



Royal Conservatoire
of Scotland

**Student Support Service
Information 2019-20**

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Please note: this information has been written with a primary audience of students in mind.

Welcome!

We hope that you will find the information about support services at the Royal Conservatoire useful. If you have any questions about support please contact Sarah Ward, Assistant Registrar (International and Student Experience), on 0141 270 8281 or welfare@rcs.ac.uk in the first instance.

The Royal Conservatoire aims to ensure that all students receive any support they may need during their course. We provide a range of support depending on students' needs. This includes:

- the counselling service
- support for study skills and written work
- support for students with a disability
- financial support through the Discretionary & Childcare Fund
- advice on accommodation
- international students

You will also find information about the Library and IT (Information Services), Medical Services and the Students' Union in this booklet.

If you are wondering whether to declare a disability or any additional support needs, we encourage you to contact the Counsellor & Disability Adviser to discuss any concerns or questions you may have.

We welcome feedback from students on provision in the Royal Conservatoire and on the information contained in this booklet.

About Glasgow

Glasgow is a historic city of around 600,000 people, which has grown from a hamlet on the banks of the River Clyde in the sixth century to become the commercial and industrial capital of western Scotland.

Many parts of the city centre are now pedestrianised and a Shopmobility scheme operates from the main shopping centres (Buchanan Galleries and St Enoch's Centre). Some of the streets are quite steep, as Glasgow was built on several hills!

You can find out more information about Glasgow on <https://peoplemakeglasgow.com/> and about Scotland on <https://www.visitscotland.com/>

Applications and Admissions

The Royal Conservatoire's Admissions Policy has full details of the process of applying to the Royal Conservatoire. A copy of the policy is available from Academic Administration and Support via admissions@rcs.ac.uk

Audition Process

If you are a disabled applicant and would like further information about facilities and access, please contact the Counsellor & Disability Adviser on 0141 270 8282 or j.balmforth@rcs.ac.uk. All on-time applicants to the Royal Conservatoire are auditioned or interviewed.

If you would like to discuss arrangements for your audition or interview, you can contact the appropriate Head of Department in the School of Music, Head of Programme in the School of Drama, Dance, Production and Film or the Counsellor & Disability Adviser either by e-mail or by telephone. (See the contact list on page 31.)

The Counsellor & Disability Adviser contacts all applicants who declare a disability at application— this is to give you the opportunity

to discuss any adjustments for your audition/interview.

The Counsellor & Disability Adviser is also available to meet you when you come for audition to discuss particular adjustments, sources of further information and any special funding that might be available, for example the Disabled Students' Allowance.

Learning Agreements

When you have been accepted onto a course or programme at the Royal Conservatoire, a meeting will be arranged for you with the Counsellor & Disability Adviser to draw up a written agreement of support, known as a Learning Agreement. The Learning Agreement details adjustments for assessments, extended deadlines for written work etc. The Learning Agreement is reviewed every academic session.

If you are assessed as having a disability (e.g. dyslexia) during your course, a Learning Agreement will be drawn up as described above and you will be fully supported on your programme of study.

The booklet entitled '*Information for Disabled Students and Applicants*', describes the support that is provided; this booklet is available from Jane Balmforth or may be downloaded from www.rcs.ac.uk

Counselling Service

Dr Jane Balmforth is the Royal Conservatoire's Counsellor and Disability Adviser. Jane's room (1.21) is located on the ground floor near the lift (Renfrew Street Campus) and is fully accessible.

Jane has an open door policy, so it is not always necessary to have an appointment. Alternatively, you can phone Jane on 0141 270 8282 or contact her by e-mail.

E-mail: j.balmforth@rcs.ac.uk

The Counsellor & Disability Adviser is available to provide:

- counselling for students
- support for students with disabilities

Jane provides a neutral and confidential space to meet any student who wishes to discuss personal matters that may be causing uncertainty or unhappiness.

If you have a disability or medical condition, you are encouraged to contact the Counsellor & Disability Adviser to discuss your support needs, whether for your application,

audition/interview or for your course/programme of study in general.

The leaflet: '*Counselling: How can it help me?*' provides further information on the counselling service in the Royal Conservatoire. The leaflet is available from Jane or from information stands throughout the Royal Conservatoire.

RCS also provides the following counselling services for students:

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Counselling through British Sign Language
- Evening counselling on weekdays 5-8pm

Further information on these services is available from Jane Balmforth and from the Students' Union.

