

ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC

Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures

Updated April 2016

Introduction

1. The RCM recognises that people are its most important asset and are fundamental to its success. We recognise that to sustain our reputation for excellence we must focus on attracting, recruiting and retaining the best staff.
2. The RCM aims to promote best practice in recruitment by:
 - ensuring that recruitment processes conform with relevant legislation.
 - providing a transparent, systematic framework for recruitment which enables fair selection decisions.
 - ensuring that line managers and other staff with recruitment responsibility are aware of the RCM's recruitment and related policies and procedures and the importance of adhering to best practice.

Scope

3. This policy applies to the recruitment and selection of all staff. It does not apply to agency workers, casual employees or contractors.

Equality & Diversity

4. The Royal College of Music is an equal opportunities employer and holds policies to this effect. Selection decisions will be made based upon an applicant's suitability for the role and all applicants can expect to be treated fairly regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, disability or union membership status. Furthermore the RCM will make every effort to avoid indirect discrimination by ensuring that no requirement or condition will be imposed without justification which could disadvantage individuals purely on any of the above grounds.
5. Further and fuller details can be found on the College's website or obtained from the Human Resources department (HR).
6. The RCM welcomes applications for employment from all sections of the community and will ensure at every stage of the recruitment and selection procedure that all reasonable and practical adjustments will be made to accommodate those who have particular needs and requirements.
7. The RCM will monitor the effectiveness of the policy by gathering relevant data confidentially from applicants, analysing the data and identifying and addressing any areas of concern.

NB. In line with good practice and legislative responsibilities we have amended our equal opportunities form in order that we are appropriately monitoring applicants at the application stage of the recruitment process, and at the point of appointment (for HESA purposes).

Filling a Vacancy

Existing posts

8. The occurrence of a vacancy is an opportunity to review the necessity for the post and its duties, responsibilities and grade. The following should be considered by the recruiting manager:
 - Is it necessary to fill the vacancy?
 - Does the role require changes in duties and responsibilities? Where the duties of the job have changed the line manager should discuss the post with HR to establish the appropriate grade for the post, ideally before approval is sought.
 - Does the feedback received from the exit interview indicate a need for any change in how the role is carried out?
 - Could the work be accommodated in other ways, for example, redistribution?
 - Are terms and conditions attached to the post consistent with other similar posts within the RCM? HR will be able to provide guidance.

New Posts

9. Authorisation for a new or significantly revised post must come from the Directorate.
10. All posts within the RCM covered by the nationally agreed pay spine will be assigned to specific grades based on an assessment of the job by means of the application of the Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA) scheme of job evaluation.
11. The application of HERA will apply both to new posts and re-evaluation of existing posts.

New Posts – Role Analysis

12. A job description and person specification for any new posts or for roles that have changed significantly must be submitted to the Head of Human Resources in order to obtain a formal evaluation of the grade. Two trained role analysts will evaluate the role to determine the appropriate grade based on a HERA assessment of the role. The relevant Directorate member/line manager will be notified of the outcome of the evaluation.

Notification of a Recruitment Need

13. HR should be notified as soon as a recruitment need arises. HR will provide guidance in relation to the recruitment procedure and any support required by the line manager. Once formal notification is received HR will assume responsibility for administration and management of the recruitment process.
14. HR will allocate a Job Reference Number to each vacancy.

Agreement to Recruit

15. The line manager of a vacant post must obtain the approval of their Director member to recruit to a vacant post. Once this has been obtained the line manager should send an email to HR (copied to the Directorate member responsible for that department) confirming that recruitment may take place. The line manager (with support from HR) must provide the draft advert, Job Description and Further Particulars.
16. HR will then discuss the recruitment procedure including suitable methods of selection and agree appropriate time scales with the line manager.

17. NOTE: Before any post is advertised or filled by way of a direct appointment, consideration must be given to any existing staff whose posts are vulnerable to redundancy.

