

<b>Royal Northern College of Music</b>
<b>Student Health and Wellbeing</b>
<b>Policy &amp; Procedure</b>
<b>Department: Academic Services</b>
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RNCM  
ROYAL NORTHERN  
COLLEGE of MUSIC

## **1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) takes the health and wellbeing of its students seriously. *RNCM Strategic Plan: Defining the future of music (2020-2025)* commits to fostering “a culture of healthy ambition; a nurturing and supportive environment, which embeds our specialist knowledge and expertise in health and wellbeing into core training for students, equipping them to establish and sustain healthy, fulfilling and lifelong careers in music.”
- 1.2 This policy lays out RNCM’s approach to supporting students’ wellbeing, including mental health support, and the College’s general duty of care (see Appendix 1).

## **2. OUR MISSION AND VALUES**

- 2.1 The RNCM wants to be a place where all students are resourced to feel safe, supported and resilient, and where all staff are aware of their role in facilitating students’ wellbeing.
- 2.2 To achieve this, the Student Health and Wellbeing Hub promotes a whole- institution approach to student wellbeing, considering the student as a whole person, and basing its work on an ethic of care and evidence-based practice (see Appendix 2).

## **3. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1 Although some key roles in the RNCM have responsibility for developing and leading the implementation of student wellbeing strategies, the responsibility for student wellbeing lies with every member of the College community.
- 3.2 The Head of Music, Health and Wellbeing is the strategic lead for developing and delivering appropriate wellbeing policies, procedures and services.
- 3.3 The Head of Student Disability and Wellbeing is the operational lead for the development and delivery of student disability and wellbeing services, for undertaking this in accordance with the College’s policies and procedures, and for dealing with individual issues of student wellbeing.
- 3.4 To support a whole-institution approach, all academic and professional services staff have a responsibility to act on any concerns regarding a student’s wellbeing.<sup>1</sup> Staff are not expected to be experts in student wellbeing support but are expected to notice when students might need support, know where to signpost students for appropriate advice and to escalate their concerns.
- 3.5 Specialist support in student disability and wellbeing, Alexander Technique and English Language is provided by staff in the Student Health and Wellbeing Hub team, acting in accordance with dedicated job roles and any relevant professional body requirements.
- 3.6 The Student Disability and Wellbeing Advisors are the first point of contact for students who may have concerns for their own or another students’ wellbeing, and for staff concerned about a student.

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<sup>1</sup> Any staff with immediate concerns for a student should consult the RNCM’s [How to Talk about Risk poster](#).

- 3.7 RNCM students, especially at undergraduate level, engage with academic teaching and research expertise in musicians' health and wellbeing. This is the responsibility of the Lecturer in Musicians' Health and Wellbeing, whose support is also embedded in workshop series and other learning opportunities that include the input of external specialists in performing arts health.
- 3.8 Unite Students is a private landlord and while their staff are not healthcare professionals or on call, RNCM will work with them collaboratively to safeguard and provide support to students as required. RNCM also has two Senior Residents (one female, one male) who are contactable to support students in Sir Charles Groves Hall of Residence.
- 3.9 Students have responsibility for being proactive in managing their own wellbeing wherever possible and in seeking support as and when appropriate. In particular, they should provide information about any situation or condition that will impact on wellbeing and for which they would like support from RNCM, or which may impact upon their time at College.
- 3.10 RNCM's Student Health and Wellbeing Hub and Student Services will make available information about their services and a wide range of external sources of support, including the British Association of Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM), Help Musicians UK, the Independent Society of Musicians (ISM) and the RNCM's partnership with the Greater Manchester Universities Student Mental Health Service (GMUSMHS). They will undertake this through a regularly reviewed approach to communications, including collaboration with the Students' Union.

#### **4. POLICY**

- 4.1 RNCM is committed to fair and equitable treatment for all members of the College community and the disclosure of any health and wellbeing issue, whether physical or mental, will be treated confidentially and will not put the student at a disadvantage.
- 4.2 RNCM will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the provision of wellbeing support is appropriately resourced based on the needs of students. The amount of support to be provided will be determined using demographic and referral data, needs analysis and service demand, and will focus on early intervention and prevention as far as possible. We are committed to further developing our partnership with external specialist services within the local community to develop the best referral pathways, rather than replicating services.
- 4.3 The College will consider the best-quality research evidence in designing, implementing and evaluating wellbeing services. RNCM will also encourage collaborative research into areas that impact on student health and wellbeing. Any such project should ensure that those who are responsible for delivering a key service of the area being researched are a core part of the project/research team. This will ensure that any outcomes from research can be used to enhance practice across the RNCM for the benefit of our students.

#### **5. RNCM EXECUTIVE**

- 5.1 The College's Executive will ensure the appropriate allocation of resources to support student wellbeing. All policies and procedures, including those relating to academic matters, should consider potential impacts on student health and wellbeing.

