

Royal Northern College of Music
Partnerships
Policy & Procedure
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RNCM
ROYAL NORTHERN
COLLEGE of MUSIC

Partnership working locally, regionally, nationally and internationally is central to the College's vision and encompasses academic, professional, international, pre-tertiary and City and City Region partnerships and lease and licence arrangements.

The Partnership Policy governs the principles and criteria used by the College in considering proposals for new academic, professional and international institutional partnership arrangements. Other arrangements are in place in relation to pre-tertiary and City and City Region partnerships and lease and licence arrangements and these are therefore not within the scope of the Policy.

The Policy is divided into three sections: academic partnerships as defined by the UK Quality Assurance Agency, professional partnerships (those linked to the music profession) and international institutional partnerships (those leading to staff/student exchange or collaboration with international institutions including those in the EU).

A Academic Partnerships

1 Context

This policy sets out the types of academic partnerships that the College supports, and the principles and criteria governing the establishment and management of collaborative academic provision. Such partnership arrangements cover both national and transnational education.

The College regards taught provision as an academic partnership when it meets the definition of collaborative provision given in UK Quality Code published by the QAA; *'educational provision that leads to the award of academic credit and that is delivered, assessed or supported in partnership between two or more organisations'*.

The College does not regard an academic partnership for the purpose of this policy as including student/staff exchange agreements or placements and work-related learning; for which there are separate procedures.

Whilst the College recognises that partnership working brings significant benefits, it also acknowledges such arrangements require the careful management of risks. Any institution or organisation with whom the College enters into a formal agreement is expected to comply with all relevant statutory requirements of a UK higher education institution and act in accordance with College policies and procedures as appropriate. It will only develop collaborative programmes where it can be confident that the quality will be excellent.

An academic partnership should enable the College:

- to develop and broaden its academic portfolio and grow its student population where appropriate;
- to enhance the experience of its students and staff;
- to fulfil its widening participation and lifelong learning remit;
- to enhance its national / international profile.

2 Academic Partnerships - Typology

2.1 Validation

Describes the process by which the College judges that a programme/module(s) developed and delivered by another institution or organisation is/are of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to an award of the RNCM or lead to specific credit towards an award of the RNCM.

2.2 Dual Awards

Describes an arrangement under which two (or more) awarding institutions design and deliver a single programme leading to separate awards being granted by both (all) awarding institutions (i.e. there are two (or more) certificates).

2.3 Joint Awards

Describes an arrangement under which two (or more) awarding institutions design and deliver a single programme leading to a single award made jointly by both (all) awarding institutions (i.e. there is one certificate authorised by both (all) awarding institutions).

3 Policy Statement

The College welcomes provision delivered through a formal academic partnership (national and transnational) that can contribute to the fulfilment of its strategic goals without detriment to its reputation.

The College will engage in provision delivered through a formal academic partnership that:

- has clear intended outcomes, that are best achieved in collaboration and demonstrate a good fit with the College's strategic goals; *and*
- is supported by, and compatible with the academic portfolio of the College; *and*
- involves partner organisations of good repute, which have a mission, ethos and educational objectives that are in accordance with those of the College; *and*
- meets the requirements of QAA's UK Quality Code and other relevant national and international quality assurance reference points; *and*
- enhances the student experience and supports students and graduate employability; *and*
- is fully costed and financially viable.

The College will not engage in an academic partnership that:

- does not demonstrate a good fit with the College's strategic goals; *or*
- does not add to or strengthen the academic portfolio of the College; *or*
- involves partner organisations which have a mission, ethos and educational objectives incompatible with those of the College; *or*
- would involve a partner institution which is not in good financial standing or which does not have appropriate legal status; *or*
- would not meet the requirements of the QAA's UK Quality Code or other external reference points; *or*
- has perceived risks that outweigh any potential benefits to the College; *or*
- that is in direct competition with the College's existing provision.

Details of the approval process for and operation of academic partnerships are provided in the RNCM Academic Quality Handbook.

B Professional Partnerships

1 Context

The strategic importance of a range of professional partnerships, locally, nationally and internationally to the College has grown in recent years and is an integral part of the Strategic Plan. Partnerships enhance the impact of the College's work, its global reach and the student and staff experience. The College will continually develop the quality and breadth of its artistic, educational and business partnership activities in a collaborative spirit.

Professional partnerships may result in student/staff exchange agreements or placements and work-related learning opportunities for students for which there are separate procedures.

Whilst the College recognises that partnership working brings significant benefits, it also acknowledges such arrangements require the careful management of risks. It will only develop partnerships where it can be confident of the value it will add to the College's activities.

Partnerships enable the College:

- to extend its local, national and international reach;
- to provide opportunities for students and staff to engage with a range of organisations;
- to broaden its range of activities and be at the forefront of the music profession.