Job Description & Person Specification

18. A job description is the key document in the recruitment process. It should clearly set out the main duties and responsibilities of the post and include the following:

- The job title (which must be gender neutral)
- The location of the job i.e. Department / Faculty
- Grade/scale (and date role evaluated)
- The post to whom the postholder is responsible
- Job purpose and major tasks
- List of main duties and responsibilities
- Internal and external contacts
- Knowledge, experience, personal qualities and skills required (Person Specification)

19. An accurate job description allows applicants the opportunity to assess their suitability for the role and to decide whether to proceed with their application, thereby limiting the number of inappropriate applications. It will also define the expectations of both the successful candidate and the manager and serve as a framework for the working agreement, whilst providing indicators for targeted induction and training, assessment within the probationary period and ongoing appraisal.

20. The person specification details the skills, knowledge, experience and abilities that are required to do the job. It should be drawn up after the job description and used with it to construct the advertisement. The requirements set out in the person specification will be used as the basis for making selection decisions. They will be used in shortlisting, designing interview questions, making the selection decision and providing feedback to the unsuccessful applicant. It is therefore essential that the person specification is a true reflection of the requirements for the role because changing the requirements during the selection process may be potentially discriminatory. Criteria should be divided into essential requirements necessary to undertake the job and desirable attributes, which the ideal candidate will have. The person specification should be detailed, related to the job and not be unnecessarily restrictive – for example, only qualifications strictly needed to do the job should be specified and experience should be based on level and depth rather than a specific number of years.

21. The criteria in the person specification should be specific and relevant to the requirements of the role. A vague person specification will result in an increased number of inappropriate applications. The RCM participates in the positive action for disability, and use the 'Two Ticks' symbol and initiative, whereby we commit to interviewing all disabled applicants who meet the minimum (essential) criteria for a job vacancy, and consider them on their abilities. It is therefore prudent to ensure that criteria are divided into essential and desirable criteria and that each of these accurately reflect the requirements of the role. If the person specification is too vague, the shortlisting panels risk facing problems shortlisting, as more people will satisfy the essential criteria and disabled applicants must be invited to interview.

22. Criteria must be identified in terms that allow for objective evaluation within the selection process.

23. Example job descriptions and person specifications can be obtained from HR.

NB. In line with the recent rebrand, we have amended the Job Description and Person Specification template to reflect the existing RCM branding. The template includes guidance on the information that is required within each section. HR can provide templates and these will soon be available on the HR page of Muse.

Further Particulars

24. Further Particulars should be drawn up for each vacancy. This is provided to candidates to give them an understanding of what it is like to work for the RCM. The particulars should include the following:
- Background to the RCM and the Department
 - A summary of terms and conditions of employment
 - Information regarding programmes / teaching (for academic posts)
25. Example Further Particulars can be obtained from HR.

NB. In line with the recent rebrand, we have amended the Further Particulars to reflect the existing RCM branding. Templates include details of what information is required for each section. HR can provide templates and these will soon be available on the HR page of Muse.

Advertising

26. All vacancy advertisements must be processed through HR who will liaise with the RCM's advertising agency.
27. Vacancies are advertised on the RCM website, internally on notice boards and in the external press including specialist, local, national or international media. The choice of medium will be determined by its appropriateness in attracting the best candidate, the recruitment budget available for the vacancy and the promotion of equal opportunities.

Applicant Information Pack

28. All advertisements will direct applicants to the RCM's website for further details, including:
- Advertisement
 - RCM Standard Application Form
 - Job description and person specification
 - Further Particulars
 - Equal opportunities monitoring form
 - Disability Statement (advising applicants how to contact HR should the information be needed in a different format)
29. For those candidates unable to access the RCM website a contact number will be placed on the advertisement directing them to the relevant Recruitment Administrator who will send out the relevant information pack by post.

Alternatives to Advertising

30. Most posts will be filled by advertisement. This is one means by which the RCM demonstrates its equal opportunity objectives. A manager may, however, make a case for an alternative method of recruitment where they believe it may be more appropriate.

