

ASSISTANT HEAD OF VOCAL & OPERA

Vocal & Opera

Grade 8, Full time, Permanent

Job reference number: 307-25

Applicant Information Pack

Closing date

9am Monday 1 September 2025

Late or incomplete applications will not
be submitted to the Shortlisting Panel

Interview date

Thursday 11 & Friday 12 September 2025

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Job Description

Job title	Assistant Head of Vocal & Opera
Department	Vocal & Opera
Grade	8
Hours of work	Full Time (1FTE)
Contract type	Permanent
Responsible to	Head of Vocal & Opera
Responsible for	No direct line management responsibility
Liaises with	Internal Artistic Director; Director of Opera; Deputy Head of Vocal & Opera; Manager of Vocal & Opera; Heads of Faculty; Director; Students; Professional Services Heads/Managers External Equivalent colleagues in national and international conservatoires; colleagues in national and international opera companies
Job overview	<p>The RCM has a distinguished tradition of Vocal & Opera teaching, and alumni are found internationally throughout the profession. The large Vocal & Opera faculty attracts students and professors from around the world, and is central to the learning, teaching and musical life of the College.</p> <p>In some larger Faculties, the Head of Faculty is supported by an Assistant Head. The position of Assistant Head of Vocal & Opera is an important role in the College, and the post-holder is expected to support the Head of Vocal & Opera and Director of Opera to continue to develop the world-leading teaching and learning of the faculty.</p> <p>They will be recognised for their experience working within opera, most likely as a vocal coach, répétiteur, member of music staff or director.</p>

Key Responsibilities

These include:

- To support the activities of RCM Vocal and Opera and Opera School at a national and international level.
- To assist the Head of Vocal and Opera and Director of Opera in the day to day running of all aspects of the RCM Opera School.
- To support the Head of Vocal and Opera in the mentoring and pastoral care of the Vocal and Opera student cohort.
- To lead RCM Opera Scenes by curating repertoire, casting students, and taking an active role in delivery by conducting / directing at least one set of scenes per term.
- Engage necessary Creative Team members for Opera Scenes in discussion with and having been approved by the Head of Vocal and Opera and Director of Opera

- In collaboration with the Manager of Vocal and Opera support productions (operas, scenes and any other staged/dramatic productions) by acting as Company Manager, including developing schedule and liaison with creative team regarding necessary changes to cast or availability.
- To coach students on a 1:1 basis as agreed with the Head of Vocal and Opera and Director of Opera. For the avoidance of doubt this coaching commitment is included in the full-time hours of this role.
- To teach / coach group classes where appropriate.
- To manage internal audition process for productions, supported by the Faculty Officer (Vocal & Opera).
- To act as first point of contact for auditions for students held at RCM for external opera companies.
- To be a member of assessment panels for opera productions and opera scenes, chairing where appropriate.
- To collaborate with Heads of Faculty, Manager of Vocal & Opera and Performance and Programming to ensure effective delivery of courses, performances, and College-wide priorities
- To attend College performances and assist with receptions and events as requested by the Head of Vocal and Opera and Director of Opera.
- To support the Head of Vocal & Opera in representing the College at home and internationally (including external concerts, competitions, seminars, conferences, committees, involvement in professional bodies, liaison with specialist music schools, liaison with partner institutions), seeking opportunities for contacts, collaborations, recruitment and other events that enhance the student experience and support the reputation of the College.
- To support and facilitate opportunities for cross-faculty and whole College collaborations, to enhance the student experience.
- Where appropriate and with the approval of the Head of Research, Head of Vocal & Opera and the Artistic Director, the Assistant Head of Vocal & Opera may undertake 35 days (pro-rata) per annum of research or knowledge exchange as part of their activity plan. This time should be used to produce research (which may include artistic outputs) at a level that is likely to lead to the production of world-leading or internationally excellent research outputs in the REF.
- to promote diversity in the Faculty, including representation in the teaching and student bodies, and through breadth of repertoire and genre studied and performed.
- to support wider College EDIB initiatives in support of the EDIB Strategy.
- to undertake such other duties as may be requested by the Head of Vocal & Opera, Artistic Director and/or the Director.

Person Specification

Applicants should demonstrate in their supporting statement how their qualifications, experience, skills and training fit each of the criteria below.

Criteria	Description	Essential/ Desirable	How Criteria Are Tested
Qualifications	Masters degree in performance or equivalent professional experience	Essential	AF, INT
	Higher Education teaching qualification or HEA Fellowship	Desirable	AF, INT
Experience, Skills & Knowledge	Experience and profile as a musician at a high professional level	Essential	AF, INT
	Experience leading staged performances as either a conductor or director	Essential	AF, INT

	Detailed knowledge of voice types and development with the ability to identify potential and make articulate, well-grounded judgements and assessments	Essential	AF, INT
	Detailed knowledge of operatic repertoire	Essential	AF, INT
	Demonstrable experience of teaching in higher education and knowledge of the conservatoire learning environment	Desirable	AF, INT
	A strong understanding of professional performing contexts, including industry organisations, networks and opportunities	Essential	AF, INT
	Efficient and deadline focused administrator	Essential	AF, INT
	Strong IT skills	Essential	AF, INT
	Excellent communication, orally and in writing	Essential	AF, INT
	Experience as an examiner, especially at HE level	Desirable	AF, INT
	Ability to contribute to the research profile of the RCM	Desirable	AF, INT
Personal Attributes	Ability to relate well to students and colleagues	Essential	AF, INT
	Ability to take a strategic overview	Essential	AF, INT
	Ability to work well as a member of a team	Essential	AF, INT
	Ability to cope well under pressure	Essential	AF, INT
	A commitment to recognising, valuing and celebrating diversity and to proactively advancing equality and inclusive practice in all areas of College life.	Essential	AF, INT

AF = Application Form INT = Interview

The duties and responsibilities assigned to the post may be amended by the Head of Vocal & Opera, Artistic Director or Director within the scope and level of the post.

Terms & Conditions

Availability	The post is immediately available and the postholder should ideally be available to start as early as possible.	
Contract type	Permanent	
Hours of work	<p>This role is offered on a full time (1FTE) basis.</p> <p>Full time hours at the RCM are 35 hours per week and normal office working hours are 9.00am-5.00pm (with a one hour lunch break), Monday to Friday.</p>	
Salary	RCM Pay Scale Grade 8, incremental points 33-38:	
	Spine points	Full-time salary*
	33	£47,606
	34	£48,891
	35	£50,213

36	£51,577
37	£52,977
38	£54,453

*inclusive of London Weighting allowance

Appointments will normally be made to the first point of the grade, in accordance with the RCM Pay Policy. Staff are entitled to an annual increment each year on 1 August (dependent on 6 complete months' service) until they reach the top of the grade.

Payday is the 15th of each month or the last working day before this should the 15th fall on a weekend or bank holiday.

Visas/ Right to Work in the UK	<p>If you have time limited permission to work in the UK you must provide full details on your Application for Employment form.</p> <p>If you do not have permission to work in the UK but would be eligible to apply for a Visa you must state the applicable route on your Application for Employment form. We suggest you use the online tool provided by the government to explore your eligibility and options relating to Visas. Visa Checking Tool</p> <p>Some applicants including prospective professors, may wish to explore the Global Talent Visa route. Further information about endorsement for this visa can be found on the Arts Council website.</p> <p>This is a role for which the RCM may consider acting as a sponsor for the Skilled Worker route.</p>
Immigration Advisors	<p>The HR department cannot act as immigration advisors however if you are an international student studying in the UK you can seek guidance from the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA). Alternatively the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) which regulates immigration advisers maintains a list of approved Immigration Advisors.</p>
DBS check	Not applicable for this post.
Probation	The post has a twelve month probationary period.
Notice period	The appointment will be subject to termination by not less than one clear term's notice. Notice during probation will be one month's notice by either party.
Pension	<p>The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is available for all academic staff. Under the rules of the TPS, professorial employment is automatically pensionable unless a professor elects to opt out of the scheme. Full details of the scheme are available from the Teachers' Pensions website: www.teacherspensions.co.uk. Arrangements exist for members to make additional voluntary contributions (AVCs).</p>
Annual leave	<p>Full time staff are entitled to 245 hours of holiday per annum, plus public holidays. Part time staff will receive a pro rata entitlement for annual leave.</p> <p>The RCM is closed between Christmas and New Year each year, the three days in this week that are not bank holidays will come out of the postholder's annual leave allowance.</p>

How to Apply

Closing date	9am Monday 1 September 2025 Applications received after the stated closing date will not be considered.
Interview date	Thursday 11 & Friday 12 September 2025 Shortlisted candidates will be notified in due course. We communicate interview dates in advance to ensure candidates have adequate notice to make arrangements. Regrettably we are unlikely to be able to accommodate alternative interview dates.
To apply	To apply, please submit the following documents available on the RCM jobs page <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application Form• Equal Opportunities Form The above documents should be sent to recruitment@rcm.ac.uk by the stated closing date. We encourage applications by email however if you wish to post your application you must ensure this reaches us by the closing date. Late Application Forms, incomplete Application Forms, Application Forms submitted in a format other than Word or PDF and CVs without an Application Form will not be accepted.
Alternative formats	If you need to receive our recruitment documentation in a different format, such as large print or are not able to submit an application electronically, then please contact us to discuss your requirements.
Interview process	Interviews will take the form of a panel interview, normally comprised of three staff members however more senior positions may have larger panels. Details of the interview panel will ordinarily be included in the interview invitation. We will be happy to make any reasonable accommodations as part of this process. As part of the interview format you may be invited to take a brief tour of our facilities, details will be included in your interview invitation and we will be happy to accommodate accessibility requirements. A test or presentation may form part of the interview process and details will be provided in the interview invitation. We will be happy to make any reasonable accommodations as part of this process.

Staff Benefits

Travel	Interest free season ticket loans are available to cover the cost of a 12 month season ticket between a member of staff's residence and the RCM. The loan will be repayable by deduction from salary over a period of 12 months or on leaving the employment of the RCM, if earlier. We also offer a tax-free bicycle loan under a similar repayment scheme.
Events	There is a range of concerts taking place at the RCM throughout the weeks, staff are entitled to one free ticket per charged concert (excluding Opera and non-RCM promotions), and unlimited tickets for non-charged concerts.

Eye tests & hearing tests	The RCM will cover the cost of an annual standard eyesight test (normally up to £25) and contribute £50 towards the cost of glasses, provided that they are for use with VDUs. We will also cover the cost of hearing tests.
Employee Assistance Programme	All RCM staff can get free and confidential advice from Confidential Care (CiC). The service is open 24 hours per day, 365 days per year, by telephone or via the web.
Professional Development	The RCM is committed to the support of training and professional development for all members of staff and a range of opportunities are available.

About Us

The College	Opened in 1883 by the then Prince of Wales, the Royal College of Music (RCM) is a world-leading music conservatoire with a prestigious history and contemporary outlook. The RCM is a vibrant community of talented and open-minded musicians, with over 900 students from more than 60 countries studying at undergraduate, masters or doctoral level in the Senior College throughout the week and 300 students on a Saturday in the Junior Department. Former students of the RCM hold key roles in music and the arts in all parts of the world - as performers, teachers, composers, conductors and animateurs. The RCM was ranked as the global top institution for both Music and Performing Arts in the 2025 QS World University Rankings by Subject. The College has held this world-leading place in Performing Arts for four successive years, while Music is a new subject introduced to the rankings in 2024.
Staff	The RCM has over 250 members of professorial (teaching) staff and over 100 teachers in the Junior Department - the majority of whom are busy professionals with worldwide reputations, who include teaching among the various musical activities that they regularly undertake. Their work, and the work of the College as a whole, is supported by a team of over one hundred administrative staff.
Location	The RCM benefits from its particular location in South Kensington - one of the most attractive and interesting parts of central London. The area is well-served by public transport: South Kensington tube station is within ten minutes' walk; several bus routes pass the Royal Albert Hall. Kensington Gardens and the renowned museums of Exhibition Road, the Natural History Museum, the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Science Museum, are only a short walk away; Imperial College of Science, Technology & Medicine is next door; the Royal College of Art and the Royal Albert Hall are just across the road. The area, known originally as Albertopolis, emerged as a location for national institutions in the arts and sciences after the Great Exhibition of 1851 largely because of the enthusiasm of Prince Albert. Relationships with neighbouring institutions are friendly and supportive.

The Royal College of Music is an Equal Opportunities employer.

Andrew Moore
Artistic Director
August 2025