## **6. ACADEMIC / PROFESSIONAL SERVICES LEVEL**

- 6.1 For students a focus will be placed on ensuring a smooth transition to College with information and activities designed to help them settle in with as little disruption as possible. RNCM will design learning opportunities and activities that offer students the very best opportunity to make the most of their time at the College with space to allow them to engage in extracurricular activities that will supplement and enhance the academic delivery.
- 6.2 Schools will ensure that student wellbeing and mental health needs are considered compassionately in curriculum design to avoid unnecessary pressure on learning and assessment. Heads of Programme / School will monitor student feedback and attendance in accordance with the Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy and ensure that steps are taken to deal with any areas of concern promptly. Staff, including Personal Tutors, will be available for academic and pastoral advice within a reasonable time and will aim to make learning opportunities and methods as inclusive as possible.
- 6.3 All Professional Services departments are required to consider any wellbeing implications arising from their activities, policies and procedures. Professional Services will monitor student feedback to ensure that any areas needing improvement can be quickly identified and addressed.
- 6.4 The Student Health and Wellbeing Hub team will facilitate debriefs following any serious student wellbeing incident to ensure that the support process and pathways are reviewed and are fit for purpose.
- 6.5 Schools and Professional Services departments will encourage their staff to engage in wellbeing training and all staff who have a student-facing role should be given time to engage in key training events such as Staff Conferences, online training packages and workshops delivered by Student Health and Wellbeing Hub team members to enable them to deal with student wellbeing concerns confidently, while paying attention to their own self-care.
- 6.6 Where concerns arise regarding a student's wellbeing, these will be shared confidentially with the appropriate staff in other schools and services to explore cohesive support, monitoring and review options with the student's consent. Concerns about a student being at risk to themselves, others or from others must also be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), or Adults at Risk Liaison Officer (ARLO).
- 6.7 Student wellbeing activities and support will be coordinated by the Student Health and Wellbeing Hub whose Head has strategic responsibility for student wellbeing, although much of the activity will be delivered in collaboration with the Students' Union, Schools, other services and external specialist services. Heads of School will be able to approach the Student Health and Wellbeing Hub for advice and guidance on School-specific wellbeing-related activity.
- 6.8 Schools and Professional Services departments will encourage their staff to engage in training that provides tools and resources to sustain their own wellbeing. Specialist student-facing staff, such as the Head of Student Disability and Wellbeing, Student Disability and Wellbeing Advisors and Counsellors will receive regular supervision, funded by the College, to review their caseloads with an external clinical supervisor.

## **7. STUDENTS**

- 7.1 Students have a responsibility for looking after their own health and wellbeing and for raising any wellbeing and support needs in a timely manner. We understand that some students may find it difficult to engage with support and we encourage other students and staff to raise issues of concern on these students' behalf. Students should feel comfortable to approach any member of staff to discuss their wellbeing, even if the staff member decides to refer them to the Health and Wellbeing Hub team.
- 7.2 As an educational establishment the College will provide information on how best to look after one's own health and wellbeing and offer access to health and wellbeing information and support services. Where a student may need support, and that support is offered to them through RNCM, they will be expected to engage with the support services that are available. However, ultimately it is the individual's responsibility how they choose to do so.
- 7.3 The RNCM Student Health and Wellbeing Hub team will collaborate with the Students' Union to understand students' needs, review relevant policies and procedures and coordinate the sharing of information, such as through publicity campaigns and other communications to students. The Hub team will also monitor student feedback via the Student Experience Forum, NSS and over relevant mechanisms.

## **8. THIRD PARTY CONTACT**

- 8.1 The RNCM does not usually share students' personal information with parents, guardians or other family members unless we see appropriate evidence that a student has expressly agreed to this (this would normally mean a signed written statement of consent). Information can be shared with family members only where we can identify a clear legal basis for the sharing under data protection laws.

## **9. LINKS TO OTHER RNCM DOCUMENTS (on the website unless otherwise stated)**

- Safeguarding Policy and related policies, procedures, statements and codes of conduct.
- Extenuating Circumstances Policy
- Fitness and Return to Study Policy
- Student Complaints Policy
- Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy
- Belonging Equity Diversity Inclusion Policy
- RNCM Privacy Statement

# ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC

## *POLICY APPROVAL/REVIEW PROCESS*

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### **AMENDMENTS SINCE DRAFT**

<b>ISSUE No</b>	<b>PAGE</b>	<b>DETAILS</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>ISSUED BY</b>
1		First draft	June 2025	Emma Hilton-Wood
2		Final – ready for publication	July 2025	Emma Hilton-Wood

### **APPROVALS**

This document requires the following approvals.

<b>Name/Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>
Executive Committee	23 June 2025	1

## **APPENDIX 1: Statement on Duty of Care**

The RNCM has a general duty of care to its student community under common law. Our legal obligations and our policies and procedures provide the framework within which we take reasonable steps to provide an environment that supports personal safety, positive wellbeing and good mental health for students who live and study as members of our community. The RNCM will provide information, guidance and support for students so that they can make informed choices to shape their own wellbeing.

The RNCM's duty of care includes providing a high standard of education and research, together with learning and pastoral support to a standard that can reasonably be expected of a 'Small and Specialist' Higher Education Institution. It will also ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of its registered students. In providing support to individual students, the RNCM will also have due regard to the safety of its entire community of students and staff.

The RNCM recognises the important role of statutory service providers in the immediate and ongoing support of students requiring clinical or mental health treatment. The RNCM is not able to provide services that are properly the responsibility of the statutory services but will support students as far as it is able in accessing the statutory services they may need.

## APPENDIX 2: Health and Wellbeing Support Overview

# Health and Wellbeing Support Overview

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RNCM students can access several sources of support. These are underpinned by the principles of the RNCM Health and Wellbeing Hub: **whole-institution approach**, **whole-person approach**, **ethic of care** and **evidence-based practice**. For more information, see Moodle (Student Support) or email: [wellbeing@rncm.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@rncm.ac.uk).