

Royal Northern College of Music
Belonging, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
Policy & Procedure
Department: N/A
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RNCM
ROYAL NORTHERN
COLLEGE of MUSIC

1. **Introduction**

This policy outlines a commitment to equity of outcomes for our College community in an inclusive environment, which is truly representative of all sections of society and our region, where everyone who works, studies or attends a performance feels they belong. This commitment to this vision and associated values are defined within our Strategic Plan.

The College recognises and continues to abide by the ‘Protected Characteristics’, as stated within the Equality Act (2010). In addition, we wish to go beyond the requirements and strive to provide equity by addressing societal inequalities, through our commitment to Access and Participation of applicants and the success of students and staff, whilst also providing an accessible cultural venue.

The RNCM champions, supports and promotes ‘Underrepresented’ music and musicians, a definition of which is included in section 3 of this policy.

2. **Scope**

This policy sets out the commitment of the Royal Northern College of Music, its Board of Governors, Principal and senior management, to promote equity of outcomes, to eliminate any unlawful or unfair discrimination and to promote belonging in a diverse and inclusive community.

This policy applies to all members of the College community as an employer, Higher Education provider and as an arts centre (including contractors, consultants, volunteer’s casual workers and agency workers). The support and co-operation of all staff, students and visitors to the College is essential in ensuring the success of this policy.

The policy also applies to staff and students working elsewhere on collaborative programmes or on college-related placements trips and conferences.

3. **Definitions**

Belonging: a person’s experience of *feeling* accepted in the RNCM community and that their perspective is valued. Belonging to a community implies a sense of value, that a person is needed and wanted.

Equity: fair and equal access, opportunities, and advancements, regardless of background. This can require action to actively break down barriers to success.

Diversity: refers to the demographics of our community, which may include ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, nationality, disability status, socio-economic background, and many other factors. It can be challenging to diversify teams and when you do succeed, having a certain percentage of diversity won’t transform your team. It’s the environment, culture and values that you foster that brings real change.

Inclusion: requires everyone to be treated fairly and respectfully, despite any perceived differences.

Underrepresented: defined as music composed by musicians/ musicians whose identity/ protected characteristics have led to systemic discrimination and barriers due to their race, ethnicity, sex, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and/or religious beliefs.

4. **Responsibilities**

This policy sets out responsibilities for the implementation of this policy, at the Royal Northern College of Music:

The Board of Governors, through the Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring that the College operates within its policy framework, learning and responding to best practice. In relation to Belonging, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, the Board of Governors will monitor progress through the annual report, offering advice and support to the College.

Each **Line Manager** is accountable for delivering the commitments in their areas of responsibility. Managers are responsible for setting a good example by treating all members of the College with dignity and respect, creating an environment to foster belonging and challenging unacceptable behaviour. Managers should ensure staff are aware of this policy and know how to report discrimination, harassment or bullying and that reporting incidents does not result in victimisation. Complaints should be dealt with fairly, thoroughly, efficiently and confidentiality.

The **Belonging, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Forum (BEDIF)** also has specific responsibilities for tracking action, monitoring equity of outcomes and providing advice and guidance on the implementation of this policy. It must also lead on the development of related policies, procedures and guidance, ensuring the College meets legislative requirements and fosters a tolerant, inclusive, welcoming and diverse working and learning environment and public performance venue. The BEDIF will keep this policy under review and will regularly monitor and assess the progress being made towards achieving the commitments set out within it.

All staff, students of the College, those carrying out work or delivering service on our behalf and our partners and visitors, are required to read and understand this policy and complete training, as appropriate. Everyone is required to promote an environment of belonging, free from discrimination and all forms of bullying and harassment.

Everyone is responsible for challenging and reporting unacceptable behaviour and to support and implement this policy, whilst ensuring that their behaviour and/or actions do not amount to discrimination or harassment in any way.

5. **Policy Aims**

The aims of this policy are:

- Involve Board of Governors, staff, students and other stakeholders in the development and delivery of the College's Belonging, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion objectives
- Ensure that staff, students and their representatives are provided with appropriate forums to discuss issues and raise any concerns
- Create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff and students are recognised and valued.
- Promote a place of work and study, which is welcoming, where there is mutual respect and where bullying and harassment, or intimidation will not be tolerated.

- Have an effective data monitoring and analysis process, which enables effective reporting through our committee structures, to Board of Governors.
- Take seriously any breaches of this policy and take appropriate action, in partnership with staff and students, with the oversight of Board of Governors.
- Meet our legal obligations.
- Ensure equality of opportunity and equity of outcomes becomes embedded within RNCM's business planning processes, committee structures and governance.

6. Policy Implementation

Policy Implementation will focus on three key areas, Community in its broadest sense, which covers all our stakeholders, as well as staff and students.

College Executive, supported by BEDIF will ensure:

Community

- That the entire RNCM community is aware of this policy and related policies and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- The procedure for making a formal complaint (staff, student or visitor) or making an anonymous report, via the 'RAISE IT' reporting webpage, is publicised and accessible.
- This policy is considered, where appropriate, in the development of strategies, policies, procedures and programming to ensure that they strive for equity, demonstrate diversity and promote belonging and do not unlawfully discriminate against anyone in our community.
- Staff, students and Trade Union Representatives are provided with appropriate forums to discuss issues and raise any concerns.
- There are sufficient resources in place to implement this policy effectively and that the annual report, which monitors and highlights progress is submitted to the Board of Governors.

Staff

- Managers and staff are provided with appropriate training and development.
- Procedures are in place for the fair appointment, promotion, pay and development of staff, free from unjustifiable discrimination and that outcomes are monitored and reported.
- All new staff, including casual staff, are made aware of their responsibilities in respect of the policy through the induction process, our Culture and Values and that compliance with this policy and related policies of the College, is explained in all Job Descriptions.

Students

- That new students are made aware of their responsibilities under this policy, through induction and welcome week, with reference to our Culture and Values and expectations of conduct and behaviours.
- Procedures are in place for the fair selection, teaching and assessment of students, free from unjustifiable discrimination, in an inclusive environment where they feel they belong.
- That taught and research programmes of study are reviewed and developed with careful consideration of innovative practice in diverse curriculum and inclusive assessment.
- That the Access and Participation Plan, an OFS requirement to monitor 'Access, Success and Progress' of students, be monitored as a priority and action taken to ensure equity in the access, awarding and employability of all student groups.

7. Complaints

- If a member of staff, student or visitor believes that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation the College will take this very seriously. All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with agreed procedures and any member of staff or student found guilty of unlawful discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action.
- Members of staff who wish to make a complaint of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation should follow the guidance and procedure set out in the College's Dignity at Work Policy. Advice and support can be sought from the Human Resources Department.
- The Student Complaints procedure should be followed if any student wants to make a complaint of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.
- Members of the public should raise a complaint in accordance with the College's published Complaints Procedure.
- The College will make every effort to ensure that any complaints are dealt with promptly and fairly.
- The College makes provision for complaints to be made anonymously (if preferred) through its online reporting tool, RAISE IT!

8. Monitoring

Actions and Outcomes will be reported in the BEDI annual report prepared by the BEDI Forum, to the Board of Governors, via the Principal and Executive Committee.

9. Related Policies and Procedures

- [Grievance Policy](#)
- [Staff Disciplinary Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct and Discipline](#)
- [Dignity at Work Policy](#)
- [Complaints Procedure \(Public\)](#)
- [Student Complaints Procedure](#)

ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC

POLICY APPROVAL/REVIEW PROCESS

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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Name/Committee	Date	Version
Executive Committee	20 October 2025	1
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