

Royal Northern College of Music
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RNCM  
ROYAL NORTHERN  
COLLEGE of MUSIC

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## **1 DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY**

Throughout these Regulations the following terms will only be understood to have the specific definitions listed below.

### **1.1 Organisations**

RNCM means Royal Northern College of Music.

OfS means the Office for Students, the regulatory body for Higher Education in England.

QAA means the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

### **1.2 Taught and Research Provision**

#### **1.2.1 Postgraduate Research Programmes**

Including Doctorates and Master of Philosophy

#### **1.2.2 Postgraduate Taught Programmes**

Including Masters and Postgraduate Diplomas/ Certificates

#### **1.2.3 Undergraduate Taught Programmes**

Including Bachelors' programmes, Graduate Diploma, Certificate/ Diploma of Higher Education.

### **1.3 Research Supervision**

Postgraduate Research students (PGRs) are normally supervised by a primary and a secondary supervisor, although the team may include two secondary supervisors and/or a specialist advisor to the PGR. The team may also include a mentor to the supervisory team. The supervisory team should not include anyone who has a close personal relationship with the PGR. The primary supervisor is responsible for coordinating the supervisory team and the progress of the PGR.

### **1.4 Taught Programmes Modules and Credits**

A module is one block of assessed learning which has a particular credit value e.g. 20 or 30. Credit indicates how much learning is expected to be undertaken within a module. The size of a module depends on the amount of study time with 10 hours of expected student study time per 1 credit.

120 credits are associated with the successful completion of one year of full-time study at undergraduate and postgraduate taught level.

A module will also be assigned a European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credit value based on the equivalence of 1 ECTS credit to 2 RNCM credits. ECTS is the European Credit Transfer System, agreed as part of the creation of the European Higher Education Area in the Bologna Agreement between the UK government and other states.

Required attendance at timetabled teaching sessions is included within expected student study time, although the proportion will vary from module to module. Expected study time includes, where relevant, all classes, one-to-one teaching, timetabled performance activities, assignments, private study, practice and assessment.

### **1.5 Sector Recognised Standards**

The Sector Recognised Standards form part of the OfS regulatory framework and are available on the OfS [website](#). The Standards are currently aligned to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), which forms part of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). The Standards provides a point of reference for setting academic standards and assessing student achievement.

## **1.6 Notional Hours of Learning**

The approximate number of hours a typical student is expected to spend learning to achieve the learning outcomes for a module.

## **1.7 Programme of Study**

The programme of study is a course of study which leads to an approved qualification, which aligns with the Sector Recognised Standards, and is cognisant of the Bologna accord which fosters compatibility between higher education systems across a European Higher Education Area.

For Taught programmes, the Programme of Study is a combination of modules leading to an award of the RNCM.

For Research Programmes, the Programme of Study is delivered through a supervisory team.

The Programme Handbook refers to an annual summary of each programme provided for each registered student. It may be in a variety of styles and some handbooks will cover interlinked awards.

## **1.8 Programme Specification**

The Programme Specification is the definitive programme document and **forms the basis of the contract between the RNCM and the student for the delivery of the programme of study** and is a distillation of a programme. It also satisfies the requirements of the Office for Students (OfS) for the submission of UNISTATS/ Discover Uni data to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

## **1.9 Award**

An award is the approved qualification that students will gain at the end of their studies e.g., Bachelor of Music (BMus), Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip), Master of Music (MMus), Doctorate (PhD), etc. It is approved at validation and/or re-approval for a specified period. Amendments may be made to the award during the period of approval through the agreed major/ minor modification process.

## **1.10 Levels of Study**

The academic standard of each component/ module, including the standard of its assessment, will be designated as being at a specific HE level, as described in the OfS Sector Recognised Standards and Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

## **1.11 Assessment**

A generic term, encompassing all forms of evaluation of learning, this may include written assessment or performance, coursework, portfolios, presentations, thesis, viva etc.

An examination/ submission is a formally convened, timed assessment under the direct supervision of staff.

## **1.12 Academic Year**

The academic year is the period from the beginning of the autumn term to the end of the summer term. The HESA academic year for undergraduate programmes runs from 1 September to 31 July. Postgraduate programmes may run for a period of 12 months.

## 2 **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 These Regulations govern the higher education awards of the RNCM made following the satisfactory completion by students of an approved programme of study. The RNCM may also offer programmes leading to the awards of other bodies including those leading to research degrees. These Regulations do not govern honorary awards of the RNCM which are conferred by the Board of Governors.
- 2.2 These Regulations will be approved annually by the Academic Board following review by the Education and Quality Committee. They are informed by the OfS B Conditions of Registration and the UK Quality Code and will meet the general guidance for the exercise of taught degree awarding powers as recommended by the OfS.
- 2.3 The definition of higher education and its levels used in these Regulations will be that of the OfS Sector Recognised Standards and UK Quality Code Framework for HE Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, published by the QAA.

## 3 **HIGHER EDUCATION AWARDS OF THE RNCM**

### 3.1 **Principles**

- 3.1.1 The RNCM offers the major awards listed below; other awards may be added as approved by Academic Board, and subject to programme approval.
- 3.1.2 The RNCM has the capacity to offer dual and joint awards in conjunction with other institutions or programmes leading to awards of other institutions or awarding bodies, under specific validation arrangements which will denote whose regulations the programme will follow; those of the RNCM or those of the other institution or awarding body. A dual award is where separate awards are conferred upon a student on completion of a single programme of study. A joint award is where a single award is conferred upon a student on completion of a single programme of study.

### 3.2 **Major Awards**

#### **Undergraduate Awards**

Bachelor's degrees with honours	6
Bachelor's degrees	6
Graduate diplomas	6
Diplomas of Higher Education*	5
Certificates of Higher Education*	4

#### **FHEQ Level**

#### **Postgraduate Awards**

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	8
Master of Philosophy*	7
Master's degrees (e.g. MMus, MPerf)	7
Postgraduate diplomas	7
Postgraduate certificates*	7

\* These qualifications are only awarded as exit awards

- 3.2.1 Where applicable, a subject title for the award will be agreed at programme approval. This will follow the award title on any certification, e.g. BMus Honours in Popular Music.
- 3.2.2 Students will register at the start of each academic year for an appropriate programme of study leading to an award of the RNCM. There will be a Definitive Programme Document for each award summarising the programme of study. The policy on student registration, including arrangements for the payment of an appropriate fee, will be published in the annual *Student Regulations and Associated Information Handbook* made available to each student through the RNCM Virtual Learning Environment.

### 3.3 Aegrotat Awards

RNCM awards, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, acting with authority delegated by the Academic Board, will be available as Aegrotat awards. An Aegrotat award for incomplete study is an unclassified award conferred in exceptional circumstances, such as in cases where a student's ability to complete an award is permanently compromised by severe illness.

### 3.4 Posthumous Awards

RNCM awards, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, acting with authority delegated by the Academic Board, will be available as posthumous awards. A Posthumous award is awarded where a student for an award has died and where the Board of Examiners is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the student's performance on the Programme shows that they would have passed. This may be classified where there is sufficient evidence of the students' attainment.

## RESEARCH AWARDS

### 4 FRAMEWORK FOR RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

#### 4.1 Principles

- 4.1.1 Postgraduate Research Students (PGRs) will receive supervision and training in respect of their learning as indicated in the programme handbook.

#### 4.2 Programmes

- 4.2.1 Research programmes of study will be designed to enable PGRs to progress through a review process to qualify for an RNCM award.

PGRs' progress is monitored continuously via termly research supervision which is reported to the Research Degrees Committee. Annual progress reviews are conducted by a review panel that is independent of the supervisory team. The review panel is appointed for the full period of the PGR's registration and consists of two reviewers, one of whom fulfils the role of panel chair.

A formal assessment of progress is conducted 18-24 months post-enrolment (full-time PGRs) and 24-36 months post-enrolment (part-time PGRs). The final viva voce examination is scheduled after the PGR has received permission to submit. Both assessments include an external examiner.

- 4.2.2 The general requirements for each type of award are as detailed below:

HE qualification	FHEQ level	Minimum credits	Minimum credits at level of qualification
PhD	8	Not typically credit weighted	
Research master's degree	7	Not typically credit weighted	

## TAUGHT AWARDS

### 5 CREDIT FRAMEWORK FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

#### 5.1 Principles

- 5.1.1 Students will receive academic credit in respect of their learning as indicated in the programme and individual module learning outcomes.

- 5.1.2 Each module within a programme will be ascribed a HE credit value, specified in terms of the number of credits and the level. Modules will also be ascribed the comparative ECTS credit value.
- 5.1.3 Every programme of study will have clearly defined aims and intended learning outcomes that provide the focus for the component modules.
- 5.1.4 All taught programmes leading to an award of the RNCM will conform to the RNCM's credit framework.

