

# ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC

## Remuneration and Human Resources Committee Annual Remuneration Report for the Year Ended 31 July 2025

### Introduction

This report summarises the approach the Committee takes in agreeing the remuneration package for the Principal for 2024/25. In doing so, it sets out how the Committee has discharged its responsibilities as set out within the approved terms of reference. The report is written for the Board of Governors.

### Structure and Membership of the Committee

The composition of the Committee reflects the guidance published by the Committee of University Chairs and the requirement set out in the Remuneration Code that Remuneration Committees must be independent and competent. The Committee is chaired by an independent governor and the Principal is not a member. The Committee has carefully considered whether the Principal should be in attendance at meetings and agreed that this is helpful when discussing business due to the insights she brings on matters relating to the remuneration of her Executive Team (excluding herself) and staffing policy.

The Secretary to the Committee is Professor Dawn Edwards, Clerk to the Board.

The members of the Remuneration and Strategic Staffing Committee during the period were:

Hazel Province (Chair)  
Kathryn Morley<sup>1</sup>  
Wendy Smith  
Ravi Gupta (Chair of the Board)  
Colin Walklin (Deputy Chair of the Board)

The Chair and members of the Committee are appointed by the Nominations Committee based on their experience and skills in relation to remuneration and human resource decisions.

### Terms of Reference of the Committee

The terms of reference were reviewed by the Committee at its November 2024 meeting. The terms of reference for 2024/25, which were the same as 2023/24, were as follows:

1. To consider and determine on behalf of the Board the remuneration arrangements for the Principal of the College, the Clerk to the Board and members of the Principal's Executive Team in accordance with the Higher Education Remuneration Code.
2. At the Board's request, to consider and determine the remuneration arrangements for senior managers in the College, who are not members of the Principal's Executive Team.
3. To advise the Board or, on behalf of the Board, the Principal, in relation to the general salary structure, remuneration and terms of employment of the College's senior management.
4. To consider any severance terms for the Principal or members of the Principal's Executive Team on the termination of their employment and make recommendations to the Board.

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<sup>1</sup> From 1 January 2025

5. To approve and keep under review on behalf of the Board, the College's Human Resources staff policies designated as a Regulation of the College.
6. To keep under review the College's Human Resources key performance indicators.
7. To take account of the College's responsibilities for equality and diversity when considering the remuneration of staff falling within the remit of the Committee and in the consideration of human resources policies designated as a Regulation of the College.
8. To review the diversity profile of the College's staff and monitor the actions taken to redress the balance.
9. To provide the Board with an annual report of the business of the Committee which is transparent and meets the requirements of good governance.
10. To consider such strategic staffing issues as may be referred to it by the Board, or by the Executive Committee of the College, and to advise the Board and/or the Executive Committee accordingly.

### **Dates of Meetings and Attendance**

Meetings of the Committee were held on the 30 October 2024, 12 March 2025 and 12 June 2025. Each meeting was quorate and well-attended. The minutes of each meeting have been received by the Board.

The Principal, (Professor Linda Merrick) and Secretary to the Committee (Professor Dawn Edwards) were in attendance at each meeting in 2024/25, but each withdrew from the meeting of 12 June 2025 when their remuneration was discussed and agreed for 2025/26. The Deputy Principal (Operations) (Susan Baines) and Head of Human Resources (Paul Hynes) were in attendance at each meeting as required for specific agenda items.

### **Approach to Remuneration**

The College signs up to and participates each year in the national pay negotiations conducted by Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) on behalf of higher education institutions. With respect to the 2025/26 national pay award, at the time of the June meeting of the Committee, UCEA and the Unions were still in negotiation, with the pay award being anticipated to be in the region of 1.4%.

Comparative data was made available to the Committee on the basic and total remuneration for the Head of institution, institutional income and expenditure, size, complexity and student numbers for Conservatoire UK peer institutions. The Committee took into consideration the Principal's outstanding performance overall and leadership, her standing nationally particularly with respect to her role as Chair of Conservatoires UK and the extensive lobbying with Government and key stakeholders she undertakes. After careful consideration and recognising the continuing financial pressures the higher education sector is facing, members agreed a six percent enhancement to her salary including the National Pay Award to bring her remuneration closer to that of comparative Conservatoire UK institutions.

The Committee operated in accordance with best practice as recommended in the Higher Education Code of Governance, the Remuneration Code and other guidance produced by the Committee of University Chairs and the Office for Students.

## The Principal's remuneration package 2024/25

The Principal's salary reflects the scale and complexity of the job, comparisons with benchmarks and her performance measured against objectives set by the Chair of the Board. The Principal has long played a significant National leadership role among UK Conservatoires as well demonstrated outstanding leadership at RNCM. The Committee has been mindful for some time of the disparity between salaries awarded to the Principal of RNCM and other UK Conservatoires and have sought to reduce this disparity over a number of years.

Professor Merrick's remuneration comprises her salary, benefits and pension. The College does not operate a system of performance-related pay.

<b>Emoluments of Principal</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
Salary	£179,906	£190,700
Benefits	£2,449	£2,606
Subtotal	£182,355	£193,306
Pension costs	£45,600	£54,693
<b>Total</b>	<b>£227,955</b>	<b>£247,999</b>

### Expenses

All expenditure for and by the Principal was wholly and exclusively for approved College business with the aim of enhancing the outcomes for students and staff and raising the profile of the College regionally, nationally and internationally.

### Analysis of Principal's remuneration

	<b>2024</b>		<b>2025*</b>	
	<b>Median</b>	<b>Pay multiple</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Pay multiple</b>
College	£46,047	4.9	£50,454	4.9
Professional services	£34,198	6.6	£37,828	6.6
Academic staff	£56,951	4.0	£60,446	4.1

\* Data based on 31 March each year

### Recommendation

The Remuneration and Human Resources Committee asks the Board to endorse its approach to the remuneration of the Principal. The Committee has endeavoured to achieve a balance between rewarding success, demonstrating good governance and use of resources. The Board is invited to receive the report and endorse the Committee's approach.

*Hazel Province*  
 Chair of the Remuneration and Human Resources Committee

November 2025