2 Types of Professional Partnership

The College engages with a wide and diverse range of partners.

For the purpose of this policy a Professional Partner is defined as one with whom the College will have an agreement¹ for the provision of educational and/or professional services to the mutual benefit of students, staff and/or the College. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Principal, where the risk of the relationship is deemed to be low and the professional standing and reputation of the partner high, a partnership may be formally recognised in the absence of a formal written agreement.

3 Policy Statement

The College welcomes partnerships that can contribute to the fulfilment of its strategic goals without detriment to its reputation.

The College will establish partnerships with institutions/organisations that meet all of the following key criteria:

- they demonstrate an alignment with the aspirations of the College's Strategic Plan;
- they share in the underlying philosophy and ethos of the College;

¹ The nature of the agreement will depend on the professional standing of the partner, their relationship with the College, custom and practice within the profession and the risk posed by the relationship. An agreement for this specific type of partnership may therefore take the form of a formal written agreement, Memorandum of Understanding or, when appropriate, a verbal agreement.

- they will benefit the external profile and reputation of the College through association;
- they will enhance the student experience and support student and graduate employability

and at least three of the following supplementary criteria:

- they bring specialist expertise and experience to inform/broaden the curriculum offer;
- they contribute to the 'real-world' learning experience and environment for students;
- they promote artistic innovation;
- they facilitate research and/or knowledge exchange;
- they enable the development and sharing of best practice;
- they support future recruitment to the College;
- they foster meaningful engagement with the wider community;
- they provide opportunities for continuing professional development;
- they create/facilitate efficiencies in working practice;
- they generate income to further enhance the student experience.

Partners that meet all three of the key criteria, but fewer than three of the supplementary criteria, may still be considered, dependent on the value they bring to the College.

4 Approval of Professional Partnerships

For potential professional partners who do not have a demonstrable professional standing, or for whom the risk of a partnership could be medium or high, a proposal for the development of the partnership should be made on the New Partner Proposal Form (Appendix 2) accompanied by the Risk Assessment (Appendix 4). Those proposing the partnership are responsible for the completion of these forms. Proposals will require the consideration by the Academic Management Group and approval by the Executive Committee. In cases where the overall risk is high, financial due diligence should be undertaken.

C International Institutional Partnerships

1 Context

The international profile and standing of the College, including international recruitment, is an integral part of the Strategic Plan. International institutional partnerships enhance the impact of the College's work, its global reach and the student and staff experience.

International institutional partnerships may result in student/staff bilateral exchange agreements and work-related learning opportunities for students for which there are separate procedures.

Whilst the College recognises that partnership working brings significant benefits, it also acknowledges such arrangements; particularly with institutions at an international level require the careful management of risks. It will only develop relationships with international partners where it can be confident of the value it will add to the College's activities.

International institutional partnerships enable the College:

- to extend its international and global reach;
- to provide opportunities for students and staff to engage with a range of international higher education providers;
- to broaden its range of global activities and be at the forefront of higher music education.

2 Types of Partnership

For the purpose of this policy an International Institutional Partner is defined as a higher education provider with whom the College will have a formal Framework Agreement or Inter-Institutional Agreement as defined by the European Commission and the Erasmus+ National Agency for the provision of educational and/or educational-related services to the mutual benefit of students, staff and/or the College.

The College also has a number of international agents and ambassadors who are formally approved by the Director of Marketing and Communications and not within the scope of this Policy.

3 Policy Statement

The College welcomes partnerships with international higher education providers that can contribute to the fulfilment of its strategic goals without detriment to its reputation.

The College will establish partnerships with international institutions that meet all of the following key criteria:

- they demonstrate an alignment with the aspirations of the College's Strategic Plan;
- they share in the underlying philosophy and ethos of the College;
- they will benefit the external profile and reputation of the College through association;
- they will enhance the student experience and support student and graduate employability.

and at least three of the following supplementary criteria:

- they bring specialist expertise and experience to inform/broaden the curriculum offer;
- they contribute to the 'real-world' learning experience and environment for students;
- they promote artistic innovation;
- they facilitate research and/or knowledge exchange;
- they enable the development and sharing of best practice;
- they support future recruitment to the College;
- they foster meaningful engagement with the wider community;
- they provide opportunities for continuing professional development;
- they create/facilitate efficiencies in working practice;
- they generate income to further enhance the student experience.

Partners that meet all three of the key criteria, but fewer than three of the supplementary criteria, may still be considered, dependent on the value they bring to the College.

4 Approval of Partnerships

A proposal for the development of a new partnership with a European institution should be made on the Pre-Bilateral Agreement Form (Appendix 3) or the partner institution's own form, accompanied by the Risk Assessment (Appendix 4). For an international (non-EU) partnership a proposal should be made on the Pre-Bilateral Agreement Form (Appendix 3) or the partner institution's own form. Those bringing forward the suggestion for the partnership are responsible for the completion of the necessary documentation in consultation with the partner institution. Where the overall level of risk is identified as high appropriate financial due diligence should be undertaken.