31. Examples of suitable cases would be where the field for an appointment may be very small. This is most likely to be the case when seeking to recruit a professor in a specialist principal study. Also, in some cases, an exceptionally high profile appointment may be sought, normally of a professor, perhaps with a reputation that is likely to attract students from one of more of the RCM's target international markets. Other cases would be where the professional field is highly specialised or may have established normal routes of recruitment, such as via an agency. Directorate level appointment will often be made with the support of search consultants to ensure that the field is thoroughly researched.
32. In each circumstance a written case should be submitted to the Head of HR & Organisational Development to be considered by them and the Directorate member for that department.
33. Alternatives that may be considered include:
 - Internal only advertisement;
 - Use of recruitment agencies;
 - Use of professional search consultants;
 - Direct approach to an individual inviting an application.
34. In all the instances above an interview/interviews will be conducted in the usual manner by a panel composed as usual for that post and applicants will be provided with an applicant information pack and required to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form.
35. HR will maintain equal opportunities monitoring statistics for posts recruited by these alternative methods of recruitment. These will be monitored by the Welfare & Diversity Committee and other committees to ensure that recruitment by these methods achieves appointment profiles that promote equal opportunities as effectively as advertising.

Shortlisting

36. All adverts will state a closing date by which applications must be submitted by interested parties. Once the closing date has been reached HR will prepare a pack for the members of the short-listing panel which will contain the following:
 - Candidate application forms / CVs and covering letters
 - Short-listing form
 - Job description & Person specification
37. Short-listing should involve as many of the interviewers as possible. At least two members of the interview panel, including the immediate line manager, should undertake the task. If any member of the panel knows or is related to an applicant, they must declare this prior to involvement in the selection process.
38. A short-listing form must be completed using the criteria in the person specification. Objective reasons for selecting and declining candidates must be recorded. Although written reasons for rejecting candidates do not need to be lengthy, sufficient information must be kept for adequate feedback to be provided to applicants if requested.
39. Under the Equality Act 2010, it is necessary to take into account any 'reasonable adjustments' that may need to be made before assessing to what extent a disabled person meets the person specification. If a candidate discloses a disability on their application form then you should obtain further guidance from HR.
40. The selection panel will not have access to the equal opportunities monitoring form and the information disclosed on that form will not form part of the selection decision.

Interview Process

Timing of Interviews

41. Interviews should be scheduled as soon after the closing date as reasonably possible, as delays are likely to lead to a loss of candidates.

Composition of Interview Panels

42. Chairs of interview panels will have received training in fair recruitment and selection techniques. Other members of staff sitting on an interview panel shall normally have attended a training course, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. where a particular skill or knowledge is required). Any member of staff, who sits on an interview panel before they have received appropriate training, will be expected to attend the next available training course.

43. As part of the RCM's commitment to Equality and Diversity, panels must:

- Consist of ideally a minimum of three people including the immediate line manager of the vacant post, a colleague who is familiar with the area of work and a third person, preferably from outside the department.
- Consider if the appointment is to a department providing services to the rest of the RCM, of inviting an end user of these services to join the panel.
- Reflect a gender, age and ethnicity balance wherever possible – the make up of panels will be monitored to assess how regularly this is achieved.
- Declare if they already know a candidate.
- Be willing and able to attend all interviews for the duration of the recruitment process, to maintain consistency and to ensure fair treatment of all candidates.

Panels will normally comprise of a selection of the following members:

Appointment of	Interview Panel
Directorate member	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director (Chair)• At least one member of Council• At least one External Representative
Head of Department / Faculty / Full time Academic Staff/ Professors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to two members of Directorate (Chair)• Head of another department/faculty/programme• External representative or Head of Human Resources
Deputy Head of Department / Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Member of Directorate (Chair)• Head of Department• External representative or member of staff of another department/faculty or HR representative
Part time Academic staff/Professors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Member of Directorate (Chair)• Head of faculty or of programme• Member staff of the same or another faculty/programme or an external representative
Administrative / Support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Head of department (Chair)• Two members of staff drawn from the same or other departments and/or an external representative and/or an HR representative (at least one of these two should normally be from outside the department)

Interview Pack

44. Each member of the panel will be provided with a pack containing:

- Interview timetable
- Candidate application forms / CVs
- Job description & Person Specification
- Interview Assessment Report Form

Interview Structure

45. The structure of interviews should be decided in advance by determining what areas of questioning are required to cover all of the elements of the person specification.
46. The criteria to be explored by each panel member should be agreed in advance to avoid overlap or repetition and panels may find it helpful to discuss their expectations of full answers to the questions, prior to the interview.
47. Consideration should be given to using job-related selection tests or asking candidates to give presentations as part of the selection process if appropriate, to measure their actual or potential ability to do or train for a particular job. HR will advise on the design of appropriate methods to gather evidence to assess all relevant skills.
48. Appropriate assessment methods may include one or more of the following:
- Structured interview
 - Presentations or “teaching” simulations including masterclasses (e.g. for academic applicants)
 - Practical assessments, including performance (e.g. to assess technical capability).
 - Work simulations such as role plays or “in-tray” exercises
49. In such circumstances, the relative weight given to interview performance and other task(s) may be balanced, giving regard to the nature of the role. For example, when appointing an hourly paid professor, evidence of pedagogic skill may be more important than answers to some interview questions.

Interview Questions

50. HR can provide guidance in terms of interview questions if needed.
51. The same areas of questioning should be covered with all candidates and assumptions should not be made regarding the expertise or abilities of candidates because of their employment history alone. All questions asked should be directly relevant to the job description and person specification.
52. Interview questions should be phrased so that they do not favour any one candidate or group of candidates. Supplementary questions should be used to probe for further information or clarification where answers are incomplete or ambiguous.
53. Care must be taken to avoid questions that could be construed as discriminatory (eg questions about personal circumstances that are unrelated to the job). It is, for example, legitimate to ask for confirmation of whether individuals can comply with the working patterns of the post, but not to ask details of their domestic or child care arrangements etc. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the panel to ensure that such questions are not asked.
54. Where the applicant being interviewed has a disability for which adjustments may need to be considered, the applicant’s requirements should be discussed with him/her once the planned questioning is complete. The outcome of these discussions should be discussed with HR prior to a final decision being made.

Interview Notes

55. Interview panels act for the RCM in making selection decisions and are accountable for them. Interview notes must be taken to help the panel to make an informed decision based on the content of the interviews. Such notes must relate to how applicants demonstrate or fail to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, experience and abilities in relation to the person specification. A member of the panel may be nominated by the panel to keep a record of interviews.
56. In relation to disabled applicants, a record should be kept of any requests for adjustments and reasons for decisions made.
57. The Data Protection Act allows applicants to request disclosure of such notes in the event of a complaint and an Employment Tribunal would expect the RCM to have notes of every selection decision. The lack of such notes would seriously impede our ability to contest such a complaint. Reasons for selection/non-selection must therefore be clearly justified and recorded.

Information Given at Interview

58. It is important to remember that the information given verbally to an applicant at interview may form the basis of a contract of employment. It is therefore imperative that information provided regarding the terms and conditions of the post is accurate.
59. In accordance with The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, employers must check that job applicants are allowed to work in the UK before employing them. Therefore, The RCM request candidates who have been shortlisted for interview to bring their original documents showing their proof of their right to work in the UK to interview. HR must check that the documents are valid with the applicant present and genuine. HR must then make and keep copies of the documents and record the date that they made the check.

