

Royal College of Music

Interim widening participation strategic statement for 2012/13

This interim widening participation strategic statement for 2012-13 sets out the Royal College of Music's key priorities for 2012-13 on widening participation activity and how the funding we receive from HEFCE for widening participation and improving retention will support delivery of those priorities. The detail of these plans is set out in the RCM's 2012/13 Access Agreement, attached as an appendix.

The RCM's overall longer-term approach to widening participation has not changed since submission of its 2009 WPSAs. Drawing on the vision of Prince Albert for the advancement of the Arts and Sciences, the College's strategic plan sets out a vision for providing access to an inspirational learning experience for the widest possible range of students. The Access Agreement takes this vision forward in line with four key drivers, to:

- enable participation
- raise aspiration
- encourage applications
- improve retention.

Widening participation priorities for 2012-13

The RCM's headline WP priorities for 2012/13 are:

- The RCM was recently successful in being made a strategic partner as part of a tri-Borough Music Education Hub. Awarded by the Arts Council to begin in September 2012 for three years, our role will be to ensure that every child aged 5-18 has the opportunity to sing and learn a musical instrument, develop their skills, and to play with other children as part of an ensemble or choir.
- Igniting Creativity workshops offer an inspirational learning experience for all regardless of age and ability by offering a sustained series of workshops throughout the academic year. At least 61% of places within 50% of these opportunities will be offered free of charge during 2012-13 and will be actively recruited from under-represented groups in particular using data based around participants' eligibility for free school meals, looked after children, children living in social housing and those from a diverse number of pupils of different ethnic groups.
- Sparks Juniors is an instrumental teaching programme designed to provide a progression route to RCM Junior Department for children whose potential might otherwise be overlooked. It recruits 10 children each year from Key

Stage 2 for a three-year programme. They attend Junior Department on a Saturday, where their timetable includes instrumental and musicianship lessons, and participation in the JD Junior Choir. 80% are to be recruited from LSE backgrounds, looked after children, children living in social housing and those from a diverse number of pupils of different ethnic groups. In 2012-13 Sparks will work towards achieving 16% of children passing a graded examination, from a baseline of 0%.

- Successful implementation of the NSP.

How HEFCE funding for widening participation (which includes the widening access for full-time, part-time and disabled students allocations; and the teaching enhancement and student success (TESS) allocation) will help deliver those priorities.

The RCM will spend £324,256 of its additional fee income in 2012/13 on WP-related activities. It will also receive a HEFCE TESS allocation of £42,554 and a WP allocation of £18,457. The HEFCE funding is therefore a significant and important complement to the RCM's spend in this area from its additional fee income. The HEFCE funding is used primarily to support academic and administrative staff costs in organising outreach activity, in supporting disabled applicants and students, and in supporting the College's pastoral support services directed at retention.

Added value of the HEFCE allocation (such as to leverage funds from other sources, enabling outreach work to be undertaken that might not directly benefit own institution).

HEFCE contributes to the infrastructure costs that external funders will not meet, providing a basis for successful bids focused on meeting direct costs of some activities. Using the HEFCE allocation as leverage, the College has attracted substantial sponsorship from corporates including BP, British Gas and, most recently, the David Ross Foundation, as well as from individuals, trusts and foundations. This has allowed the College, through its Sparks operation, to expand its schools and community partnerships extensively, engaging with more than 4000 local schoolchildren (2011-2012) and rolling out participatory creative music-making projects as far afield as Northampton.

How the institution anticipates being able to adequately evaluate the effectiveness of its approach and provide satisfactory accountability for the funding it receives for this purpose from HEFCE.

The College's new widening participation targets are now much more oriented to measuring output rather than input. This will require more energy in monitoring and evaluation than was previously the case, especially in obtaining and then analysing data from partner institutions to measure the success of outreach activity.

Learning and Participation work undergoes ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Projects such as Sparks Juniors involve formative assessment, ongoing evaluation and reporting to parents. We evaluate each project through written evaluation from participants. Regular photographic and video evidence is also taken to allow reflective evaluation. RCM Sparks & external partners also undertake regular observations of sessions and give feedback to the College and to workshop leaders and students. School students involved in the projects will be tracked and the RCM will monitor whether they study music as a GCSE, and A level and whether and where they progress to higher education.

In relation to statistical milestones and targets relating to applicants, entrants and the student body, the College will review performance not just against milestones and targets but also by comparing the RCM's performance with that of the HE sector as a whole and with conservatoire averages. The College will consider the further actions that might be taken, if needed, to improve performance.

Achievement against the range of targets and milestones will be monitored internally via an annual report by the Director of Communications and the Deputy Director to the College's Welfare & Diversity Committee, Staff Student Committee, Senate and governing Council. This report will cover all of the areas described above. There is student representation on all of these committees and students were consulted in drawing up this Access Agreement via the Students' Association and the Staff Student Committee, including to ensure that it is clear.

