



Royal Conservatoire
of Scotland

TRADITIONAL MUSIC

rco.ac.uk

**LIKE
NOWHERE ELSE:
OUR MUSIC IS
SCOTTISH, BUT
OUR DEPARTMENT
IS GLOBAL**

Our curriculum recognises that the innovative nature of Scottish traditional music today must be embraced, and that the creative development of the individual is the most important way to ensure traditional music flourishes from one generation to another.

You can expect to learn in a busy department where your musical roots and creative artistry will be nurtured and developed through one-to-one tuition, academic context, performance opportunities, masterclasses and *lots* of ensemble work, all aimed at helping you fulfil your potential.

Traditional Music

BMus: Four years, full-time
rcs.ac.uk/tradmusic

MMus: Two years, full-time
MA: One year, full-time
rcs.ac.uk/pgtradmusic

Within this department, you will explore Scotland's unique and dynamic musical traditions as a conceptual, critical and creative framework to achieve your distinctively personal voice.

Why choose us?

- | The only UK conservatoire to offer a Bachelor of Music in Traditional Music
- | Opportunity to develop invaluable industry contacts
- | High staff-student ratio
- | Excellent teaching staff who are all prolific in the academic and performing industries
- | Benefit from our partnership with the National Piping Centre
- | Dedicated recording and rehearsal studio
- | Performance opportunities include the world-famous Celtic Connections Festival and Celtic Colours Festival
- | Collaborations and connections include the National Piping Centre, the Centre for Contemporary Arts, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Fèis Rois, the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at University of Limerick, East Tennessee State University, KMH Royal College of Music (Stockholm) and the Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki (Finland)



“RCS is a world leader in traditional music education with over 20 years’ experience in guiding the next generation of artists. We believe that the creative development of the individual is the key to a thriving traditional music scene.”

Head of Traditional Music: **Joshua Dickson**

Your studies

Bachelor of Music with Honours (Traditional Music)

This programme is based primarily on the traditional and folk music of Scotland as befits our national conservatoire; however, our emphasis on the creative development of the individual allows the curriculum to be relevant to aspiring folk/trad musicians from anywhere in the world.

External learning opportunities include an Isle of Skye residency, a Blazin’ in Beaulieu residency, teaching placements and work placements in Scotland and overseas, as well as appearances at high-profile events, including Celtic Connections, Cape Breton’s Celtic Colours festival and Piping Live!

Bachelor of Music with Honours (Traditional Music - Piping)

This programme shares the same structure and range of contextual curriculum as the BMus (Traditional Music) however its range of performance tuition is specifically dedicated to the well-rounded and in-depth development of the contemporary exponent of the Scottish Highland Bagpipe. This programme includes solo piping, piobaireachd, pipe band work and piping in a folk ensemble context.

Master of Music/Master of Arts

We also offer an MA (one calendar year) or MMus (two academic years) degree in Traditional Music which nurtures your existing artistic personality. Postgraduate study focuses on your individual principal study tuition, with further departmental studies that emphasise professional and artistic skills, a knowledge of the contextual and historical foundations to Scottish traditional music today.

DID YOU KNOW?

Teaching staff are prolific in the industry. In 2019, lecturer Jenn Butterworth was named Musician of the Year at the Scots Trad Music Awards.



Teaching staff

All our teaching staff have active careers in the performing industry and include:

Ross Ainslie, Professor Margaret Bennett, Jenn Butterworth, Heather Downie, Marc Duff, Professor Joshua Dickson, Marie Fielding, Professor Fred Freeman, Djordje Gajic, David Henderson, Corrina Hewat, Fiona Hunter, Ali Hutton, Greg Lawson, Duncan Lyall, Finlay MacDonald, Kevin Mackenzie, Màiri MacInnes, Willie McCallum, Mary McCarthy, Alistair McCulloch, Karen Marshalsay, David Milligan, Ian Muir, Findlay Napier, Iseabail T NicDhomhnaill, Martin O'Neill, Rod Patterson, Ailie Robertson, James Ross, Laura-Beth MacCrimmon, John Somerville, Fraser Stone and Innes Watson.