Proposals for European and International institutional partnerships will be considered by the Academic Management Group and approved by the Executive Committee. Where appropriate, a Memorandum of Understanding should be signed.

D Termination of a partnership

Subject to the terms and conditions of any Memorandum of Understanding in place, the College may terminate a partnership giving an agreed notice period² in writing.

² This will depend on the nature of the partnership and could be three, six or twelve months.

Appendix 1

Categories of Partnership with the RNCM

Included in the scope of this Policy

Academic Partnerships

Validation arrangements with other Higher Education Institutions
Joint Degree programmes
Programmes/modules delivered collaboratively with partners
Teaching delivered through reciprocal arrangements
Partnerships supporting research and knowledge exchange activity
Project based activity

Professional Partnerships

Partnerships with professional orchestras, ensembles and opera companies
Partnerships across the wider music industry
Partnerships promoting artistic innovation

International Partnerships

Partnerships with overseas conservatoires, universities and pre-tertiary providers
International Networks
Agent and ambassador arrangements

Not included in the scope of this Policy

Pre-Tertiary Partnerships

Partnerships with UK schools and FE Colleges
Partnerships with music education hubs and music services
Partnerships with national youth ensembles
Partnerships with youth music organisations
Partnerships with organisations working in the pre-tertiary sector

City and City Region Partnerships

City and GM-based cultural providers (excluding music)
City and GM-based business partners
Networks of City partners working in cognate areas

Lease and Licence Arrangements

Partners requiring space at the College from which to conduct their work on an exclusive (lease) or non-exclusive (licence) basis

Appendix 2

New Partner Proposal Form

Name and location of partner
Type of organisation <i>Please state the type of organisation e.g. higher education provider, school, business, orchestra etc.</i>
Name of person bringing proposal forward
Links that the partner has with the College <i>Please provide details of any formal or informal links the proposed partner has with the College</i>
Engagement with key criteria <i>Please provide a brief summary of how the proposed partner meets the key criteria detailed above</i>
Engagement with supplementary criteria <i>Please provide a brief summary of how the proposed partner meets at least three of the supplementary criteria detailed above</i>

Appendix 3

Pre-Bilateral Agreement Form to develop an international institutional partnership

Name and email of a contact person	
Name of conservatoire/school	
Proposal for collaboration/exchange (brief outline)	
International Reputation	
Programmes of study	
International world class teaching staff	
Discipline Strengths	
Performance opportunities for students	
Exchange and International Student support (outline of services available and experience of hosting exchange students)	
Academic facilities	
Accommodation for exchange students	
Assessment system	
Existing Agreements with other institutions	

Appendix 4

Risk assessment tool for proposals to establish an academic / professional / international institutional partnership

All initial proposals to establish a collaborative (academic) or professional partnership must be ranked against the relevant criteria below. The scoring scale is:

- 1 No/low risk
- 2 Low to medium risk
- 3 Medium to high risk
- 4 High risk

Type of organisation	Risk rating
Higher education provider (university / college)	1
Higher education provider (EU)	2
Higher education provider (international)	3
Private college / organisation	3
UK school / FE college	2
Music education hub / music service	1
Youth music organisation	2
Professional orchestra/ensemble/opera company (within the UK)	1
Professional music organisation / company (within the UK)	1
Professional orchestra/ensemble/opera company (within the EU)	2
Professional music organisation / company (within the EU)	2
Professional orchestra/ensemble/opera company (International)	3
Professional music organisation / company (International)	3
Partner's strength / reputation	
Well-resourced, strong reputation, international standing	1
Well-resourced, strong reputation, national / European standing	1
Adequately resourced, good reputation	2
Limited resources with no / limited reputation	4
Strong potential to enhance RNCM's reputation	1
Potential to damage RNCM's reputation	4
Value partnership will add to RNCM	
Partnership will add significant value to College's activities	1
Partnership will add some value to College's activities	2
Partnership will add no value to College's activities	4
Partner's quality standing (academic collaborative proposal ONLY)	
Highly favourable (QAA or equivalent) report	1
Acceptable (QAA or equivalent) report	2
No information or QAA reports of equivalent give cause for concern	3
Knowledge of partner	
College staff regularly visit proposed partner	1
College staff occasionally visit proposed partner	2
College staff have never visited proposed partner	3
Total risk	
Overall level of risk (low = 5-8, medium = 9-12, high = 13-17)	

Royal Northern College of Music

Memorandum of Understanding for <<Insert Name>>

This Memorandum of Understanding "the Memorandum" is made this day of _____ <<DATE>> between the Royal Northern College of Music, 124 Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9RD and the <<INSERT REGISTERED ADDRESS>>. The Memorandum records the intention of the two partners to establish a formal relationship between with a view to promoting further co-operation in areas in which they share common objectives.