## **5.2 The Credit Framework**

- 5.2.1 The basic unit of credit relates to 10 notional hours of learning; a module of 10 credits represents 100 notional hours of learning.
- 5.2.2 A standard academic year of full-time study for undergraduate and postgraduate students will equate to 120 credits (1200 notional hours of learning).
- 5.2.3 Where credits are accrued as part of a programme they will not be accredited towards any other award, unless the total exceeds the minimum requirement.

## **5.3 Modules**

- 5.3.1 Each module will have an approved definition leading to the award of credit at a specific FHEQ level.
- 5.3.2 Module sizes will normally be 20 or 40 credits. The RNCM however acknowledges that other module sizes may be required for the effective delivery of learning. Credits will have equivalence with those of the European Credit and Transfer System.
- 5.3.3 Each module will specify a level of the FHEQ that indicates the intellectual demand and rigour of the learning required to successfully complete the module. Levels are progressive, with increasing demands being placed upon learners as they undertake learning at a higher level. Levels will be aligned with the UK Quality Code.

## **5.4 Programmes**

- 5.4.1 Undergraduate programmes of study will be designed to enable students to progress through the credit levels and on achievement of the learning outcomes and credit requirements associated with each stage of study, to qualify for an RNCM award.
- 5.4.2 The general credit requirements for each type of award are as detailed below:

<b>HE qualification</b>	<b>FHEQ level</b>	<b>Minimum credits</b>	<b>Minimum credits at level of qualification</b>
Taught master's degree	7	180	150
Postgraduate diplomas	7	120	90
Postgraduate certificates	7	60	40
Bachelor's degrees with honours	6	360	90
Bachelor's degrees	6	300	60
Graduate diplomas	6	80	80
Diplomas of higher education	5	240	90
Certificates of higher education	4	120	90

- 5.4.3 Bachelor's degrees with honours programmes will be designed to progress from level 4 to level 6, accruing 120 credits at each level to a minimum total of 360 credits. Bachelor's degree programmes will be designed to progress from level 4 to level 6, accruing 120 credits each at levels 4 and 5 and 60 credits at level 6.
- 5.4.4 Master's degree programmes will be designed to provide a minimum of 180 credits at level 7.
- 5.4.5 Awards of the RNCM will be made following the completion of the credits below:

<b>Award</b>	<b>Minimum number of credits</b>	<b>Duration of full time study</b>
Bachelor's degrees with honours	360-480* credits	3/ 4 years
Bachelor's degrees	300-440* credits	3/ 4 years
Graduate diplomas	280 credits	4 years
Diplomas of Higher Education	240 credits	2 years
Certificates of Higher Education	120 credits	1 year
Master's degrees	180 credits	2 years, exceptionally 1 year
Postgraduate diplomas	120 credits	1 year
Postgraduate certificates	60 credits	1 year

\* Higher number of credits refers specifically to 4-year Bachelor of Music degree

- 5.4.6 Credits beyond those required for the award and other optional study and assessment activity may be taken at the discretion of the Programme Leader. Programmes may also have study activities that lead to no credit or to the award of a qualification from another body as part of their agreed structure.

## **6 STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

- 6.1 Student attendance at timetabled learning activities (including any online learning activity) is required as articulated in the Student Attendance Policy. Notification of illness or exceptional requests for leave of absence must be made through the official processes of the College set out in the Student Regulation Handbook.
- 6.2 Any patterns of unexplained non-attendance can lead to reporting of a student to their funding authority, which may affect a student's funding.
- 6.3 Tier 4 students who present unexplained patterns of non-attendance will be reported to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) authority.
- 6.4 In all cases where concerns regarding a student's ability to study successfully are presented, the Student Fitness and Return to Study Policy shall be followed.

## **7 ADMISSION, REGISTRATION AND PROGRESSION**

### **7.1 Principles**

- 7.1.1 The RNCM is an international music conservatoire, and its programmes of study will set high standards of entry and prerequisite ability. The selection of students for admission takes account of the ability to benefit as demonstrated through musical ability, prior educational achievement, motivation and commitment, subject to the availability of places.
- 7.1.2 In setting high standards of entry, admission processes to the RNCM will nevertheless seek to remove barriers to widen participation in higher education, aiming to eliminate discrimination, being committed to the application of one major criterion for entry to its programmes: an appropriate level of musical talent and potential, as assessed at audition. As an international music conservatoire, the RNCM will aim to create an environment in which people of all nations, backgrounds and cultures can flourish.



7.1.3 The admission of students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties is based on the professional and academic judgement that the student can, with reasonable adjustments by the College, be reasonably expected to fulfil the learning outcomes of the programme to achieve the award.

7.1.4 The College will not admit applicants unless there is a reasonable expectation that the applicant can fulfil the learning outcomes of the programme and reach the required standard for the award.

## **7.2 Admission**

7.2.1 Entry to taught higher education awards in music of the RNCM will normally be by competitive audition, where applicants may demonstrate their performance ability and aptitude to benefit from the programme of study. In addition, higher education awards of the RNCM will normally require prerequisite academic qualifications appropriate to the level of study of the award.

7.2.2 Responsibility for the selection of students lies with Heads of Schools, operating within the general entry requirements for the award specified by the College and any specific programme-based requirements.

### **7.2.3 Offers to Applicants Under the Age of 18**

The Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) is committed to safeguarding and supporting all students, including those who are under the age of 18 at the point of enrolment. In line with this commitment, the College has established a specific process for making offers to applicants who will be under 18 (and at least 16) on the date of registration. Before an unconditional offer is made to any applicant who will be under 18 at the time of enrolment, the College will undertake a formal risk assessment.

### **7.2.4 Communication with Parents/Guardians**

Where appropriate, the College will liaise with the applicant's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to ensure that all parties understand the implications of studying at RNCM as a minor. Written consent will be required for certain aspects of the applicant's participation in College life.

## **7.3 Admission with Advanced Standing**

7.3.1 Students may be awarded credit for prior learning to count towards their award. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) may be Certificated (APCL) or Experiential (APEL), including a supplemental route into year two of the Bachelor of Music programmes. The Academic Board will agree procedures for APL. APL will normally be awarded on entry to the programme of study for the award.

7.3.2 Students may transfer credits achieved at other institutions while studying towards an approved programme of RNCM. This may be as part of an approved exchange or other credit transfer arrangement. Academic Board will approve procedures for the approval of transfer credits and Boards of Examiners will approve the award of credit in specific instances.

7.3.3 Normally no more than 50% of the total credit for any award will be awarded under APL, exchange or other credit transfer. APL, exchange or transfer credits will have credit value and level, but no marks. Award regulations for classification of awards will normally be adjusted to include only marks awarded at the RNCM, not those awarded for APL, exchange or credit transfer.

## **7.4 English Language Requirements**

In alignment with OfS Condition B4 for the effective assessment of proficiency in the English language, the language of operation and instruction at the RNCM will be English and admissions requirements in the programme specification will specify minimum standards of

English required to succeed on programmes. The RNCM recognises IELTS as the currency of English Language and uses the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)'s table as the benchmark. All other equivalents are considered individually as no predefined list will be exhaustive.

Programme	English Language Requirements
BMus (1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> year entry)	IELTS 5.5 in each and every component (or CEFR B2 as defined by UKVI <sup>1</sup> )
BMus 3 <sup>rd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> year entry (including exchange)	Overall IELTS 6.0, with a minimum of 5.5 in each and every component (or equivalent as defined by UKVI <sup>1</sup> )
BA (1 <sup>st</sup> year entry)	IELTS 5.5 in each and every component (or CEFR B2 as defined by UKVI <sup>1</sup> )
GRNCM/MusB (Joint Course)	Overall IELTS 7.0, with a minimum of 5.5 in each and every component (or equivalent as defined by UKVI <sup>1</sup> )
MPerf	IELTS 5.5 in each and every component (or CEFR B2 as defined by UKVI <sup>1</sup> )
International Artist PGDip	IELTS 5.5 in each and every component
PGDip (including exchange)	Overall IELTS 6.0, with a minimum of 5.5 in each and every component (or equivalent as defined by UKVI <sup>1</sup> )
MEd	Overall IELTS 6.5, with a minimum of 5.5 in each and every component
2-year MMus (1 <sup>st</sup> year entry)	Overall IELTS 6.0, with a minimum of 5.5 in each and every component (or equivalent as defined by UKVI <sup>1</sup> )
1-year MMus 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of 2-year MMus (transfer)	Overall IELTS 6.0, with a minimum of 5.5 in each and every component (or equivalent as defined by UKVI <sup>1</sup> )
MPhil/PhD	Overall 7.0 with minimums in each component dependent on specialism (or CEFR C1 as defined by UKVI <sup>1</sup> )

<sup>1</sup>English tests approved by UKVI

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-o-approved-english-language-tests>

## 7.5 Allowed Modes of Study

Taught students at the RNCM are only accepted onto full-time programmes. For Associate Students see section 6.7.