Information on how the RCM uses the WP allocation to sustain collaborative/partnership approaches and support equality and diversity objectives.

In setting targets/milestones we have sought to ensure that these pay attention to the College's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The RCM has adopted its Access Agreement targets as one of the mechanisms by which it measures its compliance with the Equality Act and has committed to publishing achievement of/progress with these targets/milestones on its website. As these targets show, they are focused on disability, social deprivation and BME populations.

A summary of the RCM's policy for fair admissions.

As in all conservatoires in the UK, entry to our undergraduate programmes is very competitive, and places are only accessible to applicants who have already achieved a very high standard in their principal study. This means that applicants who have not had the advantage of high quality individual tuition over a period of many years prior to application are inevitably disadvantaged. The availability of affordable instrumental tuition at UK schools is extremely variable and students from low-income households and from many state schools often have limited access to, or are unable to afford, tuition of the requisite standard. The College's extensive outreach activities are intended as the RCM's contribution to addressing this issue.

Against this backdrop, all applicants are given the opportunity to audition at the College, without other criteria, such as ABRSM qualifications, being taken into account – every applicant is thus given the opportunity to be considered for admission.

Open days and other initiatives, such as a vocal consultation days, encourage the widest range of applicants to apply.

Potential, as well as current level, on the principal study demonstrated at audition is explicitly taken into account in deciding offers of places. In addition, the admissions committee is provided with contextual information about applicants' school type, disability, ethnicity, and POLAR data to inform its decisions about offers.

Access Agreement milestones and targets will enable the College to monitor its progress in meeting its Fair Admissions goals.

Seven of the Conservatoires UK institutions have collaborated to establish an on-line admissions service for conservatoire entry. The prime motivation of this collaborative initiative was to provide for more public and accessible conservatoire admissions, especially for those from underrepresented groups. Called CUKAS (Conservatoires UK Admissions Service) it is an on-line admissions service, administered by UCAS that started in May 2005: www.cukas.ac.uk. The seven member conservatoires, as well as HEFCE, have invested heavily to establish the service (a total of £675,000, of which £365,000 was provided by HEFCE). As a result of the establishment of this new service applications to the RCM have increased significantly – from c1400 a year to over 1800 in 2010.

The stated goals of CUK, expressed through its 2010 publication *A Vision Shared*, include widening participation, especially through the objective for 'CUKAS [to] have become the route of first choice for most applicants to programmes in the performing arts offered by specialist institutions in the UK' and to extend CUK membership 'to include at least ten other specialist providers of higher education across all of the performing arts'. The launch of a new website articulates collective and individual institutions' access goals and facilitate the exploration of a shared approach to widening participation more generally.



Royal College of Music Access Agreement for 2012/13

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Offering access to an inspirational learning experience

“Fifty scholarships have been established, of which twenty-five confer a free education in music, and twenty-five provide, not only a free education, but also maintenance for the scholars. Of these scholarships, half are held by boys and half by girls. I observe with pleasure that the various districts from which the scholars are drawn indicate the wide-spread distribution of a taste for music, and an adequate cultivation of music throughout the United Kingdom. London, with its vast population, sends only twelve out of the fifty. The remaining thirty-eight come as follows: twenty-eight from fourteen different counties in England, two from Scotland, six from Ireland, one from Wales, and one from Jersey. The occupations of the scholars are as various as the places from which they come. I find that a mill girl, the daughter of a brickmaker, and the son of a blacksmith, take high places in singing, and the son of a farm labourer in violin playing. The capacity of these candidates has been tested by an examination of unusual severity.”

Extract from speech of HRH The Prince of Wales, at the opening of the Royal College of Music as reported in *The Times*, 8 May 1883.

Drawing on the vision of Prince Albert for the advancement of the Arts and Sciences, the College’s strategic plan sets out a vision for providing access to an inspirational learning experience for the widest possible range of students. This Access Agreement takes this vision forward in line with four key drivers, to:

- enable participation
- raise aspiration
- encourage applications
- improve retention.

1. Fees

The Royal College of Music plans to charge fees of £9,000 to home/EU full-time undergraduate degree student entrants in 2012/13, rising by the amount permitted by government as the higher fee cap for each year of the BMus for this cohort. The equivalent part-time fee will be £4,500, rising by the same % increase as that for the higher fee cap for each year of the BMus.

Today, the RCM has a total student body of around 700, of whom about 400 study on the College’s undergraduate programme - its BMus. We aim for a normal annual intake of 70 Home/EU students, which usually comprises about 55 UK and 15 EU students. This makes for a total BMus Home/EU student body of approximately 280, across all four years of the programme. The BMus is only offered as a full-time programme, although, as part of its student-centred retention strategy, the College sometimes permits students who would not otherwise be able to progress to transfer to a year of part-time study to complete deferred units or to retake failed units.