Effective Learning Service

The Royal Conservatoire provides an Effective Learning Service whose tutors are available to all students wishing to strengthen their study skills at any point in their academic life. This includes undergraduates, postgraduates, part-time students, students experiencing difficulties due to a Specific Learning Disability e.g. dyslexia, students whose first language is not English.

The Effective Learning Tutors are available to provide assistance on a range of topics, either in one-to-one meetings or specific workshops, including:

- Improving the quality of your written assignments
- Critical thinking
- Reading strategies and note-making
- Revision and preparation for exams
- Referencing
- Managing your time & prioritising

If you would like to arrange a meeting with the Effective Learning tutor please contact the ELS on els@rcs.ac.uk

Students with disabilities

Students with a range of sensory and mobility impairments, as well as unseen disabilities, have successfully completed courses at the Royal Conservatoire.

In 2018/19 a total of 375 students declared a disability. The largest single grouping was dyslexia, dyspraxia and specific learning issues (145 students), followed by students with unseen disabilities, which includes ASD, mental health issues, asthma, epilepsy, ME, rheumatoid arthritis, IBS and diabetes.

For further information please request a copy of the booklet *Information for Disabled Students and Applicants*, available from Jane Balmforth or download from www.rcs.ac.uk

Care Experienced Students

The Conservatoire is committed to ensuring that those from all backgrounds feel able to apply to study with us. Applicants who have been looked after at home, in residential care, foster care or kinship care can access support via the International and Student Experience team at welfare@rcs.ac.uk

Examples of support available are:

- Assistance with your application to the Conservatoire
- Consideration for inclusion in our contextualised admission process
- Priority consideration within our HE Discretionary Fund if your student funding package is not sufficient to support you in your studies
- Advice on external financial support
- Other support including counselling, disability services, help with employment opportunities and academic support.

It is helpful to tick the box on your UCAS Conservatoires application to identify yourself as a Care Leaver. This will enable the International and Student Experience team to contact you to offer you support. If you miss

the box, you can also contact us at any time to let us know or inform us at matriculation.

Student Carers

If you're a student with caring responsibilities the Conservatoire would like you to get in touch with the International and Student Experience team to discuss how we can support you before you start studies while you're here in Glasgow. We know that students with caring responsibilities may need extra financial support because they have higher than expected costs or they have a sudden financial emergency. They may also need additional pastoral and/or academic support. For further information please contact welfare@rcs.ac.uk

Financial support

If you find yourself in financial difficulty during your time at the Royal Conservatoire please contact the International and Student Experience Team as soon as possible to discuss your situation. You can make an appointment to see Sarah Ward via welfare@rcs.ac.uk or dropping by the AAS office between 09.00 and 17.00. A 1-2-1 student support service is also offered fortnightly at Wallace Studios. Details are advertised on the Student Portal. It is always better to speak to someone as soon as a difficulty occurs, so that you can plan an immediate course of action.

The HE Discretionary Fund is available to help full-time or part-time UK students who are facing financial hardship. To be eligible to apply students should have been ordinarily resident in the UK for the three year period immediately preceding the start of the course and be in receipt of the maximum amount of student loan to which they are entitled. The Discretionary Fund cannot be used to pay tuition fees or be used for reducing credit card balances or loans. You can apply via the

Student Portal at
<https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/funding-finance/>

HE Childcare Fund – students on full-time courses may apply for assistance with formal or registered childcare costs by applying to the HE Childcare Fund. This is a component of the Discretionary Fund and you may apply via the Student Portal at <https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/funding-finance/>

Debt/difficulty paying fees – if you anticipate difficulty in making any payment to the Royal Conservatoire (e.g. tuition fees, accommodation fees) please contact Craig Wardlaw in the Finance Office as soon as possible on c.wardlaw@rcs.ac.uk or 0141 270 8233.

The **Disabled Students' Allowance** is the main source of assistance for undergraduates whose disability means that specialist equipment or additional personal help is required to enable them to pursue a course of study. Many UK postgraduate students are also eligible to apply for DSA. The Counsellor & Disability Adviser will help you complete the application form for the Disabled Students' Allowance. Please contact Jane Balmforth on j.balmforth@rcs.ac.uk

Accommodation

The Royal Conservatoire's preferred accommodation provider is Base Glasgow, a private student residence in the city centre which is managed by We Are Homes For Students. All students with an offer of a place to study at the Conservatoire will be sent booking details for Base Glasgow in April. Places are allocated on a first come first served basis and students should apply for accommodation as soon as they are issued with the booking details. Base Glasgow has a number of accessible studios suitable for students with disabilities.

In addition, the Royal Conservatoire is able to offer advice to students seeking accommodation in the private sector and subscribes to PAD, a database of properties available for let in the city which is administered by a number of Higher Education Institutions in Glasgow. This database may be accessed on www.glasgowpad.org

If you would like more information on suitable accommodation please see our website at

<https://www.rcs.ac.uk/studyhere/accommodation/> or make contact via welfare@rcs.ac.uk

Medical Services

Please note: it is essential that you register with a GP while you are studying in Glasgow. You can do this at matriculation on Monday 23rd September 2019.

Dr Leslie and Partners at Woodside Health & Care Centre is only a short distance from the Royal Conservatoire at:

Dr Leslie and Partners
Woodside Health and Care Centre
891 Garscube Road
Glasgow
G20 7ER
Tel: 0141 201 5560

https://www.drleslieandpartners.com/practice_information/student-registering-with-the-practice/

The surgery provides a wide range of clinics in addition to access to [GPs](#). These include but are not limited to, vaccinations, sexual health, asthma, epilepsy and general lifestyle advice.

For emergency medical treatment there are Accident & Emergency Departments at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary on Castle Street and the Western Infirmary on Dumbarton Road. Please note that you should only attend an A&E service if your condition is life threatening. Less severe injuries can be treated in minor injuries units (MIUs). Telephone advice can be sought via NHS24 on 111 if your GP or dentist is closed.

The Royal Conservatoire has a register of medical specialists in four areas relevant to performance in Music, Drama and Dance. If you have a medical problem that is causing you difficulties in your studies, arrangements can be made by the International and Student Experience team for you to see a specialist from the following list:

- Physiotherapy
- Oral Surgery
- Ear, Nose and Throat

It is the Royal Conservatoire's policy to pay for the first consultation only and not for any treatment that may be required.

You must first see your GP, ask them to complete the GP Form (available on the

Student Portal at <https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/health-services/>) and then consult with your Head of Department/Programme about this service if you feel you would like to see a specialist. You may then obtain a referral form from the International and Student Experience team in AAS who will make the appointment for you.

If you're experiencing a health problem which is related to being a performer you may also wish to contact the [British Association of Performing Arts Medicine](#) (BAPAM) in order to attend a free of charge appointment with one of their assessment clinicians. BAPAM gives free medical advice for performing arts professionals and students at specialist clinics in London, Glasgow, Birmingham, Leeds and Cardiff.

The Students' Union

The Royal Conservatoire's Students' Union (RCS SU) provides support, advocacy and information to all students of the Conservatoire. Your SU runs campaigns on

issues from mental health through to LGBTQ+ issues, hosts nights out, talks and events and is at the heart of the thriving student community.

The SU is there when you need them, attending meetings with staff, support through Fitness to Study programmes and being a place where you can find out who to speak to about your issue.

RCS SU represents you nationally and internationally. It is affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS), a member of Conservatoire UK Student Network (CUKSN) and has close ties with the Association of European Conservatoire's Student Group. NUS has a website packed full of informative links from finance through to housing www.nusonline.co.uk

The SU runs clubs such as RCS Film Society, RCS Sports, yoga and LGBTQIA+ all of which you can take part in as a member of the SU. You can also set up your own society – just pop by the SU office or send us an email to find out more.

Your SU is run primarily by volunteers from our Liberation Officer's through to helping out at specific events – to find out how you can get involved use the contact details below:

- Drop by the office – located on the ground floor opposite the Client Services desk
- e-mail Jasmine Munns
SUPresident@rcs.ac.uk
- phone 0141 2708 296
- Instagram @rcsunion
- tweet us @rcsunion
- Facebook us at Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Official SU

International Students

The Royal Conservatoire's International and Student Experience team (Sarah Ward and Pauline McCluskey) are available to provide information, advice and support for all international students. They are based in the Academic Administration and Support (AAS) office on the ground floor of the Royal Conservatoire.

To make an appointment, e-mail international@rcs.ac.uk or book at the AAS office reception.

The Conservatoire welcomes students from all over the world – every year students from over 64 countries choose to study here.

For more information and general advice international students may refer to the [Study Here](#) section of the Conservatoire website

Information Services

Information Services

Information Services is made up of the Whittaker Library, RCS Archives and the IT and Learning Technology departments of the Conservatoire. Collectively, these departments are central to supporting & facilitating an exceptional student learning experience.

The Whittaker Library contains one of the most comprehensive collections of performance materials for music, dance, drama, production and screen in the UK and internationally. In addition to our unique print materials, we also offer our students access to thousands of electronic resources, together with extensive audio and film collections. All students receive subject specific training on making the most of the Library and the resources therein.

Underpinning all of this activity is a professional and friendly staff, dedicated to supporting the needs of all Conservatoire students and staff. The library is open 7 days a week during time and you can access all our services at

https://www.rcs.ac.uk/why_rcs/campusandfacilities/libraryandit/

RCS understands that technology is central in supporting 21st century learning in the Conservatoire and to that end, our facilities and services include:

- Over 70 open access student PCs
- 50GB personal storage space
- Expert IT helpdesk and training teams
- Subject specific software & assistive technologies
- WiFi access throughout our campus

Learning Technologies, including our Moodle VLE are used to enhance the Conservatoire learning experience and we have a dedicated learning technologist and IT Trainer to guide students through IT systems and technology, giving every student the essential transferable skills needed to ensure progression.

Finally, RCS Archives celebrate and capture our past, from our inception as the Glasgow Athenaeum in 1847, to the present. RCS Archives hold a number of collections of both national and international significance which complement our learning, teaching and research agendas.

The Academic Registrar, Suzanne Daly, is the manager of the Royal Conservatoire's student support team. She can be contacted on 0141 270 8206 and is based in Academic and Student Support on the ground floor of the Royal Conservatoire. E-mail: s.daly@rcs.ac.uk

If you have a complaint about the service or information provided by the Royal Conservatoire you should consult the Complaints Procedure, which is included in the Royal Conservatoire's Regulations, Codes of Procedure and General Rules.

The Royal Conservatoire's Regulations including the Complaints Procedure are distributed to all students at the start of each Session or a copy may be obtained from the Academic Administration and Support (AAS) office. These can be made available in large print, Braille, tape, etc if required.

Transitions Tutors

The Transitions Tutor is a role which was created during the Curriculum Reform process.

The primary function is to act as your advocate in curriculum choice and completing your Student Contract. By doing this the Transitions Tutor will ensure that you are supported and encouraged to be an autonomous learner making the choices you believe will best develop you academically, professionally and socially. The Transitions Tutor will help you to:

- Reflect on your own learning and development
- Set meaningful and relevant goals
- Identify potential barriers and challenges
- Identify action plans to ensure continuing progress and development

More information on Transitions Tutors is available in the Undergraduate Handbook.

Equal Opportunities

The Royal Conservatoire is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the community, as stated on our website at [https://www.rcs.ac.uk/about us/equalityanddiversity](https://www.rcs.ac.uk/about_us/equalityanddiversity)

Roz Caplan, the Royal Conservatoire's Equality & Diversity Officer is responsible for ensuring that the Royal Conservatoire's environment and facilities are fully accessible and that any barriers to equal opportunity are removed.

The Equality & Diversity Forum monitors the Royal Conservatoire's provision for students with disabilities. Membership of the Equality & Diversity Committee includes representatives from throughout the Royal Conservatoire.

Useful Contacts

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland 0141 332
4101 www.rcs.ac.uk

Suzanne Daly, Academic Registrar. Tel: 0141 270
8206
E-mail: s.daly@rcs.ac.uk

Jane Balmforth, Counsellor & Disability Adviser.
Tel: 0141 270 8282 E-mail: j.balmforth@rcs.ac.uk

Sarah Ward, Assistant Registrar (International &
Student Experience). Tel: 0141 270 8281 E-Mail:
s.ward@rcs.ac.uk

Roz Caplan, Equality & Diversity Officer. Tel: 0141
270 8397 E-mail: r.caplan@rcs.ac.uk

Debbie McLean/ Elke Finkenauer, Finance Office.
Tel: 0141 270 8233 E-mail:
financeadministrator@rcs.ac.uk

Students' Union. E-mail: SUPresident@rcs.ac.uk

Further Information

SAAS (Student Awards Agency for Scotland: funding information for Scottish domiciled students)

www.saas.gov.uk

Student Finance England (funding information for students living in England)

<https://www.gov.uk/student-finance>

Student Finance Wales (funding information for Welsh students) www.studentfinancewales.co.uk

Student Finance NI (funding information for students living in Northern Ireland)

www.studentfinancenir.co.uk

[UCAS Conservatoires](http://www.ucas.com) (for all full-time applications with the exception of research)

UKCISA (UK Council for International Student Affairs - information and advice for international students)

www.ukcisa.org.uk

(Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this publication at the time of going to press, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland wishes to stress that information given may be subject to alteration. Students should check the up to date position when they need to know it.)