## 7.6 Registration – All Students

- 7.6.1 A full-time taught student entering the RNCM at the commencement of the academic year will be required to register for one academic year's programme on initial registration, and thereafter to register annually at the beginning of each new academic year.
- 7.6.2 A full, or part-time postgraduate research student entering the RNCM will be required to register for one academic year's programme on initial registration, and thereafter to register annually at the beginning of each new academic year, or at the earliest opportunity following interruption.
- 7.6.3 Students will be admitted to an approved programme of study of the RNCM and registered for awards in accordance with conditions and requirements approved by the Academic Board and set out in each Programme Specification and validation document.
- 7.6.4 The permitted length of registration is outlined in the appropriate Programme Specification. Periods of interruption of study will not count towards the student's total permitted period of study. Whilst a student is absent from College, they will not be entitled to principal study lessons or access to College facilities. During an interruption of study, the UKVI will expect a Tier 4 student to leave the country, and the interruption will be reported to them.
- 7.6.5 A student who has not qualified for an award in the period specified and for whom no extension has been granted will normally be ineligible to continue and their programme and studentship will be terminated by the Board of Examiners acting with authority delegated by the Academic Board. In these circumstances, the student will be entitled to a named exit award available within the programme, provided the student has satisfied all the requirements for that award.

- 7.6.6 The RNCM reserves the right to terminate the registration of any student who has failed to disclose information material to the proper consideration of their application, who has presented misleading or false information in applying for their programme or who has not provided all relevant documentation and met all legal or statutory requirements to complete registration.

## **7.7 Associate Students of the RNCM**

The RNCM may admit Associate Students who will undertake a short and intensive period of study for a brief period (normally between one term and one academic year) drawn from the existing RNCM modular offer. Associate Students will not follow a degree or diploma programme of the RNCM. Associate Students may elect to undertake the assessment(s) of the modules for which they are registered, although this will not be a requirement. Associate Students awarded credit who subsequently apply for an award-bearing programme at the RNCM may, at the discretion of the RNCM, use this credit to contribute to the new programme of study.

## **7.8 Exchange Students (Incoming) and Other Students Registered for Credit Only**

The RNCM may admit exchange students and other students registered for credit only from partner institutions with whom they have a formal agreement and other partnerships within the UK and internationally. Such students will study on an agreed programme that constitutes part of an award but will not normally be registered for the award. Such students will have the outcome of their assessment considered by a Board of Examiners and, where appropriate, be awarded credit for modules passed.

## **7.9 Payment of Registration Fees**

If a student does not pay or does not make satisfactory arrangements to pay their registration fees by the end of the academic year or is in any other way in debt to the RNCM, then the student's registration for the academic year in question will firstly be on a temporary basis and may subsequently be terminated. Any student with an outstanding registration fee debt will not be provided with a transcript or formal verification of awarded marks until the unpaid debt has been met in full or satisfactory arrangements have been made with the Deputy Academic Registrar.

## **7.10 Progression**

- 7.10.1 Students will remain on their programme providing they fulfil the requirements for progression and are fit to study, as set out in the Programme Specification and Assessment Regulations or are otherwise allowed to continue at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. Subsequent to failure and where there is no resit opportunity, students will be required to withdraw from their programme of study and their studentship will be terminated. In these circumstances, the student will be entitled to the lower exit award available within the programme, provided the student has satisfied all the requirements for that award.
- 7.10.2 Taught students will not be permitted to take modules from a subsequent year of study until they have completed all required modules in their current year. The exception to this is students who are temporarily registered as a result of the referral or deferral of a module or modules.
- 7.10.3 In all cases where concerns regarding a student's ability to study successfully are presented, prior to termination, the Student Fitness and Return to Study Policy shall be followed.

## **7.11 Transfer**

- 7.11.1 In certain circumstances it may be possible for students to transfer between programmes at the College. Transfer arrangements, where permitted, are set out in Programme Specifications.

- 7.11.2 Credit transfer and Accreditation of Prior Learning arrangements between providers are set out in section 7.3 above. Transfer between providers is subject to entry requirements, such as audition, test and/ or interview.
- 7.11.3 Credit transfer for Direct Entry are set out in the regulations for Accreditation of Prior Learning and are subject to entry requirements, such as audition, test and/ or interview.
- 7.11.4 Postgraduate research students (PGRs) may transfer from full-time to part-time or vice versa (at the end of the second year, or fourth part-time year). Note that for visa reasons this option is not open to international PGRs.
- 7.11.5 For PGRs, following a formal assessment of progress made in Year 2 (Year 4 PT), the examiners may recommend Transfer to MPhil registration and submit for MPhil by the end of Year 3 (FT) or Year 5 (PT).

## 7.12 Termination of Registration

Subject to the provisions of paragraph 10.17, a student's programme may be terminated by the Board of Examiners, acting with authority delegated by the Academic Board, where a student has:

- i. **(taught programmes)** failed a core module, where no compensation for failure is allowed and no further resits are granted;
- ii. has undertaken no assessment for a particular term or where the student has demonstrated severely limited achievement (a pattern of marks of 19% or less) or where all right of resit has been exhausted and where no evidence of extenuating circumstances has been presented;
- iii. **(research programmes)** following a failed formal assessment of progress, where transfer to MPhil is not recommended and the examiners recommend withdrawal from the programme;
- iv. not completed a programme within the permitted timescale;
- v. committed an offence of academic misconduct for which programme termination is the penalty.

## 7.13 Interruption of Study

- 7.13.1 An interruption of study involves a student taking a complete break from study for an agreed period of time, usually up to one academic year.
- 7.13.2 A student may apply for interruption of study due a chronic health condition, an extended career-enhancing performance or professional opportunity or other personal or extenuating circumstances that mean that a student temporarily is unable to engage with their studies. Interruption of study is normally granted from the date of interruption until the beginning of the next academic year for taught students. A reason for the interruption will be recorded and held on the student file.
- 7.13.3 On rare occasions, where a student fails to engage with the appropriate procedures, the College may escalate to the *Procedure for Fitness to Study* with a view to specifying the circumstances within which a student may be permitted to continue as an enrolled student.
- 7.13.4 During the period of interruption of study, the individual's studentship is suspended and they will not normally have access to the RNCM facilities beyond the public areas or access to tuition.
- 7.13.5 Periods of interruption of study will not count towards a student's registration period for an award. An authorised interruption of study would normally require an adjustment to the expected end date of the programme by the equivalent time period.

- 7.13.6 Prior to returning from interruption of study taught students must successfully complete a re-entry audition, in order to assess their performance level.
- 7.13.7 On return from interruption taught students must undertake all assessments for the year of interruption and may not resubmit work that they have previously submitted.
- 7.13.8 On return from interruption PGR students must meet with their supervisor and undertake any progress reviews or formal assessments of progress originally scheduled during the period of interruption.

#### **7.14 Repeat Year of Study**

- 7.14.1 Students who have failed a year of undergraduate study may, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, be permitted to repeat that same year of study in the subsequent academic year. During the repeat year the student must undertake all assessments for the year and may not resubmit work that they have previously submitted. Students will normally only be able to repeat one year of study during the course of their programme. In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Examiners will consider a request to repeat a further year of study.
- 7.14.2 Repeat years of study are not permitted at FHEQ level 7, or 8 except in the case of exceptional circumstances.

#### **7.15 Lapsed Students**

- 7.15.1 It will be deemed that the programme of students who fail to re-register at the beginning of subsequent academic years has lapsed unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. The student will then be withdrawn from the programme retrospectively to the last day of the final term in the previous academic year.
- 7.15.2 Students whose programmes have lapsed through failure to re-register or through expiry of time or where programmes have been terminated will, where they have accumulated sufficient credit, be given a lower exit award. If the student is not eligible for such an award, then they will receive a transcript outlining module marks and any credits earned.

#### **7.16 Withdrawal**

Students who wish to withdraw from their programme of study will be interviewed prior to withdrawal. A reason for the withdrawal will be recorded in order to comply with Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and/or UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) authority requirements.