2. Expenditure on additional access and retention measures

We plan to spend more than £1,000 per BMus full-time home/EU student on access and retention measures. In 2012/13, because of the significant scale of our outreach programme, we will be spending significantly in excess of this amount.

3. Successes of the College's current strategy

Outreach A flourishing and growing outreach programme delivered by **RCM Sparks**. Sparks activity is becoming more focused on widening participation through the new *Sparks Juniors* initiative that will connect outreach activity with fee-free study in the College's Junior Department and offer access routes through to RCM BMus study. This programme started in September 2009 and is funded by both the College's additional fee income and the College's private funds.

Establishment of two orchestras for the borough Built on the success of the five-year programme *Musicians of the Future* which culminated in 2010, RCM has founded two orchestras in partnership with the local authority. The **Young Person's Orchestra** provides a destination for graduates of *Musicians of the Future* at key stage 2, and the **New Generation Orchestra** for pupils at KS 3 and 4. Both welcome players from all schools in the borough.

Strong partnerships Links flourish with local schools and boroughs and other community groups, such as the Exhibition Road Cultural Group. A new partnership has been forged with the Hammersmith Academy which opens in September 2011, and we are planning to participate in London Higher's new AccessHE initiative (described in more detail below).

Pre-tertiary financial awards Funded places in the College's Junior Department - through privately funded bursaries and the Music and Dance Scheme (MDS) - providing additional access routes to HE music, including the RCM BMus for students from disadvantaged backgrounds

Accessible resources A significant increase in the Museum of Instrument's public opening hours coupled with free admission and a growth in the number of guided tours given to groups of all ages and knowledge levels. The College is investing significantly in a remodelling of the Museum, a key motivation for which is to support outreach activity

Application process streamlined A significant increase in the applicant base as a result of the CUKAS conservatoire on-line application system, administered by UCAS

Identifying talent The College places an increased emphasis on recognising potential as well as existing executant skill when making admissions decisions; we now use contextual data about educational background in reaching admissions decisions

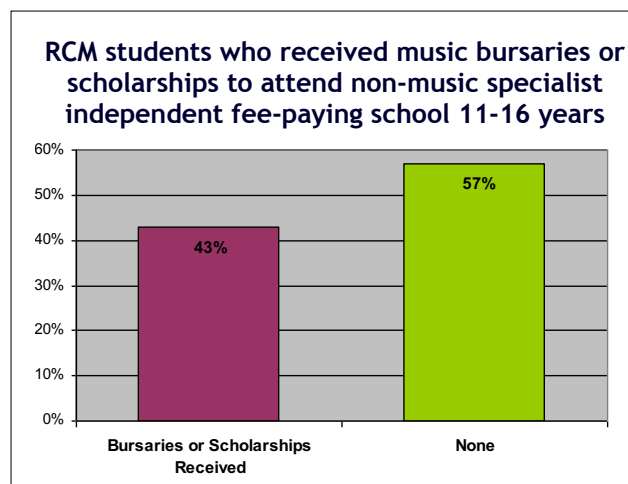
Supporting disabled students The strength of learning agreements to support disabled students and strong systems to encourage and support applications from disabled applicants

Retention rates Monitored and reported through Access Agreement targets. These are achieved through a strong system of personalised pastoral support for all students provided by heads/deputy heads of programmes and heads of faculty and through coordination of this support with Student Services. This is being extended from 2011, to include a new tutoring system and a specific role for the Counsellor in supporting retention.

4. Ongoing challenges to our approach

Limited music provision in state schools This makes it difficult for the College through its own efforts significantly to change its student mix. However, the College's extensive outreach programme, the success of its *Musicians of the Future* project and future plans in partnership with local boroughs and schools - including the Borough Orchestra - represent the College's contribution to turning this around.

Specialist state-funded music schools and independent school specialist scholarships The categorisation of these schools in official data as independent schools distorts the data. The College recruits a significant proportion of its BMus UK students from the specialist music schools. Even among independent schools, many RCM students are only able to study at them because of generous scholarships, but this will not be apparent in HESA performance indicators.



Focus on undergraduate students This disadvantages the College as some students, singers especially, enter the College directly to postgraduate programmes without undergraduate qualifications. Many of these are admitted on the basis of raw potential and from modest backgrounds; they are frequently supported by high value RCM scholarships. They, like EU students, do not figure in official data. For example, the ‘world’s favourite tenor’:



‘The world’s favourite tenor’, Alfie Boe left his local school in Fleetwood, to become a paint sprayer in a Blackpool car workshop. His unique talent was spotted, and a scholarship to the RCM catapulted him to fame. Alfie has appeared at many of the world’s major opera houses including Covent Garden, English National Opera and La Scala Milan, and later this season joins Les Misérables in London.

A level point scores Official data benchmarks are driven by A level point scores. While many of our students achieve good A level results, we do not require high A level scores for our BMus. What we do need is an exceptionally high standard of performance, as demonstrated through an audition.

Our global widening participation role Current performance measures fail to reflect our international widening participation role for low-income and socially disadvantaged students from across Europe and beyond. These students have typically benefited from better state provision of music in those countries’ state schools and other structures. Through the College’s scholarship and bursary programmes these students are able to study at the RCM. For example, in two EU countries, Finland and France:

Finland

Finland's share of internationally acclaimed music professionals seems to be disproportionate compared to its population of only five million. All children have weekly class music lessons and access to instrumental and vocal lessons, group and individual. These are almost invariably free of charge. A student with an interest in music can apply to a special upper secondary school with a focus in music. There are eleven schools, called musiikkilukio, which are located in major cities and often function in conjunction with local music conservatories. Eleven conservatoires, ten polytechnics, and the Sibelius Academy give professional level music education in Finland.

As with other public education, they are free of charge. Conservatoires and the more recently-formed polytechnics offer a Bachelor's Degree in concert music, church music, or pop and jazz music. Conservatories give the vocational degree of a musician, whereas the polytechnics include pedagogical studies, and the graduates also qualify for teaching positions in music institutes.

France

The National Curriculum in France includes at least one hour of music each week for students up to the age of 16. The rigorous curriculum includes theory, history and performance, including instrumental lessons for many. There is a system of community, inter-community, departmental and regional music schools, (confusingly, also called conservatoires) which supplements the national curriculum offer.

Typically, these music schools operate after school each weekday, and are hubs of music activity for the whole community, though predominantly providing extended music education for school-age pupils.

In 2008-09 there were:

- 36 Regional Conservatoires and 101 Departmental Conservatoires, with a total of 155,000 students of whom 137,000 studied music*
- 255 Community Conservatoires, 147,000 students of whom 125,000 study music*
- 3,322 other schools with e music specialism, with 513,000 students*
- Total of 775,000 studying music in heavily-subsidised state system*

Each community (or arondissement) has a music school where individual tuition is offered after school, enabling children to participate in ensembles of various configurations and to continue their music theory and history training.

The schools ask families to contribute to tuition costs for instrumental lessons, which represent a total of 7.4% of schools' running costs. The amounts are fixed by the individual regions and municipalities but remain modest relative to total costs. In addition, these take into consideration the family's means. Some children pay nothing, most make a very modest contribution, and in every case a second child from a family will pay less. Talented musicians can progress to one of the 36 regional conservatoires, or to one of the Conservatoires supérieures (in Paris and Lyon, with Strasbourg soon to achieve the supérieure status).

5. Additional access measures

RCM Sparks As the Royal College of Music's learning and participation programme, RCM Sparks provides opportunities for everyone to make or learn about music at the RCM, regardless of musical ability. From weekend workshops for children to holiday courses for teenagers, vocal days for families to opera matinees for schools, RCM Sparks offers a musically enriching experience for all. RCM Sparks projects aim to break down barriers, real or perceived, and unlock musical opportunity to those who otherwise would have little or no experience of live music.

RCM Sparks in partnership Sparks works with a variety of partners, ranging from local schools to community music projects, and internationally recognised organisations such as the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, English Chamber Orchestra and English Touring Opera.

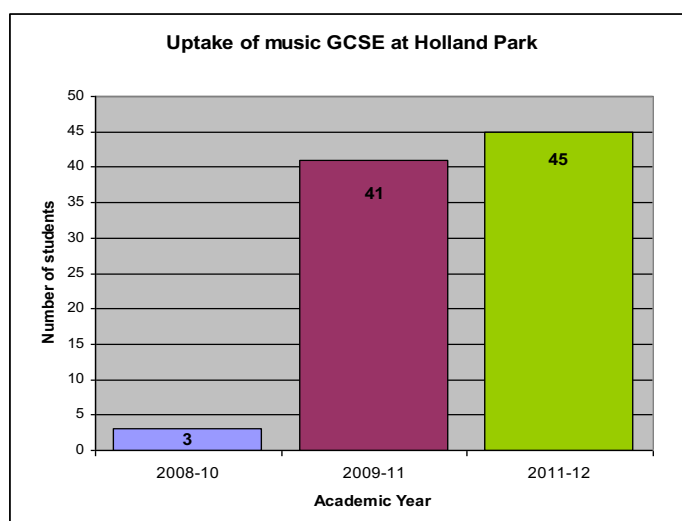
- RCM Sparks currently runs 15 different types of projects working in three main areas: in the Community, in Schools and in Partnership.
- In 2009-10 Sparks worked with over 3000 children, schools and members of the community - over 2700 were new to the RCM
- 60% places at community workshops are offered free of charge. We actively recruit from the local Borough to allow children from low socio-economic (LSE) backgrounds to take part regardless of means.
- Its principal programmes for promoting progression to HE are (i) Instrumental projects and (ii) Springboard Composition Projects.