Decision Making

60. The information obtained in the application, the interview and any selection tests will allow candidates to be assessed against the person specification and a selection decision to be made.
61. The decision must be made:
 - systematically and objectively, on the basis of evidence obtained throughout the selection process
 - without making assumptions or stereotyping
 - keeping all information in context; not focusing on one or two issues.
62. The Chair of the panel should ensure that all notes taken by the panel during the interview, together with all original application forms and interview notes must be returned to HR for retention. The completed Interview Assessment Report form must be passed to HR identifying if an offer is to be made and the terms of the offer.
63. If the successful applicant has a disability and adjustments have been identified, advice must be sought after the interview from HR regarding what would be considered 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate the disability.
64. Interview proceedings are confidential and interviewers must not divulge to others the decision reached until the appointee has accepted the post.

Record Keeping

65. All documentation in respect of a vacancy including application forms, short-listing forms and interview records will be retained for six months after the selection process is complete in the event that a complaint is received.

Feedback for Candidates

66. It is good practice to offer applicants feedback after interviews. Internal applicants should be offered feedback as a matter of routine. Feedback should be specific, related to the person specification and honest. Applicants should be advised of their strengths and weaknesses displayed at interview in relation to the person specification. HR will either offer guidance on how to provide feedback or provide feedback directly to candidates where appropriate.

Offers of Employment

67. HR will make a provisional offer to the successful candidate subject to satisfactory references being received, sight of the relevant passport / work visa (see paragraph 4.14), medical clearance, qualifications and a Disclosure and Barring Service check where appropriate. When a written acceptance has been received HR will write to all unsuccessful candidates who were interviewed.

Criminal Convictions and Disclosure Applications

68. The RCM will not discriminate unfairly against applicants who have a criminal record and will not necessarily bar an applicant from employment due to an unspent conviction; the nature of the conviction and its relevance to the post will be considered.

Working with Children or Vulnerable Adults

69. Depending on the nature of the role, additional checks may be required for successful applicants to ensure that the RCM conforms to current child protection legislation further information and guidance is available from HR.

Eligibility Checks & Work Permits

70. Asylum and immigration legislation makes it a criminal offence to employ anyone who does not have permission to be in, or work in, the UK. To avoid making assumptions about such permission, it is the RCM's responsibility to ensure all appointees are eligible to work in the UK. HR will undertake these checks at interview stage, prior to employment commencing. It is unlawful racial discrimination to carry out checks only on potential staff who by their appearance or accent seem to be other than British.
71. If a candidate is a national of a non-EEA country, a work permit may be required. Applying for a work permit is a lengthy process and permits are only awarded under certain circumstances. It is therefore essential that if there is any doubt regarding a person's eligibility to work in the UK and need for a work permit this must be discussed immediately with the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

Monitoring

72. All applicants are asked to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form. Monitoring forms will be retained by HR and used for monitoring purposes only.
73. HR will ensure that each recruitment campaign is evaluated to identify its cost effectiveness.
74. Monitoring will take place to ensure that, *inter alia*, where the requirement to waive advertising for a post has occurred the RCM is complying with its Equal Opportunities Policy.

Probationary Period

75. It is RCM policy that all new staff undergo a probationary period during which they will be introduced to the main duties and responsibilities of their post. The probationary period allows the line manager to make an assessment of the individual's suitability for the role in terms of their performance, conduct, attendance etc before confirming the individual in post. Further information and guidance regarding probationary periods is available from HR.

Induction

76. Prior to the new employee commencing employment the line manager should prepare an induction plan. A well planned and executed induction will ensure the new employee quickly settles into the RCM and becomes an effective member of the team.
77. In planning the induction the manager should think about who the employee will need to meet both internally and externally, the practicalities of working for the RCM such as the location of all facilities and arrangements for lunch, the RCM's policies and procedures that they employee will need to be aware of and specific role related information they will need to have. The manager will need to think about the timings in which this information will be delivered and by whom.
78. During the first few weeks and months of employment regular review meetings between the line manager and new employee should take place as a forum to ensure all is running smoothly for both parties and to address any concerns.

Head of HR & Organisational Development

Human Resources

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