For an up-to-date list of staff and recent masterclasses from industry professionals, please see [rcs.ac.uk](https://www.rcs.ac.uk)

Our graduates

Our graduates are working in the professional music and related industries; as performers, teachers, composers, musical directors, recording artists, producers, music therapists, doctoral students, community project managers and broadcasters. Graduates include:

- | **Gordon Bruce** Piper, Double Silver Medallist
- | **Cameron Drummond** Piper, Double Silver Medallist
- | **Connor Sinclair** Piper, Gold Medallist
- | **Alastair Henderson** Piper, Silver Medallist

- | **Ruairidh MacMillan** Fiddler, Teacher and member of multi award-winning band Blazin' Fiddles
- | **Mischa MacPherson** Singer, BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award 2014
- | **Robyn Stapleton** Singer, BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year 2014
- | **Claire Hastings** Singer, BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year 2015
- | **Charlie Stewart** Fiddler, BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year 2017
- | **Hannah Rarity** Singer, BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year 2018
- | **Benedict Morris** Fiddler, BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year 2019
- | **Ryan Young** Fiddler, Celtic Connections Danny Kyle Award winner

How to apply

Before you apply, please go to [rcs.ac.uk](https://www.rcs.ac.uk) to read full details on the music programme you wish to apply to, and the application and admissions processes.

The application deadline is **1 October** and, for US applicants only, **1 December**.

All applications must be made through the UCAS Conservatoires online admissions service: [ucas.com/conservatoires](https://www.ucas.com/conservatoires)

Our institution code is R58 and you will find the specific programme code on [rcs.ac.uk](https://www.rcs.ac.uk)

Entry requirements

Entrance to RCS is based on talent, potential and ability. We are looking for students who display outstanding potential, dedication and ambition.

BMus academic entry requirements

- | Scottish Highers - 3 passes (grade C or above)
- | A Levels - 2 passes
- | International Baccalaureate - minimum score of 24 with 3 subjects at Higher Level
- | Recognised equivalences

We offer a flexible approach to students taking Highers over more than one academic year and/or who achieve their qualifications in more than one sitting.

Within the minimum academic entry requirements, the subjects recommended are:

- | History at Higher, Advanced Higher or Advanced level or equivalent
- | English at Higher, Advanced Higher or Advanced level or equivalent
- | the study of Gaelic and/or another European language at least to National 4/5 or Standard Grade/GCSE

Postgraduate academic entry requirements

- | Honours degree (at least 2.2), or its overseas equivalent in a subject area relevant to the demands of the programme.

For more specific entry requirements, including language requirements, please visit [rcs.ac.uk](https://www.rcs.ac.uk)

Tuition fees and scholarships

Tuition fees can be found at [rcs.ac.uk/fees](https://www.rcs.ac.uk/fees) as well as information on financial support and scholarships.

Your audition

We want you to enjoy the audition process and use the opportunity to discover more about RCS and see if it is the right place for you.

Most auditions take place on campus, however we do offer some internationally. Please see [rcs.ac.uk](https://www.rcs.ac.uk) for more details. You can also audition via a video recording, please see our website for what to prepare.

At your audition you will be asked to perform a programme of approximately 15 minutes on your principal study, followed by a short interview with the panel.

Your audition should demonstrate your present level of achievement and your musical potential, and must be performed from memory and unaccompanied, with the exception of guitar or pipe band snare drum, or in cases of self-accompanying for one or two items (e.g. clarsach player accompanying own singing, or singers accompanying themselves on another instrument).

You will be asked to give brief spoken introductions to each item performed and your own compositions may be included alongside traditional repertoire.

Full details on what to prepare for are available online: [rcs.ac.uk](https://www.rcs.ac.uk)

Junior Conservatoire

The Junior Conservatoire of Music programme is for talented and committed young people aged 11-18 who are passionate about music and want to develop their skills and techniques.

Junior Conservatoire students benefit from one-to-one tuition from RCS expert teaching staff, performance classes and the opportunity to play in a variety of ensembles every week.

Find out more at [rcs.ac.uk/junior](https://www.rcs.ac.uk/junior)

Short Courses

We offer a range of short courses and summer schools for people who wish to develop their skills and passion for music.

To see what courses are on offer this year, please visit [rcs.ac.uk/shortcourses](https://www.rcs.ac.uk/shortcourses)

Contact us

If you have any questions about your application, please contact us at admissions@rcs.ac.uk and we'll be happy to help you.

The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

100 Renfrew Street, Glasgow G2 3DB

Telephone: +44 (0) 141 332 4101

[rcs.ac.uk](https://www.rcs.ac.uk)

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