Local Authority context

- *Kensington and Chelsea is a diverse multicultural and multi-lingual inner London borough. It is the second smallest local authority geographically in the United Kingdom, yet the most densely populated. The total population is currently estimated to be 178,000, although turnover is estimated to over 20% each year.*
- *The area displays remarkable diversity and contrasts, including ethnic and linguistic diversity and wide socio-economic disparities; almost half the population was born outside the UK (the second highest nationally). There are pockets of high deprivation. While seven wards in Kensington and Chelsea are among the least deprived nationally, two wards are among the 10 per cent most deprived in England. There are around 1,000 households living in temporary accommodation. Additionally one in five households has dependent children.*
- *In Kensington and Chelsea maintained schools, just over half of pupils speak English as an additional language (51%), compared to around 10% nationally; pupils speak a total of over 100 languages other than English, and over a third of pupils on roll are not fully fluent in English, requiring specialist support. 60% of the proportion of children attending K&C schools qualify for free school meals which is more than double the national average. Some schools also experience very high turnover of pupils - this is often the result of the movement of travellers, migrant workers, families in temporary accommodation and asylum seekers and refugees.*

Young Persons' and New Generation Orchestras Building on the success of RCM Sparks' five-year instrumental teaching programme, Musicians of the Future, two orchestras have been founded in partnership with the local authority, Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea (RBKC). Musicians of the Future was designed specifically to improve uptake of orchestral instruments in state schools; of 'graduates' have reached the required standard and now need orchestras to progress to. The impact of MoF was impressive, particularly at Holland Park School, where the level of general musical activity has increased (the MoF students acting as catalysts) and the take-up of GCSE (and more recently BTEC) has risen markedly. Through Musicians of the Future:

- 120 local children have learned an instrument over a sustained period of time through an innovative, bespoke, fast track programme of learning, led by trained RCM musicians
- More than 800 children learned an instrument through the **Wider Opportunities MoF** programme, led by RCM musicians and RBKC class teachers
- More than 3000 children accessed a live music experience through the Musicians of the Future concerts given by RCM students and MoF instrumentalists.
- Uptake for music GCSE and BTEC grew. For example:



Head of Music at Holland Park School:

'Sparks has provided excellent instrumental tuition, and produced a real rise in the level of musicianship in school and I believe also impacted on our huge rise in numbers for uptake at KS4 music.'

RCM Springboard Composition Project supporting GCSE Music Since 2005, RCM Sparks has collaborated with three local authorities on RCM Springboard, a composition project available free of charge to all state school pupils in Yrs 10 -13 in the boroughs of Richmond, Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea who are studying GCSE or A-level Music. Six workshop days are run across three weekends in the autumn term, led by a professional composer, RCM composition students and RCM musicians. The programme has been developed in consultation with the Heads of Music in participating schools and is designed to support widening participation by giving an insight into the creative process of writing music, its notation, performance and recording, in order to support the composition aspect of the examination courses.

RCM Sparks Juniors for those with special potential A collaboration between RCM Junior Department and RCM Sparks, Sparks Juniors is an instrumental teaching programme designed to provide a progression route to RCM Junior Department for children whose potential might otherwise be overlooked. Now in its second year, it recruits ten children each year from Year 4, for a three-year programme. They attend Junior Department on a Saturday, where their timetable includes instrumental and musicianship lessons, and participation in the JD Junior Choir. Children are recruited in consultation with the school, following a series of whole-class workshops led by the RCM at which exceptional musical

promise is identified. 80% are from LSE backgrounds, have English as a second language or have a special learning need. Whole families are encouraged to become involved and many parents and siblings attend Family Days with their children.

RCM Junior Department This provides specialist training for talented children aged 8-18. It comprises 320 students who meet on term-time Saturdays. The challenging curriculum, including individual instrumental or vocal lessons, ensembles, choirs and general musicianship, is designed to nurture talented musicians and prepare them for entry to conservatoire or other HEI. Admission is by competitive audition and a bursary system, which includes MDS bursaries, ensures that no talented child is refused a place on financial grounds alone.

Progression to HE among JD bursary holders

Year	No. of leavers from Yr 13	No. supported by bursary	No. bursary holders progressing to HE	Destinations of bursary holders
09-10	51	12 (MDS 8)	9	Conservatoire 2, University 7, (4 music), Unknown 1
08-09	49	13 (MDS 8)	12	Conservatoire 4, University 8, (2 music), Unknown 1
07-08	55	9 (MDS 6)	7	Conservatoire 4, University 3, (2 music)
06-07	48	11 (MDS 4)	11	Conservatoire 3, University 8, (5 Music)
05-06	42	12 (MDS 6)	11	Conservatoire 7, University 4 (all music)

6. Building on arrangements prior to 2012-13

Evolution and development The College's flagship outreach programme, Musicians of the Future, was conceived to boost the teaching of instruments in local schools, with a view to developing an ensemble. Culminating after five years in summer 2010, the programme taught 120 students in 6 schools to play a range of 8 instruments. As planned, two borough orchestras, **The Young Persons' Orchestra** and **The New Generation Orchestra** were launched in 2010 to provide a progression route for all MoF 'graduates'. School pupils are taught by RCM students, who also act as section coaches, working in schools and at the College where both Orchestras meet each term for a performance day.