### **8 APPROVAL, REVIEW AND WITHDRAWAL OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY**

- 8.1 The Academic Board, on recommendation of the Education and Quality Committee, will approve procedures for the approval, modification, periodic review, and withdrawal of programmes of study leading to awards, which will be published in detail in the Academic Quality Handbook.
- 8.2 The Academic Board, on the recommendation of the Education and Quality Committee, will approve new programmes of study, major modifications to programmes and the periodic review (re-approval) of programmes.
- 8.3 Every programme of study will undergo continuous monitoring as agreed by Academic Board and described in the Academic Quality Handbook. Student feedback will be an integral part of the Continuous Monitoring process.

- 8.4 Every programme of study will undergo periodic review (re-approval) at least every five years. In exceptional circumstances the Academic Board may grant an extension to this period of no more than two years.
- 8.5 The Academic Board will ensure that appropriate external advice, including that from the External Examiner, is taken during the initial approval, major modification of the requirements for awards and periodic review (re-approval).

## **9 COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

- 9.1 Programmes may be delivered in conjunction with external organisations under procedures approved by Academic Board, having due regard of the relevant section of the OfS Conditions of Registration and the UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Partnerships published by the QAA.
- 9.2 Where an external organisation is delivering or assessing a major part or the whole of a programme leading to an award of the RNCM, due diligence will be undertaken and there will be an appropriate Collaborative Agreement in place between the RNCM and the partner organisation that will be subject to approval by the Academic Board. Collaborative Agreements will include the process for approval of staffing of the collaborative organisation associated with examining and assessment.
- 9.3 Where an external organisation is involved in providing a work placement or similar learning opportunity or collaborating with the RNCM in other ways in the programme of study delivered by the RNCM, there may, if appropriate, be a formal written agreement between the RNCM and the other organisation.

## **10 ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES AND REGULATIONS**

### **10.1 Boards of Examiners**

- 10.1.1 Boards of Examiners will be constituted by Academic Board for awards of the RNCM as appropriate. A written record will be kept of their proceedings. Minutes will be presented to Academic Board for information following meetings of the Board of Examiners.
- 10.1.2 The membership and terms of reference of each Board of Examiners and the qualifications it can award will be approved by Academic Board. Membership will include appropriate internal and external examiners and others associated with the organisation of the programme of study and academic activity of the RNCM.
- 10.1.3 For each award with registered students, there will be an annual meeting of the Board of Examiners. Other meetings, including those to deal with reassessment of students, may be organised as required.
- 10.1.4 Academic Board will approve procedures for the consideration of students to be anonymised at the Board of Examiners.
- 10.1.5 The Board of Examiners will approve the outcome of assessment for each module, agree the award of credit and progression through taught programmes of study, and confer awards acting with authority delegated by the Academic Board. Other roles of the Board of Examiners will be as agreed in their terms of reference.
- 10.1.6 The Board of Examiners will approve the outcome of assessment for the PGR thesis or portfolio, critical commentary and the viva voce examination, and agree the progression through research programmes of study, and confer awards acting with authority delegated by the Academic Board.

## **10.2 External Examiners (EE)**

- 10.2.1 At least one External Examiner will be appointed for each taught award and programme of study. Acting with authority delegated by the Board of Governors, the Principal will make such appointments on the nomination of Academic Board, which in making such nominations, will have due regard to OfS Condition B4 and the UK Quality Code on Assessment published by the QAA.
- 10.2.2 The College reserves the right to terminate the appointment of an External Examiner where the role is not fully or properly discharged.
- 10.2.3 The standard appointment period is four years.
- 10.2.4 External Examiners will be full members of the Board of Examiners and are expected to attend each meeting. Where an External Examiner is unable to attend a Board of Examiners, the Secretary will arrange for their input to be sought by other means.
- 10.2.5 External Examiners will review and observe samples of assessed work for the award for which they are responsible. External Examiners are also expected to meet annually with students studying on the programme.
- 10.2.6 External Examiners will be asked to offer their opinion and to give feedback on marks attributed to assessed work and may recommend a systematic review of marks awarded for assessment across a module.
- 10.2.7 External Examiners will be asked to provide an annual report on their findings with recommendations and asked to approve the awards made by the Board of Examiners by signing the Board record of marks sheet at each Board of Examiners where awards are made.

## **10.3 Specialist External Assessors (SEA)**

Special External Assessors (SEAs) are practitioners judged able to undertake assessment. They are appointed as members of assessment panels for taught study recitals. The procedures for their appointment will be agreed by the Academic Board and published in the Academic Quality Handbook.

## **10.4 Module Assessment (Taught Degrees)**

- 10.4.1 All modules will be assessed. Students are expected to attempt all required assessments for each module for which they are registered, and to do so at the times scheduled unless special arrangements for students with a disability, or extenuating circumstances allowing deferral have been granted.
- 10.4.2 Modules will be assessed by the methods which have been approved through the programme approval or modification process and appear in the Programme Module descriptors. The methods of assessment for each module are published in the Programme Handbook, which is updated with agreed changes annually. If, as a result of exceptional circumstances, it is necessary to amend a published assessment, the Director of Programmes will be required to give their approval and students notified.
- 10.4.3 Students will be given a minimum of six weeks' notice of an assessment title prior to the submission date. A schedule for the submission and return of assessments will appear in the Programme Handbook. If as a result of exceptional circumstances, it is not possible to give six weeks' notice, students will be informed of an assessment title as soon as is possible.
- 10.4.4 Each module will be examined by internal examiners who are full or part-time academic staff of RNCM, or approved staff of collaborative partners. Module Coordinators will oversee the assessment arrangements for each module.

- 10.4.5 Each module will have one or more assessment component. The combination of assessment components will test every stated learning outcome for a module. The assessment of a module will be no more than the minimum necessary to test whether a student has met the stated learning outcomes. In considering the nature and volume of assessment consideration will be given to both the credit value of the module and its FHEQ level. Modules of a higher credit value should not necessarily have proportionately more elements of assessment and consideration must be given to the overall volume of assessment across the programme.
- 10.4.6 Alternative forms of assessment to those published at the commencement of the module may be permitted exceptionally, including when recommended by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, and will be approved by the Head of Undergraduate Programmes/ Head of the Graduate School having due regard to the decisions of the Extenuating Circumstance Panel and/or specific circumstances of the individual student or group of students.
- 10.4.7 It will be for each approved module description, as agreed in the programme approval or amendment process, to define whether it is a requirement that each assessment component within a module will be passed.
- 10.4.8 Students will not be permitted to repeat any assessment that they have already completed successfully, unless repeating a year of study or returning from a period of interruption.

## **10.5 Assessment Deadlines**

- 10.5.1 It is the responsibility of the student to attend all published examinations and submit all required coursework by the published date. No extensions will be permitted. These dates will be published annually in the Programme Handbook. If as a result of exceptional circumstances, it is necessary to amend a submission date, students will be notified as soon as possible in writing.
- 10.5.2 Coursework submitted later than the published deadline will be deemed to have failed with a mark of 0%.
- 10.5.3 In the case of extenuating circumstances, where the student is unable to attend a published examination or submit coursework by the published deadline the student should submit a request to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.
- 10.5.4 PGRs requiring an extension to the deadline for an annual progress review or formal assessment of progress should consult the RNCM Extenuating Circumstances Policy.
- 10.5.5 In exceptional circumstances, subject to the approval of a funding body or sponsor, if relevant, FT and PT PGRs can make an application to extend their full registration or writing-up period by no more than 12 months.
- 10.5.6 PGRs requiring longer term concessions to their registration should consult the Concessions Policy.

## **10.6 Assessment Support for Students**

A student who seeks specialist support when preparing an assessment will do so no later than two weeks (fourteen days) before the published deadline.

## **10.7 Outcomes of Taught Assessment**

- 10.7.1 In assessing a student's work a marker will judge the standard achieved in accordance with the module learning outcomes and marking guidelines. If the work demonstrates that the learning outcomes have been achieved, the mark will be determined by the extent to which the student



demonstrates this, such that, in principle, the full range 0% to 100% is available. If the learning outcomes have not been met, the appropriate fail mark will be given.

- 10.7.2 Marks for modules will be based on weighted values of the assessment components.
- 10.7.3 A percentage mark will be awarded by the examiner for each element of assessment. This must be expressed as a whole number. For those modules where more than one element of assessment is employed, the absolute value of each element (value not rounded up or down) will be used in the calculation of the overall module mark. The relevant weightings of each component of assessment will be noted in the module descriptors.
- 10.7.4 In order to obtain credit, an appropriate pass mark must be reached. For modules at levels 4, 5 and 6, the pass mark will be 40%. For modules at level 7, the pass mark will be 50%.
- 10.7.5 Marks for each component of assessment within a module and for each module as a whole will be provisional until confirmed by the appropriate Board of Examiners.
- 10.7.6 Where the overall mark for a module or the end-of-year weighted average mark is not a whole number, the mark that will be presented to the Board of Examiners will be 'rounded' to one decimal place (a mark of 63.15 would appear as 63.2 ('rounded up'), a mark of 63.14 as 63.1 ('rounded down'), for example.)
- 10.7.7 Reassessed marks awarded as a result of initial failure will be capped at the level of the pass mark. However, the full mark achieved will be reported to the Board of Examiners and recorded internally.

