

Royal Northern College of Music

# Sponsorship Policy

Policy & Procedure

Department: Academic Services

Document owner: Academic  
Registrar

Approval Committee: Academic  
Board

Revised: January 2020

Period of Approval: 3 Years

Review Date: July 2026

RNCM  
ROYAL NORTHERN  
COLLEGE of MUSIC

## **RNCM Sponsorship Policy: Student Visa**

The College as a Student Visa Sponsor is expected to ensure that it and its students are compliant with the points-based system policy guidance and the immigration rules.

The following procedure has been developed in order to comply with the requirements of the UK Visas & Immigration. (UKVI).

The College's duties to UKVI for all Student Visa students are complying with immigration rules, monitoring, record-keeping and reporting. The specific duties are:

- Monitor College's and students' compliance with immigration rules.
- Ensure that English language requirements are met before assigning Certificates of Acceptance for Studies (CAS), and keep records of this.
- Issue Certificates of Acceptance for Studies.
- Maintain up-to-date contact details.
- Collect and store passport details and proof of eligibility to study in the UK.
- Ensure that entry onto new courses represents academic progression.
- Notify UKVI of any applicable changes in course of study and/or study status that impact on course end date or mode of attendance.
- Record work placement details and report to UKVI if necessary.
- Report to UKVI any breaches of the immigration rules by sponsored students.

### **1. Admissions/CAS**

The College will only issue CAS to an applicant (valid for 6 months) after receiving evidence of:

- English language ability as per entry criteria as evidenced by an IELTS certificate (or RNCM approved alternative).
- Financial requirement: a non-returnable 25% deposit against course fees owed to the College.
- Receipt of CAS request form confirming course details; immigration history and financial evidence of funds to cover the remainder of fees and maintenance.
- Academic progression, which is defined as follows:
  - Completion of a Bachelor's degree, FHEQ Level 6, from the RNCM or a UK HEI, prior to study for an RNCM Level 7 qualification.
  - Completion of a Master's degree, FHEQ Level 7, from the RNCM or a UK HEI, prior to study for an RNCM/MMU Level 8 qualification.

In order to develop deeper specialisation in a principal study discipline the College may exceptionally permit academic progression to a programme of study at the same level. In such instances the programme will complement a student's previous study and enable the development of skills and knowledge beyond that of the previously undertaken course. Examples might include:

- Completion of a Master's degree, FHEQ Level 7, from the RNCM or a UK HEI, prior to study for an RNCM International Artist Diploma.
- Completion of a Master's degree, FHEQ Level 7, from the RNCM or a UK HEI, prior to study for an RNCM Postgraduate Diploma Advanced Studies (and vice versa).
- Completion of Master's degree, FHEQ Level 7, from the RNCM or a UK HEI, prior to study for the RNCM Master of Performance (and vice versa).

Please refer to RNCM Admissions Policy for further details on admissions.

Please refer to Graduate School Handbook for more details of Post-Graduate programmes.

CAS requirements are different from Admissions requirements, and you may be asked to provide specific information on sources of funding, ID, immigration history, etc. The College is under an obligation from the UKVI and so may request this in order to facilitate the application and acceptance of your CAS. The UKVI will undertake further checks, however, the College has a responsibility to ensure that all requests for a CAS are legitimate and as such undertakes checks to help minimise the risk of a refusal. Each visa refusal is recorded against the individual's immigration record and the College's allocation.

## **2. RNCM Responsibilities**

Responsibility for the admission and monitoring of Student Visa students resides with Principal Study Schools, Academic Services, Professional Engagements Office and Marketing & Student Recruitment, as follows:

### **Schools and staff involved in overseas recruitment (Heads of Schools)**

- Advise students about potential study at the College in line with academic progression requirements

### **Marketing & Student Recruitment**

- Request CAS allocation from UKVI
- Issue CAS to new applicants
- Support visa extension applications
- Keep Student Visa information on applicants' records up-to-date.
- Ensure students meet entry requirements as per RNCM Admissions Policy.
- Monitor expiry dates of current students' leave to remain.

### **Academic Services**

- Responsible for ensuring that required data is on the student record prior to and during Registration.
- Report non-engagement and non-enrolment to UKVI.
- Report changes in student course status.
- Report termination of studies or withdrawal from studies.
- Report changes in course length or course title.
- Report to UKVI unauthorised absences (it is College's responsibility to judge whether absence is authorised or not). Please refer to RNCM Attendance Policy.
- Report to UKVI course deferrals.
- Report to UKVI transfers to another course or university, college, conservatoire.
- Maintain up-to-date student contact information on the Student Records System (Unit-E).
- Monitor non-engagement and unauthorised absences in line with RNCM Attendance Policy.
- Provide information to students about their immigration responsibilities and remind them on a termly basis.
- Notify Student Finance and Records Administrator of course transfers, interruptions or withdrawals; inform students of the related impact upon their immigration status; and work with the Admissions department where students will require a new visa to continue their studies.

### **Professional Engagements Office**

- Record professional engagements outside the College and report to UKVI as appropriate.

### **3. Students' Responsibilities**

- Submit an accurate, timely CAS Request Form and any supporting documentation requested by the College, in order to facilitate CAS issue.
- Make sure that all documentation and financial circumstances meet the immigration rules at the time of application.
- Respond promptly to all requests to present passport, visa and other documents for scanning.
- Present documentation / evidence for extended / renewed leave to remain in the UK to the Academic Services to be copied to student file/Unit-E.
- Keep the College updated with any changes to your documents for example.
  - a new passport
  - an extended visa (not through the College)
  - change in immigration status
- Register for the course of study **before the late registration deadline at the beginning of each academic year.**
- Attend lectures and tutorials and complete all compulsory elements of the course on time.
- Request and receive permission for any absences and keep the College up to date on any issues that impact on studies.
- Follow College procedures if planning to suspend/defer or intending to withdraw from studies (please refer to Student Information Handbook).
- Leave the UK within **60 days** in case of deferral/suspension or withdrawal from study and provide the International Office with information regarding departure from the UK.
- Comply with the restrictions on the working hours (20 hours during term-time) and performance engagements. Please refer to Student Visa Policy Guidance for details on restrictions. Further information can be obtained from Academic Services.
- Keep up to date with the immigration rules.
- Apply for visa extension in time.
- Maintain up-to-date term time contact details and inform the College immediately of any change in these details.

**Should RNCM become aware that a student has not been compliant with Student Visa Policy Guidance and/or their responsibilities, RNCM reserves the right to withdraw sponsorship as a result and will inform UKVI, as appropriate.**

### **4. Changes during studies**

Some changes that occur during period of study at the College may affect students' immigration permission to be in the UK and may have to be reported to the RNCM or the UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI). It is students' responsibility as a Points-based system migrant to report changes in personal information to UKVI; whilst the College has a duty to report any academic changes during their stay.

### **5. Monitoring and Reporting**

The College will monitor and report Student Visa students' related information as outlined in 'Responsibilities' section.

### **6. Review of Procedure**

This procedure is accurate at the time of publication. The College will make every effort to update the procedure in line with changes in immigration rules. The Executive Committee will sign-off the Sponsorship Policy. Any changes to immigration rules will supersede the procedure document.