1. Purpose

The Memorandum provides a framework for partners to strengthen links and share designated resources as defined under the Scope and Areas of Co-operation.

2. Areas of Co-operation

Areas of Co-operation include but are not limited to <<SPECIFY AREAS/RESOURCES>>.

3. Objectives

The Objectives of the Memorandum are to develop links between the two partners which will involve enhancing the student experience by providing facilities at either partner to <<SPECIFY>>.

4. Term

The Memorandum will be for a period of <<INSERT YEARS/MONTHS>> commencing on <<INSERT DATE>> and terminating on <<INSERT DATE>>.

5. Review

The Memorandum will be reviewed at the mid-point of the agreement.

6. Termination

The Memorandum may be terminated by either partner giving three months / six months / one year notice in writing <<DELETE AS REQUIRED>>.

7. Dispute Resolution

In the event of any dispute emerging, the Partners will make best effort to solve the problem amicably and promptly between themselves by negotiation.

8. Marketing and Promotion

Each Partner may make reference to this Memorandum in any advertising or promotion provided that the detail has been discussed with, and agreed by, the other Partner.

9. Resources

The resources available to the Partners at either institution are <<SPECIFY>>. Booking arrangements agreed by either partner for the resources of the other partner must be followed. Arrangements will be monitored to ensure use follows agreed procedures and within agreed maximums between the two partners. The Partner and their authorised visitors will also be granted a right to use the communal areas within the partner institution including any catering facilities but students of Partners will not be entitled to any discounts except those applicable to their home institution.

Partner users will not be entitled to use any resources of the other partner not specified in this Memorandum.

10. Services

The following services in the Royal Northern College of Music will be provided: <<INSERT DETAIL>>.

The following services in the <<INSERT ORGANISATION>> will be provided: access to <<SPECIFY DETAILS>>.

The following services in the Royal Northern College of Music are excluded: student/staff IT facilities, printing and photocopying, access to the Library or to practice rooms.

The following services in the <<INSERT ORGANISATION>> are excluded: <<SPECIFY DETAILS>>.

11. Royal Northern College of Music Obligations

The Royal Northern College of Music will be required to comply with the <<INSERT ORGANISATION>>'s regulations issued from time to time which will be issued to the Royal Northern College of Music as part of this Agreement. The Regulations include <<INSERT DETAILS>>.

12. <<INSERT ORGANISATION>> Obligations

The <<INSERT ORGANISATION>> will be required to comply with the Royal Northern College of Music's regulations issued from time to time which will be issued to the <<INSERT ORGANISATION>> as part of this Memorandum. The Regulations include conditions relating to access, security, equipment use, health and safety, prohibition of smoking in the premises and or common parts, and keeping the shared facilities clean and tidy etc.

Partners should note the College's commitment to equality and diversity in order to ensure equality of opportunity which is an intrinsic element in the delivery of the aims and objectives of the College. The College is committed to the values of probity and accountability and will uphold all laws relevant to countering bribery and corruption in all the jurisdictions in which the College operates.

The RNCM is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults studying in the College by raising awareness of safeguarding and promoting a safe environment in which to learn and explore music. If partnership activities include work with children under 18 or vulnerable adults, specific safeguarding arrangements must be agreed between both partners. The College's policies on safeguarding are available for download from the RNCM website or are available on request from the Vice-Principal (Operations).

13. Academic Freedom and Equal Opportunities

The RNCM is committed to maintaining academic freedom and integrity and to operate within an open ethical environment.

14. Access

The <<INSERT ORGANISATION>> will be permitted a right of access to the Royal Northern College of Music's premises along designated circulation routes. Such access will be permitted between 0800 hrs and 2345 hrs Monday to Sunday inclusive. Details of any closure arrangements for Statutory and Bank Holidays will be communicated to the <<INSERT ORGANISATION>>. Access outside these times will be by prior arrangement. Access cards will not normally be provided as students and staff of the <<INSERT ORGANISATION>> are expected to be escorted by their hosts.

The Royal Northern College of Music will be permitted a right of access to the <<INSERT ORGANISATION>>'s premises <<INSERT ACCESS DETAILS>>.

15. Insurance

Each Partner will ensure that, in respect of their buildings, appropriate insurance cover is in place for all authorised users of the accommodation.

16. Legal Costs

Each party is to pay its own legal costs in connection with the completion of the Memorandum, whether or not the matter proceeds to completion.

Signatures of Parties to the Memorandum

Representative of Royal Northern College of Music

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

Representative of <<INSERT ORGANISATION>>

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date: