means of focus groups to ensure the College is providing a 'positive working environment [that] inspires pride in all its members'

- Undertake VfM reviews of key administrative departments with a view to promoting and supporting efficient working methods and approaches

Support for teaching and learning

To be led primarily by Director of Programmes & Research and Artistic Director

- Undertake initiatives to encourage professors to identify with the RCM and take pride in it and to become well-informed about their central role in students overall learning, including through faculty days run by heads of faculty
- Undertake initiatives to actively support the development and sharing of good practice in teaching and assessment, including by means of videoed teaching and assessment sessions, engagement and involvement of students in reflection on effective teaching, exploration of team and group teaching approaches, observation of teaching schemes
- Develop a new induction process for new appointed professors that ensures they feel well supported, know where to find information and advice, and are well-prepared to take-on teaching and assessment roles
- Review arrangements for joining and leaving professors to ensure they are introduced to staff and students when they start teaching at the RCM and that, on leaving, their work for the College is appropriately recognised

Staff development and training

To be led primarily by Director of Programmes & Research

- In line with the Research Support Policy that forms part of the Professional Development Policy, ensure that a deliberate plan is in place to prepare for the HEFCE REF
- Provide staff training opportunities to support staff in the further development of e-learning and technology (in particular live streaming, voice telephony, Web 2 and the further development of Muse to encourage the development of materials for staff and students)

Equal opportunities

To be led primarily by HR

- Review and implement actions necessary following the finalization of the Public Sector Duty of the Equality Act 2010
- With ACAS, review Equal Opportunities Monitoring training to take into account the Equality Act 2010
- Review staff retirement policy and procedures taking into account the removal of the Default Retirement Age

Performance reviews of staff and addressing poor performance

To be led primarily by HR and Directorate

- Review the appraisal system for hourly paid professors in a broad context that ensures their needs are being identified, that their performance is being actively managed and that there is an effective means of communicating with them as individuals
- Provide support to managers in developing confidence to deal with poor performance, including by rolling out related training for managers

Implementation and evaluation

- The HR department will annually review the initiatives planned in this Strategy to ensure that over the lifetime of the Strategy they are all delivered and that the success of initiatives is evaluated
- An annual action plan and progress report will be produced that sets out initiatives from this Strategy to be undertaken each year and that reports on and evaluates achievements for the year completed. Many initiatives will be led by individuals outside the HR department and each initiative/action will be allocated an individual with responsibility to lead it
- The annual action plan and progress report will be considered by the Directorate and will be submitted to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, which will have oversight of delivery of the Strategy on behalf of Council

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