## **10.8 Outcomes of Research Assessment**

- 10.8.1 Examiners will prepare an outcome report and make a recommendation on the outcome and timeline for any re-submission with details of any further enrolment requirements. Recommended outcomes will be subject to approval by the Board of Examiners.
- 10.8.2 Candidates who fail to resubmit their amendments by the date specified may be deemed to have failed their degree and may be withdrawn by RNCM.
- 10.8.3 Submission of revisions: If the candidate has submitted the corrected thesis or portfolio and critical commentary within the deadline, but the examiners are not satisfied with the revisions, the examiners may agree to allow up to one additional month on one occasion for the candidate to make further, minor revisions.
- 10.8.4 Re-submissions: Candidates will be permitted to resubmit on only one occasion. The candidate shall be required to re-submit for re-examination and approval within 12 months from receipt of the written outcome.

## **10.9 Marking and Moderation of Taught Degrees**

- 10.9.1 A consistent cross-programme approach will be employed for the marking of modules on programmes with the common purpose being to ensure consistency, accuracy, and fairness in accordance with the principles set out in these Regulations.
- 10.9.2 Where a module has more than one element to the assessment, the mark for each discrete component will be recorded to make transparent the derivation of the overall module mark.
- 10.9.3 Tutors who are related to a student or who have declared a personal relationship with a student will not be permitted to directly assess that student or make recommendations to the Board of Examiners regarding the progression or award.

- 10.9.4 Marking guidelines will be employed for all assessment within each programme, details of which will be set out in the Programme Handbook.
- 10.9.5 The External Examiner(s) will be invited to inspect a sample of marked and moderated written work and to attend a sample of live practical assessments across all modules which occur in the years of the programme under their jurisdiction.
- 10.9.6 The purpose of moderation is to ensure the consistency, comparability and appropriateness of the marking and assessment procedures within programmes.
- 10.9.7 All modules within programmes will be subject to moderation by an independent member of staff, normally the Module Coordinator or Programme Leader. Specific procedures for moderation will be reviewed as part of the programme approval and review process and described in the relevant Programme Handbook.
- 10.9.8 The moderator will select and moderate a sample of work which will consist, as a minimum, of a selection of work across the mark range (normally not less than 10%). For modules with less than fifteen students, the sample will not be less than five students. The sample will include all failed work, and a representative selection of each of the other grade levels awarded.
- 10.9.9 The moderation procedure for the modules within a programme, including for the practical elements of a programme will be approved by Education and Quality Committee as part of the programme approval and review process.
- 10.9.10 At the end of the academic session, Module Coordinators will provide a brief report on the marking and moderation process within their module(s) to the Programme Leader, which will be considered as part of the Continuous Monitoring Procedure. This evaluation may highlight staff development issues that will be included in the Action Plan of this review.

#### **10.10 Penalties for the infringement of assessment regulations**

- 10.10.1 The regulations and procedures relating to all assessed work including written examinations, coursework and performance assessments, and the penalties for the infringement of these, are set out in the Student Regulations and Associated Information Handbook.
- 10.10.2 The RNCM will ensure that its assessment regulations are fully and fairly implemented and will take action against any student who contravenes these regulations.

#### **10.11 Compensation**

The College does not permit the compensation of marks at any level of study.

#### **10.12 Feedback Policy and Notification of Marks**

- 10.12.1 For all assessments students will be provided with individual feedback. Feedback may be provided in oral, written, audio or digital format.
- 10.12.2 PGR supervisors provide written feedback on work that has been submitted. The nature, amount and format of feedback will vary according to the type and stage of the research project.
- 10.12.3 Taught student feedback will be timely, constructive, show clearly how the student can improve their work and be explicitly founded on the marking guidelines that are used for the assessment of the module. Written feedback will be provided within three working weeks of the assessment deadline excluding statutory holidays and non-term times. Where modules include more than one element of assessment, the return of the initial assessment/s will allow students reasonable time to build upon those areas identified as strengths and respond to identified areas of weakness. Exceptionally, in cases where the three working weeks deadline cannot be met, students will be informed of the reason and the revised date for the provision of feedback.

- 10.12.4 Unconfirmed marks, that is, those marks which have not been confirmed by Board of Examiners, and tutor feedback will be returned to students with their written assessments using a standard coursework coversheet.
- 10.12.5 The RNCM will conduct regular staff development sessions to ensure the consistency of its marking and the appropriateness and timeliness of student feedback.
- 10.12.6 After the end of the academic session, taught students will receive a notification of their marks in those modules undertaken. For Undergraduate programmes, this notification – a transcript of studies for the year – will include an overall weighted average mark for the year's study. All students undertaking deferred or referred assessments during August/ September will also receive notification via e-mail. Notification of results via e-mail to other students will be considered on an individual basis.

### **10.13 Reassessments**

- 10.13.1 Students will not be permitted to repeat any assessment that they have already completed successfully, that is having achieved the pass mark or above, in order to improve their mark.
- 10.13.2 Students returning after an interruption of study will be expected to undertake all assessments/ review points for the year. Students on taught programmes may not resubmit work that they have previously submitted for assessment.
- 10.13.3 Where a student fails or defers an assessment which is largely based on coursework or practical activities and where it is consequently impossible to replicate the activity save for requiring re-attendance, an equivalent reassessment, which is able to test that the learning outcomes of the module have been achieved, may be employed. In such cases, the Director of Programmes will approve alternative forms of assessment.
- 10.13.4 A taught student who fails to progress to a subsequent year of a programme will be reassessed in all modules for which the pass mark was not attained.
- 10.13.5 Where a student is required to be reassessed in a module which has more than one element of assessment, the student will be required to retake only those assessed elements which were failed.
- 10.13.6 A student who fails to progress to a subsequent year of a programme, and who fails modules at reassessment will not be permitted any further resit opportunity.
- 10.13.7 A student who defers assessments from one academic year to the next will be required to complete/ pass these by the end of the subsequent autumn term. If any assessments are outstanding from the previous year at the end of the autumn term, then the student will be required to undertake an interruption of study and can only return once all assessments have been passed.
- 10.13.8 Students with a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) that grants them an extension for assessments will be entitled to the same extension for reassessments.
- 10.13.9 Students will be allowed one resit opportunity provided that the relevant assessments have been attempted. At the discretion of the Board of Examiners students will be allowed one resit opportunity for failed modules in which they did not submit or did not attend an assessment. A second resit opportunity will not be permitted on any of the College's taught programmes of study.
- 10.13.10 All taught resits will be subject to a fee. Details of reassessment fees are in the Student Regulations and Associated Information Handbook and available from Academic Services.
- 10.13.11 PGR re-submissions may require further enrolment fees.

## **10.14 Recording and Use of Taught Programme Results**

- 10.14.1 Where a candidate fails a module overall but achieves a pass in one or more of the failed components, for the purpose of carrying forward marks, subsequent calculations and for the classification of the degree or lower award, the module mark used will be the 'capped' pass mark.
- 10.14.2 Where a candidate fails a module but achieves a pass by compensation arrangements for the purpose of transcripts any compensated marks will be recorded with the actual mark attained followed by 'C', for example 36C. Marks achieved in reassessments will be recorded as 40R for undergraduate students (50R for taught postgraduate students), provided that the module has been passed, and regardless of the actual marks achieved. Transcripts of grades will carry a note explaining this convention.
- 10.14.3 The only copy of student marks will be held in the student records database within Academic Services. Following the relevant Board of Examiners meetings, all marks held locally, that is, on an individual's OneDrive, PC or written notes, etc. MUST be destroyed. Programme Leaders and the Head of Undergraduate Programmes / Head of the Graduate School may request access to student marks if required.

## **10.15 Extenuating Circumstances**

- 10.15.1 The Education and Quality Committee will approve the constitution and terms of reference of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, which will have the power to vary or amend the requirements for assessment in the light of a submission by students concerning exceptional circumstances, if the request is approved, at the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.
- 10.15.2 The procedures for claiming Extenuating Circumstances and Terms of Reference and Membership of the Panel are published in the annual Student Regulations and Associated Information Handbook.
- 10.15.3 All students with a notified disability will have an agreed Personal Learning Plan setting out the support arrangements for their learning. Where such students require special arrangements for assessment, in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, these will be agreed by the Programme Leader or by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel and will be recorded in the student's Personal Learning Plan.

## **10.16 Academic Integrity**

The Education and Quality Committee will approve regulations for Academic Integrity and for detecting, confirming, and penalising academic malpractice by students. The Education and Quality Committee will establish an Academic Malpractice Committee to investigate and rule on matters brought before it. Penalties will be ratified by the Board of Examiners. The penalties associated with confirmed malpractice are as set out in the Academic Integrity Policy which is published in the Student Regulations and Associated Information Student Regulations and Associated Information Handbook.

## **10.17 Appeals against Decisions of the Board of Examiners**

- 10.17.1 Students will have the right of appeal against the decision of the Board of Examiners relating to assessment, progression, or an award through the Academic Appeals Panel of the Academic Board. The grounds, time limits and process for appeals, articulated in the Academic Appeals Policy, will be agreed by Academic Board and published in the annual Student Regulations and Associated Information Handbook. Appeals will not permit the questioning of the academic judgement of the Board of Examiners.

10.17.2 The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel will be final.

10.17.3 Students will have the right to complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) if they believe their appeal has not been dealt with properly by the College, or that the outcome is unreasonable.

## **11 ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES**

### **11.1 Marking and Moderation**

11.1.1 Marking panels will be employed in all assessments in Principal Study and performance elements of the programme, including practical/ performance electives.

11.1.2 For Principal Study final assessment at Level 6 panels will consist of three members, the Panel Chair, the Head of School or representative and a Specialist External Assessor. Progression panels will consist of at least two members, the Head of School or representative and an internal specialist. A principal study tutor will not examine their own student in performance elements of the programme. An exception may be made where a student has been taught by a range of principal study tutors and no independent tutor is available to assess them.

11.1.3 Single marking will take place by teaching staff employed by the College and overseen by the Module Coordinator with moderation undertaken for written assessments and presentations. All internally set, summative assessment and examinations at undergraduate and taught postgraduate level will be subject to moderation by an independent team member, normally the Module Coordinator or Programme Leader.

11.1.4 Double Marking will take place in cases where the marking of assessments takes place in a 'live' situation, for example, Principal Study techniques and end-of-year recitals. assessments must be witnessed and marked by at least two assessors.

11.1.5 Principal Study Recitals at levels 6 and 7 will be moderated by an approved Moderation Panel. The Panel will meet to discuss moderation and identify any sets of marks that may require adjustment and to identify examples of best practice.

11.1.6 In all cases the External Examiner will have sight of the same sample of assessed work and shall have access to the examinations for the whole cohort.

### **11.2 Awards**

11.2.1 Tables 1, 2, and 3 indicate the number and level of credits required for each Undergraduate award:

**Table 1: Credits, Levels and Awards – Bachelor of Music (4-year programme)**

	Total Credits	FHEQ		
		Level 6	Level 5	Level 4
Bachelor of Music with Honours	480 credits (240 ECTS):	240 credits	120 credits	120 credits
Bachelor of Music (non-Honours)	400 credits (200 ECTS)	160 credits	120 credits	120 credits
Diploma of Higher Education	240 credits (120 ECTS)		120 credits	120 credits
Certificate of Higher Education	120 credits (60 ECTS)			120 credits

**Table 2: Credits, Levels and Awards – Bachelor of Arts (3-year programme)**

	Total Credits	FHEQ		
		Level 6	Level 5	Level 4
Bachelor of Arts with Honours	360 credits (180 ECTS)	120 credits	120 credits	120 credits
Bachelor of Arts (non-Honours):	300 credits (150 ECTS)	60 credits	120 credits	120 credits
Diploma of Higher Education	240 credits (120 ECTS)		120 credits	120 credits
Certificate of Higher Education	120 credits (60 ECTS)			120 credits

**Table 3: Credits, Levels and Awards  
GRNCM Pre-2025 Entry**

	Total Credits	FHEQ		
		Level 6	Level 5	Level 4
GRNCM	340 credits (170 ECTS)	180 credits	80 credits	80 credits

**GRNCM 2025 Entry Onwards**

	Total Credits	FHEQ		
		Level 6	Level 5	Level 4
GRNCM	280 credits (140 ECTS)	160 credits	60 credits	60 credits

11.2.2 A student who fails or who elects to leave before the completion of the Bachelor's programme will be entitled to the exit awards of Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE) or Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE), provided that the requirements for these awards have been successfully completed. The CertHE and DipHE are awarded without title.

11.2.3 The award of a non-Honours degree will be conditional upon:

- the candidate submitting themselves for the examination in all 120 credits which constitute the final year of the programme;
- the candidate successfully passing the Principal Study: Final Recital or Composition Portfolio.

**11.3 Differentiation of Awards**

11.3.1 The awards of Certificate in Higher Education and Diploma in Higher Education will be undifferentiated.

11.3.2 The awards of BMus (non-Honours) will be unclassified.

**11.4 Classification of Awards**

***Bachelor of Music with Honours***

11.4.1 The award of Bachelor of Music with Honours will be made to students who have fulfilled the requirements for that award. Marks of modules are associated with classes as follows:

- First Class: 70% and above.
- Second Class Division I: 60% and above but less than 70%.

- Second Class Division II: 50% and above but less than 60%.
- Third Class: 40% and above but less than 50%.
- Fail: less than 40%.

- 11.4.2 A student will be required to complete 240 credits at Level 6 for the award of Bachelor of Music with Honours (4-year programme); 120 credits in Year 3 and 120 credits in Year 4. The Board of Examiners will consider marks from Years 3 and 4 in determining the award classification. The Year 3 contribution will be the overall weighted average from the 120 credits taken in Year 3, which for the purpose of the award classification will be deemed to be equivalent to a single 60-credit module. The Year 4 contribution will be the overall weighted average from all 120 credits taken in Year 4. The Board of Examiners will therefore, in effect, consider marks from modules totalling 180 credits (60 credits from Year 3 and 120 credits from Year 4). This constitutes a weighting between Years 3 and Years 4 of 1:2 (a one-third contribution from Year 3; a two-third contribution from Year 4).
- 11.4.3 In exceptional circumstances that affect an entire student cohort, and in accordance with QAA guidance, the Academic Board has the authority to approve; on a time-limited basis, a change to how a students' degree outcome is calculated, taking into account the need to uphold academic integrity and standards.
- 11.4.4 The Board of Examiners will consider marks for the BMus 3-year programme observing the same regulations as apply to the 4-year programme but applied to level 6 credit obtained in years 2 and 3 of study. This will be from modules totalling 180 credits: marks representing 120 credits will derive from the Level 6 modules undertaken in Year 3 of the programme marks representing 60 credits will be brought forward from the 120 Level 6 credits undertaken in Years 2 and 3 of the programme.
- 11.4.5 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a First Class if either of the following conditions apply:
- The weighted average for the 180 credits is 70% or higher.
  - The weighted average mark for the 180 credits is 68% or higher and there are marks representing at least 90 credits within the class (70% or higher).
- 11.4.6 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a Second Class Division I if either of the following conditions apply:
- The weighted average for the 180 credits is 60% or higher.
  - The weighted average mark for the 180 credits is 58% or higher and there are marks representing at least 90 credits which are in or above the class (60% or higher).
- 11.4.7 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a Second Class Division II if the following conditions apply:
- The weighted average for the 180 credits is 50% or higher.
  - The weighted average mark for the 180 credits is 48% or higher and there are marks representing at least 90 credits which are in or above the class (50% or higher).
- 11.4.8 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a Third Class if the following conditions apply:
- The weighted average mark for the 180 credits is no less than 40%.
- 11.4.9 Notwithstanding the above guidelines, all differentiation and classification will ultimately be at the discretion of the Board of Examiners which will pay particular attention to borderline or exceptional cases.