RCM Sparks Juniors, launched in September 2009, flourishes and some its participants have joined the borough orchestras in 2011. Those with special promise will audition for the Junior Department where they may be supported by a full bursary. All other existing RCM Sparks programmes continue and develop, with the aim of reaching a larger number of schools and individuals. Extra opportunity will arise from the amalgamation of some of the functions of the nearby local authorities: Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham, and Richmond. A newly-founded youth choir for all-comers, **AKA**, meets weekly at the RCM, in partnership with the local authority, for pupils who are vocally gifted.

Raising aspiration and encouraging applications As a highly selective institution we have focused our resources on activities, such as CUKAS, that have encouraged and achieved more applications from disadvantaged students; we are increasing our spending on outreach activity focused on raising aspirations and attainment, and encouraging students from

under-represented groups to apply to higher education, including conservatoires, from an already high base. Most of this outreach activity, as recommended by the Sutton Trust, is targeted at younger age groups and is geared towards encouraging GCSE study of music. We have also established systems to encourage and support applications from disabled candidates - an area where we can provide highly personalised support.

7. Collaborative working between HE institutions

Conservatoires UK CUK is the umbrella organisation which currently represents the collective views of music education and training across eight major UK conservatoires.

Seven of the CUK conservatoires have collaborated to establish an on-line admissions service for conservatoire entry. The prime motivation of this collaborative initiative was to provide for more public and accessible conservatoire admissions, especially for those from under represented groups. Called CUKAS (Conservatoires UK Admissions Service) it is an on-line admissions service, administered by UCAS that started in May 2005: www.cukas.ac.uk. The seven member conservatoires, as well as HEFCE, have invested heavily to establish the service (a total of £675,000, of which £365,000 was provided by HEFCE). As a result of the establishment of this new service applications to the RCM have increased significantly - from c1400 a year to over 1800 in 2010.

The stated goals of CUK, expressed through its 2010 publication *A Vision Shared*, include widening participation, especially through the objective for 'CUKAS [to] have become the route of first choice for most applicants to programmes in the performing arts offered by specialist institutions in the UK' and to extend CUK membership 'to include at least ten other specialist providers of higher education across all of the performing arts'. The launch of a new website in summer 2011 will articulate collective and individual institutions' access goals and facilitate the exploration of a shared approach to widening participation more generally.

8. Strengthening Access at the pan-London level through the collaboration of London HEIs

Pan-London dimension embedded We confirm that the Royal College of Music is adding a collaborative pan-London dimension to our own access and outreach plans. This will further help students (and their professors) to have contact with a wider range of higher education opportunities.

AccessHE Through our established regional membership association London Higher, we are in discussion with the developers of AccessHE. This is a new social enterprise formed by and for London's HE sector. It will seek to take forward some selected aspects of the collaborative and targeted programmes of the current Aimhigher Partnerships in London, following a lead by WECAN (the Partnership in West, Central and North London), whilst at the same time and in a cost effective, co-ordinated way exploring possible new ways of reaching out to schools across the capital and including especially young people under-represented in HE.

More effective monitoring, evaluation and coordination This new pan-London collaborative approach will help support and inform our own Access Agreement by, for example, the acquisition, analysis and reporting of data, such as contextual data, school and college profiles, patterns of access by different groups across London and deprivation profiles. Taken together, these are important aids to targeting, and to delivery at the local level. Monitoring, evaluation and also co-ordination on the pan-London basis will help us to place our own efforts into the necessary broader context of widening participation and help to show if recent valuable momentum is being maintained.

Time scale Through our joint efforts, we are expecting to confirm the constitution, budget and work programme of this new collaborative group during the first half of the 2011-12

academic year. On behalf of the participating group of London HE institutions, London Higher will liaise closely with OFFA to explain how its activities address directly the requirements of OFFA's March 2011 guidance, and the spirit of the letter of Sir Alan Langlands to heads of institutions dated 11 March 2011. If, having taken part in the initial set up discussions and process, this institution should decide after all not to take part in the new London Higher/AccessHE collaboration you will of course be advised.

Reporting We envisage that once established the group will report annually to all participating HEIs to show what benefits the collaboration has brought, and how it has helped individual HEIs such as ourselves to engage more effectively with identified schools and colleges for outreach purposes.

9. Links with schools and colleges

Local authority schools partnerships Through RCM Sparks the College has links with 40 state schools in local authorities. Pupils participate in creative workshops, learn instruments taught by RCM students, attend concerts and classes at the RCM, have access to RCM Springboard GCSE Composition project, and can participate in the the Young Persons' or New Generation Orchestras, and the AKA Choir.

