

# SUMMARY OF 2025-26 TO 2029-30 ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN

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The Royal Academy of Music moves music forward by inspiring successive generations of musicians to connect, collaborate and create.

Charity number 310007

Company registration number RC000438

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**UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON**

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## WHAT IS AN ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN?

An access and participation plan sets out provisions that will be meaningful and effective in promoting equality of opportunity for under-represented groups, as determined by the Office for Students.

You can see the full access and participation plan for the Royal Academy of Music [here](#).

## KEY POINTS

Our analysis has identified five main risks to equality of opportunity in the context of the Royal Academy of Music:

**Risk 1:** Students from under-represented backgrounds often know little about entry routes to specialist performance post-18 education, little about the nature of such education and little about the variety of careers to which it can lead.

**Risk 2:** Resource constraints leave many UK state schools struggling or unable to develop the high-level music performance skills, knowledge and understanding that students are required to demonstrate at conservatoire admissions stage. As far as UK school music is concerned, risks to equality of opportunity fully materialised some years ago. In common with other UK conservatoires the Academy has to navigate a world of wide, known and deeply embedded inequality. We do and will continue to do everything we can to compensate for it.

**Risk 3:** Overall, the Academy's student population is highly diverse, but British nationals in some of the ethnic groups recognised by The Office for Students (OfS) are under-represented within it. Prospective students may be reluctant to apply to the Academy if they interpret present under-representation as evidence of institutional bias against groups to which they belong.

**Risk 4:** Concern about the cost of studying in central London, about the additional costs often involved in studying Music, and about wellbeing and mental health stresses caused by financial insecurity, may lead potential applicants from low-income family backgrounds to look elsewhere or to decide against music altogether.

**Risk 5:** Academy students with declared disabilities or learning differences are, compared to others in their year-group, marginally less likely to achieve first class or 2:1 degrees.

See pages 1-3 of the access and participation plan and Annex A for more information.

## FEES WE CHARGE

The tuition fee for Home fee status students starting their first undergraduate degree in 2025-26 is £9,535.00 per year. If government-regulated tuition fees change in future years we will make updated information available via the Academy's website.

See page 31 of the Access and Participation Plan for more information.

## FINANCIAL HELP AVAILABLE

Around 35 UK students each year are automatically awarded low-income bursaries (family income less than £35,000).

UK students with family incomes between £35,000-c £60,000 can apply for needs-based bursaries.

Each year the Academy loans around 250 high-value string instruments and 180 bows to students. This in-kind support enables students to practise and perform on instruments of far higher quality than might otherwise be available to them.

Academy application fee waivers are offered when candidates (or their parent or legal guardian if the candidate is under 28) are in receipt of the following UK government benefits: free school meals, 16-19 Bursary Fund, Education Maintenance Allowance, Disabled Students' Allowance, Universal Credit, Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance.

See pages 19-22 and 31 of the access and participation plan for more information.

## INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

We make clear and accessible information about fees, financial and other forms of support available to current and prospective students via the Academy's website. Current students can obtain information from their Heads of Year, from our Student Funding Manager and from staff specialists reporting to the Dean of Students.

See page 31 of the access and participation plan for more information.

## WHAT WE ARE AIMING TO ACHIEVE

These are our five main objectives:

Objective 1: Increase the proportion of undergraduate applications from prospective students in all significantly underrepresented categories, aiming for 73% of all auditionees to belong to one or more of these groups by 2030.

Objective 2: Increase the proportion of places offered to state school students applying for undergraduate places at the Academy, so that by 2030 they receive 50% of all UK undergraduate offers made.

Objective 3: Maintain the proportion of places offered to prospective students who identify as from the Global Majority (26% in the 2024 admissions round). Increase the proportion of places offered to Black British applicants specifically, so that by 2030 they receive 5% of all offers made.

Objective 4: Increase the proportion of places taken up by prospective students from low-income family backgrounds, many of whom are likely to live in Low Participation Neighbourhoods, so that by 2030 they represent 18% of UK undergraduates.

Objective 5: Ensure that Academy students with declared disabilities or learning differences achieve the best possible final degree results, further investing in Academy Disability and Study Support programmes if year-on-year data monitoring reveals a widening attainment gap.

See pages 4-5 of the access and participation plan for more information.

## WHAT WE ARE DOING TO ADDRESS KEY RISKS TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

We have developed and are implementing five headline intervention strategies to address key risks to equality of opportunity. These are to:

### Intervention strategy 1 – raise awareness and build trust

Plan and deliver a full programme of Widening Participation activities designed to bring young people and their families into the Academy building and introduce them to Academy teachers and students (on or offsite), so spreading awareness of the Academy's existence and building trust with a growing number of potential applicants.

### Intervention strategy 2 – targeted support for state school pupils

Provide sustained, intensive support – including specialist tuition – for musically gifted state-school pupils across the age range 8-18, reaching as many as resources available to the Academy and its delivery partners allow.

### Intervention strategy 3 – Belonging: promote a learning and teaching environment in which all students feel welcome

Create and maintain a fully inclusive teaching and learning environment at the Academy, through a range of interventions apparent to prospective Global Majority students. Ensure that Widening Participation activities are designed to interest students beyond the white community and involve them fully. Make specific scholarship and (where necessary) needs-based bursary provision for Black British and British Asian students.

### Intervention strategy 4 – financial and other targeted support for low-income students

Make needs-based bursary provision for students from low-income family backgrounds. Ensure that Academy hardship funds support students from low-income family backgrounds as a matter of priority. Ensure that present and prospective students from low-income family backgrounds know about all forms of non-financial support available to them at the Academy, in particular our student counselling service and high-value instrument loan scheme.

### Intervention strategy 5 – targeted support for students with declared disabilities or learning differences

Further invest in Academy Disability and Study Support programmes if year-on-year monitoring reveals a widening attainment gap between students with declared disabilities or learning differences and fellow students declaring neither.

See pages 5-24 of the access and participation plan for more information.

## HOW STUDENTS CAN GET INVOLVED

Students are represented on the Academy's Access and Participation Committee which meets three times a year and monitors data concerning access, progression and career outcomes of our target groups of UK students.

Our Belonging Committee, Museum and Library Committee, Safeguarding and Support and Student-Staff Liaison committees all consider access and participation matters. All report regularly. All include student representatives.

Students can get involved in access and participation Plan implementation through mentoring and education delivery, for which they are paid as colleagues working alongside staff. They gain experience in leading and assisting workshops. Students regularly visit primary and secondary schools, for example as part of Community First String Experience, Audition Club and through Open Academy activity (the latter as a credit-bearing part of their degree). Student performers showcase Widening Participation composition work in public performances at the end of our Winter and Spring showcases, Takeover Day and summer schools.

See pages 26-27 of the access and participation plan for more information.

## EVALUATION – HOW WE WILL MEASURE WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

We have engaged with the Office for Students' (OfS) self-evaluation framework to assess the strengths and limitations of our current Access and Participation activity. The outcomes highlighted areas of strength and areas for development. These findings have informed our strategic priorities and our evolving evaluation approach.

We are developing a cross-institutional evaluation toolkit to assist staff in designing, implementing, and reflecting on evaluation consistently and effectively.

We are also redefining what success looks like. Rather than focusing solely on entry into the Academy, we now measure success by how well we support students to make autonomous, informed decisions – whether that leads them here, to another conservatoire, or along a different creative or academic path. This student-centred perspective reflects our institutional values and is central to how we evaluate our impact.

See pages 28-30 and Annex B of the access and participation plan for more information.

## CONTACT DETAILS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information, please contact Elizabeth Kenny, Dean of Students

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