## Bachelor of Arts with Honours

- 11.4.10 The award of Bachelor of Arts with Honours will be made to students who have fulfilled the requirements for that award. Marks of modules are associated with classes as follows:
- First Class: 70% and above.
  - Second Class Division I: 60% and above but less than 70%.
  - Second Class Division II: 50% and above but less than 60%.
  - Third Class: 40% and above but less than 50%.
  - Fail: less than 40%.
- 11.4.11 A student will be required to complete 240 credits at Levels 5 and 6 for the award of Bachelor of Arts with Honours; 120 credits in Year 2 and 120 credits in Year 3. The Board of Examiners will consider marks from Years 2 and 3 in determining the award classification. The Year 2 contribution will be the overall weighted average from the 120 credits taken in Year 2, which for the purpose of the award classification will be deemed to be equivalent to a single 60-credit module. The Year 3 contribution will be the overall weighted average from all 120 credits taken in Year 3.
- The Board of Examiners will therefore, in effect, consider marks from modules totalling 180 credits (60 credits from Year 2 and 120 credits from Year 3). This constitutes a weighting between Years 2 and Years 3 of 1:2 (a one-third contribution from Year 2; a two-third contribution from Year 3).
- 11.4.12 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a **First Class** if either of the following conditions apply:
- The weighted average for the 180 credits is 70% or higher.
  - The weighted average mark for the 180 credits is 68% or higher and there are marks representing at least 90 credits within the class (70% or higher), of which at least 60 shall be at Level 6.
- 11.4.13 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a **Second Class Division I** if either of the following conditions apply:
- The weighted average for the 180 credits is 60% or higher.
  - The weighted average mark for the 180 credits is 58% or higher and there are marks representing at least 90 credits which are in or above the class (60% or higher), of which at least 60 shall be at Level 6.
- 11.4.14 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a **Second Class Division II** if the following conditions apply:
- The weighted average for the 180 credits is 50% or higher.
  - The weighted average mark for the 180 credits is 48% or higher and there are marks representing at least 90 credits which are in or above the class (50% or higher), of which at least 60 shall be at Level 6.
- 11.4.15 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a **Third Class** if the following conditions apply:
- The weighted average mark for the 180 credits is no less than 40%.
- 11.4.16 Notwithstanding the above guidelines, all differentiation and classification will ultimately be at the discretion of the Board of Examiners which will pay particular attention to borderline or exceptional cases.



### ***Graduate Diploma of the Royal Northern College of Music (GRNCM)***

11.4.17 The award of Graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music will be made to students who have fulfilled the requirements for that award. Marks of modules are associated with classes as follows:

- Upper Level: 60% and above.
- Lower Level: 40% and above but less than 60%.
- Fail: less than 40%.

11.4.18 The Board of Examiners will consider marks from modules totalling 100 credits from Year 4 of the programme.

#### **11.5 Progression**

##### ***Bachelor of Music with Honours (4-Year Programme)***

11.5.1 To progress from Year 1 to Year 2 of the programme the student will have been awarded 120 credits at Level 4.

11.5.2 To progress from Year 2 to Year 3 of the programme the student will have been awarded 120 credits at Level 5.

11.5.3 To progress from Year 3 to Year 4 of the programme the student will have been awarded 90 credits at Level 6. A student may thus progress from Year 3 to Year 4 having failed a maximum of 30 Level 6 credits. Students who progress to Year 4 with Year 3 failure will not be eligible for the award of BMus (Hons).

##### ***Bachelor of Arts with Honours (3-Year Programme)***

11.5.4 To progress from Year 1 to Year 2 of the programme the student will have been awarded 120 credits at Level 4.

11.5.5 To progress from Year 2 to Year 3 of the programme the student shall have been awarded 120 credits at Level 5.

### ***Graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music GRNCM***

11.5.6 To progress from Year 1 to Year 2 of the programme the student will have been awarded 60 credits at Level 4

11.5.7 To progress from Year 2 to Year 3 of the programme the student will have been awarded 60 credits at Level 5

11.5.8 To progress from Year 3 to Year 4 of the programme the student will have been awarded 80 credits at Level 6

#### **11.6 Reassessment**

11.6.1 The Board of Examiners meets at the end of academic year and in September, prior to the commencement of the academic session, primarily to consider the results of reassessments. As the second teaching period begins immediately after the first in each year, it is not possible to re-sit any failed modules from the first teaching period at this stage. A student who fails a module from the first teaching period will, if permitted, be reassessed by/in the following August/September. It is not normally possible for resits from the first teaching period to occur in the May/June examination period.

## 12 ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

### 12.1 Awards

12.1.1 The number and level of credits required for each postgraduate award are indicated below:

#### ***Credits, Levels and Awards***

<b>Award</b>	<b>FHEQ Level 7</b>
Masters	180 credits (90 ECTS)
Postgraduate Diploma	120 credits (60 ECTS)
Postgraduate Certificate of Higher Education	60 credits (30 ECTS)

12.1.2 Students who are unable to complete the Postgraduate International Artist Diploma within the designated duration will not be permitted to interrupt their study but may re-audition for competitive entry in a subsequent academic year.

### 12.2 Classification of Awards

12.2.1 The award of Postgraduate Diploma and Masters will be made to students who have fulfilled the registration and attendance requirements for that award. Marks of Course Modules are associated with classes as follows:

- Distinction: 70% and above.
- Pass: 50% and above.
- Fail: less than 50%

12.2.2 The award of Postgraduate International Artist Diploma will be made to students who have fulfilled the registration and attendance requirements for that award. This award is undifferentiated:

- Pass: 50% and above
- Fail: less than 50%

#### ***Master of Music and Master of Performance***

12.2.3 The Board of Examiners will consider marks for Level 7 modules totalling 180 credits.

12.2.4 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a Pass if:

- They have achieved 50-69% in *both* the Principal Study strand *and* their chosen options.

12.2.5 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a Distinction if:

- They have achieved 70% or above in the Principal Study strand and an average mark of at least 60% in their chosen options.
- They have achieved 70% or above in their Specialism (90 credits), if selected, with at least 60 of those credits above 70%, and an average mark of at least 60% in the remaining 90 credits.

12.2.6 A candidate who has achieved 60 credits in the Principal Study element plus a further 60 credits in the Options element of the MMus programme, after all available retake opportunities have been exhausted, will be eligible for the award of PG Diploma in Solo Performance/Chamber Music/Orchestral Studies/Composition. Such a candidate will *not* be eligible for the award of Distinction in the Principal Study element.

12.2.7 In exceptional circumstances that affect an entire student cohort, and in accordance with QAA guidance, the Academic Board has the authority to approve; on a time-limited basis, a change to how a students' degree outcome is calculated, taking into account the need to uphold

academic integrity and standards.

### **Postgraduate Diploma**

- 12.2.8 The Board of Examiners will consider marks for Level 7 modules totalling 120 credits.
- 12.2.9 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a Pass if the following condition applies:
- They have achieved 50-59% in **both** Principal Study strand *and* their chosen options.
- 12.2.10 A candidate will be assigned **automatically** to a Distinction if:
- They have achieved 70% or above in the Principal Study strand and an average mark of at least 60% in their chosen options.
- 12.2.11 A candidate who has achieved 60 credits in the Principal Study strand of the PGDip programme, but failed one or more options, after all available retake opportunities have been exhausted, will be eligible for the award of PG Certificate. Such a candidate will *not* be eligible for the award of Distinction in the Principal Study strand.

### **12.3 Compensation for Failure**

Compensation for failure will not be permitted at Level 7, including the Postgraduate International Artist Diploma.

### **12.4 Reassessment**

- 12.4.1 Students will not be permitted to repeat any assessment that they have already completed successfully (that is having achieved a mark of 50% or above) unless returning from a period of interruption.
- 12.4.2 In the event of failure in any component of the Postgraduate International Artist Diploma there is no right of resit.

## **13 ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES**

### **13.1 Awards**

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	<b>FHEQ Level 8</b>
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	<b>FHEQ Level 7</b>

### **13.2 Classification of Awards**

- 13.2.1 Research Degrees awards are undifferentiated.
- 13.2.2 The award of Master of Philosophy will be made to students who have transferred from the PhD only. The formal assessment panel may recommend that the PGR submit for MPhil rather than PhD, in which case the PGR should submit within one year of the communication of the outcome of the Formal Assessment of Progress.

### **13.3 Final Examination**

- 13.3.1 Submission of thesis or portfolio and critical commentary  
To submit a thesis or portfolio and critical commentary, PGRs must be currently enrolled at RNCM and have no outstanding fees. To enable examiners to be appointed, they must give

three months' notice of their intention to submit using the PGR Notice of Intention to Submit form.

If a submission is not made before the end of the maximum period of registration (excluding any interruptions), the PGR will be withdrawn from RNCM and deemed unable to submit, unless an extension is granted owing to reasons of exceptional circumstances. The maximum period of registration is defined in the Regulations, Section 3, and the procedure for applying for extensions can be found in the Regulations, Section 4.2.2.

#### 13.3.2 Request for early submission

PGRs may submit a request for early submission to the Research Degrees Committee. The minimum length of registration before a PGR can submit for a PhD is 24 months FT (48 months PT), after the formal assessment of progress has taken place in Year 2 (Year 4 PT).

