



Royal Conservatoire  
*of* Scotland

**Research Programmes**  
**MPhil/PhD**

**Guide for Applicants**  
**Academic Year 2012/13**

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. If you require further information regarding the application and selection process generally, please do not hesitate to contact the Royal Conservatoire's Registry in the first instance. Contact details are:

0141 332 4101  
registry@rcs.ac.uk  
<http://www.rcs.ac.uk>

If you require further specific information about research degrees at the Royal Conservatoire, the FAQ's on our website should be helpful <http://www.rcs.ac.uk/research/faqs/>. We advise all applicants to discuss their research ideas informally before applying with Stephen Broad (for applications in Music) or Ros Steen (for applications in Drama). Their contact details are:

**Stephen Broad**  
0141 270 8329  
[doctoraladmission@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:doctoraladmission@rcs.ac.uk)

**Ros Steen**  
0141 270 8330

## THE ROYAL CONSERVATOIRE OF SCOTLAND

In 1994, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (then, the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama) became the first UK Conservatoire to be awarded degree-awarding powers for taught courses by the Privy Council. Since then, the Royal Conservatoire has developed a range of vocationally-orientated degree courses in music and drama performance, including taught Masters courses in vocal and instrumental performance, opera, composition, conducting, acting, directing and producing. In 1998, the Royal Conservatoire won springboard funding from the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council to establish a National Centre for Research in the Performing Arts. From October 2000, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland has offered research programmes leading to the awards of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Philosophy (MPhil) of the University of St Andrews. The Conservatoire's first doctorate was awarded in 2005.

## RESOURCES

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is housed in a modern, specially designed building and has some of the best performance and rehearsal facilities of any conservatoire in Europe. The auditoria include the New Athenaeum Theatre as the principal auditorium for plays and opera, the Chandler Studio Theatre and The Conservatoire Concert Hall. In addition the Alexander Gibson Opera School, which opened in 1998, houses rehearsal and coaching rooms and a stunning performance space. The Royal Conservatoire library contains one of the most comprehensive music and drama collections in the UK and features reading and study areas, listening booths for the extensive collection of CDs, cassettes and records and viewing facilities for the video and DVD collection. ICT facilities and a study lab for research students are available.

Conservatoire research students also have access to the University of St Andrews' library resources.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS**

Research programmes offered by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland lead to awards of the University of St Andrews. Research students will matriculate at both the Conservatoire and the University and will have access to the facilities of both institutions. **Programmes of study will be undertaken at, and administered by, The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.** All fees will be payable to the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

## **A DISTINCTIVE RESEARCH ETHOS**

The mission of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is:

**To create in Scotland the international centre of excellence and innovation for learning, teaching and research in performance, in which quality of student experience is paramount.**

As performance to the highest standards is central to all of the Conservatoire's work, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's research activities will always be located within that context. The key elements of **performance and/or creation** give the Royal Conservatoire's research profile a clear and individual identity, both in general as regards research within the Conservatoire and in particular as regards the acceptance of research students and the awarding of research degrees.

## **SPECIALIST AREAS OF STUDY**

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland offers opportunities for suitably qualified students to work towards the achievement of research degrees in appropriate areas of enquiry. Applications will only be successful if it is clear that the proposed research can best be undertaken within a Conservatoire context, in which performance and/or creation is held central.

The specific areas for research degrees will be:

- the processes and methodologies of developing new performance work (music/drama/music theatre), including collaborative and devised performance
- performance
- musical composition, in all genres, for live, electro-acoustic and mixed media
- Scottish music
- methodologies of specialist performance training, including the use of IT.

## TYPES OF SUBMISSION

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland will accept any one of three possible forms of submission for a research degree. The final proposal as to which form of submission is most appropriate to a student's work will be agreed between the student and her/his supervisors and submitted to the Research Degrees Committee for approval in good time before the anticipated date of submission. Three forms of submission for the degrees of MPhil and PhD will be acceptable. In the following examples (which relate to PhD), the word "portfolio" is used to signify the presence of **performance-centred** and/or **practice-based** work in a submission, and therefore in a student's research processes throughout her/his programme of study. Candidates will be examined on their submissions through a *viva voce*.

### **1. Portfolio accompanied by Written Commentary**

A substantial body of original work that represents or embodies new knowledge, derived from original research. It will be accompanied by a succinct written commentary (of around 12,500/ 15,000 words) contextualising the production and/or presentation of that original work. The original work submitted must be documented fully in appropriate forms that will be accessible to future researchers.

### **2. Joint Portfolio with Dissertation**

A combination of original work and an extended written text (of around 40,000/50,000 words) which together (but not necessarily separately) represent or embody new knowledge and derive from original research. The original work submitted must be documented fully in a form that will be accessible to future researchers.

### **3. Thesis**

A substantial written thesis (of around 80,000/100,000 words) representing or embodying within the text, new knowledge deriving from original research.

## ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

The essential qualification for admission to the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland as a research student is the possession of a good honours degree or the attainment of a level of professional achievement equivalent to that of a good honours degree. Within the processes laid out above, a student who possesses a research Master's degree, or has attained a level of achievement equivalent to that of a research Master's degree, may be permitted to enter the Conservatoire as a second-year research student. The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is committed to the principles of the Accreditation of Prior Learning, including experiential learning, and will bring those to bear on the admissions process for its research students. Applicants for whom English is a second language must demonstrate an IELTS score of 7.0.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

The research proposal is a key part of the application. In general, the most successful applications are strong in three key areas: the proposal itself is strong, showing the context and need for the research with an awareness of previous work in the area; the

application shows that the candidate is well-prepared, in terms of their previous experiences and/or training, to undertake the proposed research; and the proposal makes a reasoned case for the proposed course of research being undertaken here at the Royal Conservatoire – usually because a particular specialist supervisor or other resource is available here. As noted above, we advise all applicants to discuss their research ideas informally before applying with Stephen Broad (Music) or Ros Steen (Drama).

Research programmes offered by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland will lead to the award of MPhil or PhD of the University of St Andrews, but initial applications are handled by the Royal Conservatoire.

An application fee of £35, which is non-refundable, must accompany your Royal Conservatoire of Scotland application form. Cheques should be made payable to the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

If you meet the criteria for admission and your proposed research can be supported by the Conservatoire, you will be invited for interview and/or audition. If successful, you will be asked to fill in an application form for the University.

Applicants intending to commence their studies at the beginning of academic year 2012/13 are advised to submit their applications by Friday 27 January 2012.

## **THE SELECTION PROCESS**

All applicants submit an application form and research proposal. Those applicants who meet the admissions criteria and whose proposed research projects accord with the Royal Conservatoire's research priorities and context will be interviewed/ auditioned. At least two supportive references from appropriately qualified persons will also be required. The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland may require an applicant to provide additional material in support of her/his application prior to her/his interview/audition.

An audition panel will be chaired by a specialist member of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland staff and will include other members of staff or external advisers as appropriate. An interview panel will normally be chaired by the Head of Research in the appropriate school and will include at least one other member of staff or external adviser as appropriate. At the conclusion of the interview/audition process, the panel will formulate a recommendation to the Research Degrees Committee regarding the application. In exceptional cases, the panel may defer its recommendation until

- additional material has been requested and received from the applicant; and/or
- the applicant has participated in other interviews/auditions.

The Research Degrees Committee will recommend an applicant's admission to the University of St Andrews. (NB – although the offer of a place is made by the University, students will undertake their research programmes at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland).

## **SUPERVISORY ARRANGEMENTS**

Supervisors for research students are appointed, with the approval of the University of St Andrews, by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's Research Degrees Committee. At least one supervisor must be a member of staff of the Royal Conservatoire. A second or joint external supervisor will also normally be appointed.

## **REGISTRATION AND PROGRESS**

Successful applicants will initially be admitted as general research students. The Research Degrees Committee will review their progress after the first year of study (two years in the case of part-time students). On the basis of that review, the Research Degrees Committee will recommend to the University of St Andrews registration for either the degree of PhD or MPhil. After the initial review, the progress of students will be reviewed annually.

## **FEES: SESSION 2011/12**

	Full-Time	Part-Time
Home and EU students:	tbc	tbc
Overseas students:	tbc	tbc

Please note that these fees are offered for guidance only and will be subject to annual increase. By agreement with the Conservatoire's Finance Officer, fees may be paid by instalment. Details will accompany any offer of a place.

## **DURATION AND MODE OF STUDY**

Study may be undertaken on either a full- or part-time basis. The normal duration of study is as follows:

MPhil: 24 months full-time or 48 months part-time.

PhD: 3 years full-time or 6 years part-time. A one-year continuation period is normally allowed.

With the approval of the Research Degrees Committee, it may be possible for a student to change his/her mode of study depending upon individual circumstances.

## **Students with Disabilities**

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland welcomes applications from all applicants and has substantial experience in supporting disabled students. Currently, over 15% of students at the Royal Conservatoire have declared a disability or medical condition. Applicants who have a disability or special need and would like further information about facilities and support are invited to contact Jane Balmforth, the Conservatoire Counsellor and Disability Adviser. Jane contacts all applicants who declare a disability or medical

condition on their application form to discuss any adjustments that may be required, and will provide information about studying at the Conservatoire. If support is required for audition or interview, we would encourage you to help us to make the necessary arrangements by contacting by telephone, in writing or by email either Jane Balmforth (email: [j.balmforth@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:j.balmforth@rcs.ac.uk) phone: 0141 270 8282) or Registry (email: [registry@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:registry@rcs.ac.uk)). The Royal Conservatoire Counsellor and Disability Adviser is also available to meet you when you come for audition/interview to discuss your particular requirements, sources of further information and any special funding e.g Disabled Students' Allowance. For more information, please request a copy of the Conservatoire's booklet 'Information for Disabled Students and Applicants', or download this from the following website – <http://www.rcs.ac.uk/research/study>.

## **Equal Opportunities Policy and Statement**

**The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland operates an Equal Opportunities Policy.** The Royal Conservatoire welcomes a diverse population of staff and students. The Conservatoire is committed to promoting equality in all its activities and aims to provide a performing, learning, teaching, working and research environment free from discrimination and unfair treatment.

All endeavours will be made to grant equality of opportunity to applicants, staff and students regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnic origin, disability, marital status, age, religious belief, social or economic class and not to discriminate against them through the application of any unjustifiable factor

The information you give in response to any questions regarding Equal Opportunities is required only for statistical purposes, eg for monitoring application and admission rates to courses and will not be available to course selectors and will have no bearing on the admission decision.



# Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

## Equal Opportunities and Monitoring Questionnaire 2012/13

To help the Royal Conservatoire ensure that its Equal Opportunities Policy is being carried out, please provide the following information.

***Details concerning ethnicity will be kept in strictest confidence, separate from your application form and will be used for equal opportunities monitoring purposes only.***

Name of last secondary school:			
Leaving date:		Home Postcode:	

### Ethnicity (Please tick):

- |                                 |                          |  |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| White British                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black or Black British – Caribbean         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White Irish                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black or Back British – African            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White Scottish                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Black Background                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other White Background          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mixed – White & Black Caribbean            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian/Asian British – Indian    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mixed – White & Black African              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian/Asian British – Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mixed – White & Asian                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian/Asian British Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Mixed Background                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Chinese                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Ethnic Background                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other Asian Background          | <input type="checkbox"/> | I do not wish to disclose this information | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Marketing Monitoring

How did you hear about the course you are applying for?

Careers Office / Adviser		Teacher	
RSAMD Website		Directly from the RSAMD	
Word of Mouth		Publication (please state)	
Open Day		Other (please state)	