Academy partnerships The RCM's existing Academy partner is Northampton Academy - a specialist performing arts academy with whom the RCM provides student mentors and facilitates visits to RCM - all with a view to raising aspirations. In similar vein, the RCM supports regional music services, such as Worcester music services, with whom the College has provided access for students to high level RCM teaching and facilitated visits to RCM to help Worcester identify talent.

A new RCM partner institution is Hammersmith Academy, opening in September 2011 as a non-denominational, all-ability, co-educational secondary school for 11-18 year olds, with specialisms in Creative & Digital Media and IT. Focused on personal learning, the Academy will have an innovative curriculum model in which the school day will be divided into three sessions, with the afternoon session focused on performing arts for many students. The RCM is collaborating with Hammersmith Academy as a new key partner for outreach activity.

Enrichment projects

Brentfield School is one of the existing state schools with which the College has a partnership and is where the Brentfield Enrichment Project is based. It is a large primary school in a disadvantaged area of north-west London.

Brentfield School

The school is in the top 20% of the most deprived schools in the UK. 93.2% of children are from ethnic minority groups of which 50% are from either asylum seeker or refugee families. 63.8% speak English as an additional language (EAL) and eight out of ten pupils are drawn from a council ward which is significantly deprived. 53.8% of pupils are entitled to free school meals.

10. Student retention and success

The College already has good retention rates, monitored and reported through Access Agreement targets. These are achieved through a strong system of personalised pastoral support for all students provided by heads/deputy heads of programmes and heads of faculty and through coordination of this support with Student Services. This is being extended from 2011, to include a new tutorial support system and a specific role for the Counsellor in supporting retention. Great efforts are taken to ensure that those students

who do leave the College, for example because they realise that a career as a musician is not for them, nevertheless stay within HE.

Despite the fact that it works against HESA PIs, the RCM coaches students who are not likely to succeed as musicians, to help them transfer to other HEIs.

We have also established systems to support disabled students - an area where we can provide highly personalised support, not least through personal learning agreements.

11. Balancing financial support and non-financial measures

The College believes it can be most successful in widening participation through outreach activity rather than through financial or retention measures: the College's evidence suggests that bursaries have not been effective in widening participation and has an existing record of success in retaining students through to graduation. Therefore, we believe the area for most investment is outreach activity delivered by RCM Sparks - both to support initiatives that lead to study at the RCM and to support study in music and other subjects at HE generally.

National Scholarship Programme The RCM will match its 2012/13 National Scholarship Programme allocation of four £3,000 scholarships. In 2012/13, the NSP scholarships will be provided as fee waivers for the first year of BMus study to four home students with household incomes at the level set by government (currently incomes below £25,000). The College will match these with fee waivers of £3,000 year for the second year of BMus study to the four NSP scholars, assuming continuing eligibility. If an NSP scholar ceases to be eligible, the RCM will award the scholarship to another student who meets the eligibility criteria. One reason we are offering fee waivers is to reduce the strain of loans on the public purse. We also believe that this financial support is likely to encourage applications from applicants from under-represented groups.

Fee waivers, bursaries and scholarships for new and continuing students The College's existing bursary scheme will continue to be available to BMus students who started their programmes prior to 2012.

Overall, the College will be spending:

Institutional spend: fee income above basic fee (total students) £		
	2012/13	2015/16
NSP institutional spend	0	36,000
Bursaries and scholarships (non-NSP) - ie remaining bursaries arising from the College's existing bursary scheme	32,000	0
Outreach activity	£239,951	£258,799
Retention measures	£52,105	£52,294
Total	£324,256	£347,093
Institutional spend: fee income above basic fee (total students) %		
	2012/13	2015/16
NSP institutional spend	0.0	4.3
Bursaries and scholarships (non-NSP)	5.1	0.0
Outreach activity	38.1	30.8
Retention measures	8.3	6.6
Total	51.5	41.7

12. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

Focusing on output The College's new widening participation targets are now much more oriented to measuring output rather than input. This will require more energy in monitoring and evaluation than was previously the case, especially in obtaining and then analysing data from partner institutions to measure the success of outreach activity. The RCM plans to work with Access HE in tracking the destinations of school students involved in outreach activity and in evaluating its overall success.

Learning and Participation work undergoes ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Projects such as Sparks Juniors involve formative assessment, ongoing evaluation and reporting to parents. We evaluate each project through written evaluation from participants. Regular photographic and video evidence is also taken to allow reflective evaluation. RCM Sparks & external partners also undertake regular observations of sessions and give feedback to the College and to workshop leaders and students. School students involved in the projects will be tracked and the RCM will monitor whether they study music as a GCSE, and A level and whether and where they progress to higher education. The RCM plans to work with Access HE in undertaking this work.