#### 13.3.3 Appointment of examiners

The examination team will normally consist of two suitably qualified examiners, one internal and one external, unless the candidate is currently a member of staff at RNCM (FT, FT [fractional] or PT hourly-paid), in which case both examiners should be external. Examination teams are approved by the Research Degrees Committee.

An independent chair will be appointed to chair the viva voce examination

#### 13.3.4 Viva voce examination

The viva voce examination normally takes place 8-12 weeks following submission. Standard attendance at the viva voce examination consists of the candidate, two examiners and an independent chair.

The viva voce examination will be conducted at RNCM, or via video conferencing if deemed appropriate and the candidate agrees.

All candidates must defend their thesis in English.

#### 13.3.5 Examination outcomes

After examining the thesis or portfolio and critical commentary the examiners will prepare a joint outcome report and make one of the following recommendations for subsequent approval by the Board of Examiners. The joint report and list of revisions to be made, if appropriate, will be given to the candidate at the end of the viva voce examination.

- i. The candidate be awarded the degree with no revisions to the thesis or portfolio and critical commentary (except the correction of typographical errors) being required.
- ii. The candidate be awarded the degree subject to minor revisions being made to the thesis or portfolio and critical commentary within 2 months from receipt of the written outcome (4 months for PT students).
- iii. The candidate be awarded the degree subject to major revisions being made to the thesis or portfolio and critical commentary within 6 months from receipt of the written outcome (12 months for PT students). The candidate will be required to enrol for a (further) writing-up period of no less than 3 months and will be entitled to up to 4 hours of supervision over the 6-month period (2 hours in each 3-month term).
- iv. The candidate be invited to revise and re-submit the thesis or portfolio and critical commentary within 12 months from receipt of the written outcome (24 months for PT students). The candidate will be permitted to resubmit on only one occasion. The candidate will be required to enrol for a (further) writing-up period of no less than 12 months and will be entitled to up to 6 hours of supervision (2 hours in each of the 3-month terms). PT candidates are entitled to the same numbers of hours supervision as FT candidates.

- v. The candidate be awarded an MPhil with or without revisions being made to the thesis or portfolio and critical commentary within 12 months from receipt of the written outcome. Examiners should make a recommendation as to whether further supervision is required. If so, the candidate will be required to enrol for a (further) writing-up period of no less than 12 months and will be entitled to up to 6 hours of supervision (2 hours in each of the 3-month terms). PT candidates are entitled to the same numbers of hours supervision as FT candidates.
- vi. No award be made to the candidate and no resubmission be permitted.

#### 13.3.6 Submission of revisions (outcomes ii, iii & v)

If the candidate has submitted the corrected thesis or portfolio and critical commentary within the deadline, but the examiners are not satisfied with the revisions, the examiners may agree to allow up to one additional month on one occasion for the candidate to make further, minor revisions.

#### 13.3.7 Re-assessment and resubmission (outcome iv)

The candidate shall be required to re-submit for re-examination and approval within 12 months from receipt of the written outcome.

Candidates who fail to resubmit their amendments by the date specified may be deemed to have failed their degree and may be withdrawn by RNCM.

Upon resubmission, the examiners shall make one of the following recommendations for subsequent approval by the Board of Examiners.

- i. The candidate be awarded the degree with no corrections to the thesis or portfolio and critical commentary being required.
- ii. The candidate be awarded the degree subject to minor revisions being made to the thesis or portfolio and critical commentary within 2 months of receipt of the written outcome. The revisions will be assessed as outlined in the "Submission of revisions" section above.
- iii. The candidate be awarded an MPhil with or without corrections being made to the thesis or portfolio and critical commentary within 6 months of receipt of the written outcome.
- iv. No award be made to the candidate, and the candidate is withdrawn from RNCM.

The original examiners will normally undertake the re-examination, but in the event of non-availability, new examiners shall be appointed and approved by Research Degrees Committee.

## 14 CONFERMENT OF AWARDS

- 14.1 Awards, and authority for their conferment, are granted by the Board of Examiners acting with authority delegated by the Academic Board.
- 14.2 The RNCM will keep a permanent record of all awards made. The names of those who have received awards of the RNCM will be published by the Academic Registrar in the Conferment of Awards ceremony booklet, subject to data protection provisions.
- 14.3 Following the conferment of an award, an award certificate, if not collected by the student, will be sent via recorded delivery to the student's permanent address as listed in the College records.
- 14.4 A replacement certificate can be issued by the RNCM only on receipt of a written request and on the payment of an appropriate fee.

- 14.5 Students on taught programmes will receive a transcript of their marks after each Board of Examiners, either electronically or in hard copy. Students completing an award will receive formal confirmation of their performance on modules constituting their award which will be in the form of a transcript. Credit values of passed modules on all transcripts also include official confirmation of their value on the ECTS scale.
- 14.6 All students receiving an award will be invited to attend a Conferment of Awards ceremony for the formal presentation of their award. Academic dress, as defined by the RNCM, will be worn for the presentation.

## **15 REVOCATION OF AWARDS**

- 15.1 The Academic Board will have the power to revoke with 'good cause', current or former students of any Degrees, Diplomas or Certificates conferred on them by the College.
- 15.2 Good cause may include but will not be limited to serious misconduct by a student (fraud or falsification of documentation or misrepresentation in connection with the award or distinction, committed before, during or after the period of registration for the award or distinction) or causing severe damage or risk of severe damage to the College's interests and/or its reputation before, during or after the period of registration for the award or distinction.

## **16 STUDENT REPRESENTATION**

Students will be represented on Academic Board and its sub-committees; save those dealing with individual student circumstances such as examination results, academic malpractice and extenuating circumstances. Academic Board will agree the details of student representation when it approves the membership and terms of reference of committees. Student members of Academic Board will withdraw prior to consideration of Reserved Business.

## **17 STUDENT APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS**

- 17.1 Students will have the right to challenge a decision made by the College Board of Examiners. Academic Board will approve an Academic Appeals Policy which details the grounds on which an appeal can be made and the procedure a student should follow to request a review of a decision made by the College Board of Examiners (See section 9.16). The procedure will be published in the Student Regulations Handbook.
- 17.2 Academic Board will approve a Student Complaints Policy which is for students to use if they are dissatisfied about an aspect of their programme, facilities or the delivery of any of the College's services or if they have a complaint in relation to the behaviour of a student, group of students or member of College staff including bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct. A summary of the procedure will be published in the Student Regulations Handbook.

## **18 PROGRAMME ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

### **18.1 Record of Programmes**

- 18.1.1 Each programme will have a Programme Handbook. This will be updated on an annual basis.
- 18.1.2 Each programme of study leading to an award of RNCM will have a Definitive Programme Document which is the Programme Specification. This will be available to students on the website and in the Programme Handbook. A record will be kept of changes made to the Definitive Programme Document since approval of the programme.

## **18.2 Responsibility for Programmes**

- 18.2.1 The overall responsibility for the quality and academic standards of programmes of study offered by the RNCM rests with the Academic Board.
- 18.2.2 Undergraduate programmes will be the responsibility of the Head of Undergraduate Programmes. Taught postgraduate programmes will be the responsibility of the Head of the Graduate School. Strategic oversight will be the responsibility of the Director of Programmes.
- 18.2.3 Each programme will be the responsibility of a Programme Leader who will be responsible to the Head of Undergraduate programme, Head of the Graduate School or Head of Doctoral Programmes for the management, organisation, and administration of the programme, in consultation with the academic staff contributing to all modules within the programmes.
- 18.2.4 Each module within the taught programmes will be the responsibility of a Module Coordinator. The Module Coordinator will be a member of academic staff who contributes to the teaching of the module. The Module Coordinator will be responsible for the efficient organisation and administration of the module, for the development and monitoring of the module and for all assessment and assessment procedures connected with the module.
- 18.2.5 Where a module is cross validated to other programmes, the Programme Leader will consult these programmes regarding changes to the module(s).
- 18.2.6 Quality matters, including the oversight of programme approval and review will be the responsibility of the Education and Quality Committee.

## **18.3 Degree Committees**

- 18.3.1 Each cognate group of degrees (Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Research) will have a Degree Committee.
- 18.3.2 The Degree Committee will have the Head of Undergraduate Programmes, Head of the Graduate School and Head of Doctoral Programmes as Chair for the Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Research Degree committees respectively.
- 18.3.3 Membership and Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually and reported to the Education and Quality Committee. Degree Committees will have student representatives as members.
- 18.3.4 Minutes will be maintained for each Degree Committee, which will be considered by Education and Quality Committee. Each Programme Committee will meet once per term.

# ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC

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### AMENDMENTS SINCE DRAFT

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### Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

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