In relation to statistical milestones and targets relating to applicants, entrants and the student body, the College will review performance not just against milestones and targets but also by comparing the RCM's performance with that of the HE sector as a whole and with conservatoire averages. The College will consider the further actions that might be taken, if needed, to improve performance.

Achievement against the range of targets and milestones will be monitored internally via an annual report by the Director of Communications and the Deputy Director to the College's Welfare & Diversity Committee, Senate and governing Council. This report will cover all of the areas described above. There is student representation on all of these committees.

13. Providing information to prospective and existing students

Clear, accessible and timely information will be available for applicants and students on the fees that we charge and the financial support that we will offer. This information will make it clear exactly what level of financial support we are offering students in each year of their studies (including for national scholarships, as a one-off benefit rather than a recurrent annual award). This information will be provided on our website and in our prospectus. We will provide timely information to UCAS for the CUKAS admissions service and to the SLC to enable them to populate their applicant-facing web services. The new CUK website to be launched in summer 2011 provides information about study at UK conservatoires, including the RCM.

14. Targets and milestones

The four key drivers of the College's Access Agreement are measures and approaches which

- enable participation
- raise aspiration
- encourage applications
- improve retention

The tables on the pages 13-15 detail targets and milestones to 2016-17.

Statistical milestones and targets relating to applicants, entrants and student body

Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones/targets					Commentary
			2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
UK BMus entrants from a state school/specialist music school background (three-year rolling average).	2009-2010	73%	73%	74%	75%	76%	77%	We have used a rolling average because our low student numbers mean that each student (+/-) results in a c4% swing in the overall %.
Number of applicants declaring a disability on applications (three-year rolling average).	2009-2010	125	128	130	133	135	140	We have used a rolling average because of low student numbers involved.
Number of students in receipt of a disabled student's allowance (DSA) (three-year rolling average).	2008-2009	10	12	13	14	15	16	We have used a rolling average because of low student numbers involved.
Percentage of NSP holders who continue or qualify at RCM or transfer to another HEI to be better than the RCM average	N/A	N/A	N/A	88%	90%	92%	95%	Our target is to have a better retention rate for NSP holders continuing and qualifying than the average for the RCM as a whole. It is the RCM's policy to counsel students to transfer to another HEI if their progress as a musician suggests that they will not succeed in the music profession, hence the inclusion of 'transfer to another HEI' as part of this target.

Participation of under-represented groups in higher education: Young first time degree entrants (three year rolling average)	2008-09	1.60%	2.50%	3.50%	4.00%	4.50%	5%	We have used a rolling average because of low student numbers involved. We have set our target at a level that means we will exceed the current conservatoire average
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Other milestones and targets

Description	Baseline		Yearly milestones/targets					Commentary
	Baseline year	Baseline data	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
Raising Aspirations - RCM Sparks Juniors Target: to increase the number of participants working in line with ABRSM graded levels.	2010-11	0	16%	26%	36%	46%	56%	Sparks Juniors is instrumental teaching programme designed to provide a progression route to RCM Junior Department for children whose potential might otherwise be overlooked. It recruits 10 children each year from Year 4, for a three-year programme. They attend Junior Department on a Saturday, where their timetable includes instrumental and musicianship lessons, and participation in the JD Junior Choir. Children are recruited in consultation with the school, following a series of whole-class workshops led by the RCM at which exceptional musical promise is identified. 80% are to be recruited from LSE backgrounds, have English as a second language or have a special learning need.
Encouraging Applications - RCM Springboard Courses Target: to increase the	2010-11	60%	61%	62%	63%	64%	65%	RCM Springboard Courses deliver support for pre-HE students of music, to raise aspirations and attainment and encourage students from under-represented to apply to RCM or higher education more widely.

percentage of free places offered to underrepresented groups by 5% over a five year period.								
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Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones/targets					Commentary
			2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
<p>Enabling Participation: Igniting Creativity workshops</p> <p>Target: to increase the percentage of free places offered to underrepresented groups by 5% over a five year period.</p>	2009-10	60%	61%	62%	63%	64%	65%	<p>Igniting Creativity workshops offer an inspirational learning experience for all regardless of age and ability by offering a sustained series of workshops throughout the academic year.</p> <p>At least 60% of places within 50% of these opportunities are offered free of charge and are actively recruited from under-represented groups in particular using data based around participant's eligibility for free school meals and those from a diverse number of pupils of different ethnic groups.</p>
<p>Raising aspirations - School Partnerships</p> <p>Target: to increase the percentage of pupils learning an instrument at Grade 3 level or above.</p>	2010-11	13%	14%	15%	16%	17%	18%	<p>School Partnerships projects will further develop with 2 local schools to raise aspirations and attainment in order to encourage students from under-represented to apply to RCM or higher education more widely.</p> <p>Data taken from 2 local secondary schools, where currently 22 out of a cohort of 169 pupils who are learning an instrument are currently working at ABRSM grade 3 level or above.</p>

