



# **Royal Academy of Music: Access Agreement 2011**

## **1. Fee limits and fee income above £6,000 (drawn from Annex B Tables 1 and 2)**

<b>All Bachelor's programmes entry in 2012</b>	<b>£9,000</b>
<b>All Bachelor's programmes entry prior to 2012</b>	<b>£3,375</b>
<i>All fees will be subject to permissible real-term annual rises</i>	

<b>Fee income above Basic Fee</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
<i>Total</i>	£575,850	£617,810	£682,100	£720,000

## **2. Expenditure on access (e.g. bursaries, outreach and retention measures - drawn from Annex B Tables 3c)**

<b>RAM spend: fee income above Basic fee</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
<i>Total</i>	£177,440	£211,980	£241,660	£267,200
<i>Percentage of additional fee income to be spent on Access Agreement</i>	30.8	34.3	35.4	37.1

## **3. Assessment of access and retention record**

As in all conservatoires in the UK, entry to our undergraduate programmes is very competitive, and places are only accessible to applicants who have already achieved a very high standard in their principal study discipline. This means that applicants who have not had the advantage of high-quality individual tuition over a period of many years prior to application are inevitably disadvantaged. The availability of affordable instrumental tuition at UK schools is extremely variable, and students from low-income households and from many state schools often have limited access to, or are unable to afford, tuition of the requisite standard.

To address this, the Academy is energetically developing new approaches to partnerships with schools and community music organisations through Open Academy (the Academy's outreach department) and Junior Academy (the Academy's Saturday school for under 18s). The Academy's WPSA contains a more detailed account of these activities. However, because of the long timescale involved in developing instrumental skills, our future success in widening participation at undergraduate level will only start to pay significant dividends over the next five to ten years.

The Academy recognises its responsibility to make progress against benchmarks in the next five years and we are proposing ambitious but realistic targets for entrants from state schools, from NSSEC classes 4,5,6 and 7, and from households with incomes below £25,000.

Overall the Academy has made good progress against its Access Agreement targets. The following table is taken from our WPSA 2011 report.

State School (HESA Table T1a)	Our population as per the WPSA represented 40.4%	56.9% in 2009-10 demonstrating good upward progress
NS-SEC (HESA Table T1a)	The Access Agreement target was 25 for 2009-10	24 students in 2009-10
Other (please give details in comments box)	We were committed to doubling bursary support to HEBSS eligible students within specific income bands by 2010.	Target exceeded by 100%
Other (please give details in comments box)	To increase overall spending on Outreach by 66% by 2010.	We have increased expenditure on Outreach by 265%, far exceeding our target.

It is also important to recognise that the Academy's performance against the WPPIs varies markedly from year to year.

Year	Entrants from state schools		Entrants from NSSEC classes 4, 5, 6, & 7		Entrants from Low Participation Neighbourhoods	
	% from state schools or colleges	location adjusted benchmark	% from NSSEC classes 4 5 6 7	location adjusted bench mark	% from LPNs	location adjusted benchmark
2009-10	56.9	89.6	18.3	32.2	1.7	9.8
2008-9	45	88.5	no data	no data	5.4	8.4
2007-8	40.4	93	20	34.8	3.5	10.1
2006-7	42.3	86.8	22.4	23.2	1.9	6.3
4 year mean	<b>46</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>8.65</b>

The very small size of the Academy's annual undergraduate intake (capped by HEFCE at 60 students per annum) means that even modest changes in the demographics of the intake from year to year produce sizeable statistical variance. This makes it difficult to draw reliable conclusions about the trajectory of the Academy's performance against the PIs. We are proposing to use the four-year mean figure shown in the table above as a benchmark, and we will compare the figure year-on-year over the next five years to measure our success against both milestones and targets (see below, section 5).

It is also worth noting that the 60 entrants in each year are subdivided into 24 separate principal study disciplines (e.g. violin, oboe, bass trombone, jazz saxophone, tenor voice), and places are not offered in all disciplines in every year. It is important to balance carefully the ecology of the intake to ensure that our provision of orchestras, ensembles and chamber groups can be maintained. So, for example, in the December 2010 auditions for entry in September 2011, 28 flute students from the UK and EU applied for one place; 58 students applied for 3 composition places. This combination

of very high contention ratios with very low entrant numbers provides the Academy almost no flexibility in making additional offers to students who at audition demonstrate even marginally lower achievement than the accepted candidates.

The Academy's retention record for students from low income households (under £25,000) is

<b><u>LOW INCOME BMUS HOME RETENTION</u></b>					<b><u>GENERAL BMUS HOME RETENTION</u></b>				
<i>Cohort</i>	<i>Low Income</i>	<b><u>UK/EU FEES</u></b>				<b><u>ALL UK/EU FEE BMUS</u></b>			
		<i>Graduated/ Progressing</i>	<i>% Retd</i>	<i>% in HE</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>Graduated/ Progressing</i>	<i>% Retd</i>	<i>% in HE</i>
2006/07	10	9	90.00	90.00		56	51	91.07	91.07
2007/08	13	12	92.31	100.00		66	60	90.91	93.94
2008/09	10	10	100.00	100.00		53	51	96.23	96.23
2009/10	16	15	93.75	93.75		72	69	95.83	95.83
	<b>49</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>93.88</b>	<b>95.92</b>		<b>247</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>93.52</b>	<b>94.33</b>

consistently excellent, and is very close to, and in some years better than, that of the overall UK/EU population.

#### **4. Financial support for students (see Tables 3a and 3b)**

##### ***The amounts of support and the eligibility criteria for new entrants***

Higher education in music performance at conservatoire level presents particular financial challenges for students. The cost of purchasing and maintaining musical instruments is high, particularly for string players, and although the Academy has a generous instrument loan scheme for students, there is nevertheless a considerable financial burden for students. Also, the very demanding regime of individual practice (up to 6 hours per day) and rehearsal makes it particularly difficult for conservatoire students to finance their studies through part-time employment.

Therefore, the Academy is committed to providing an appropriate level of scholarship, bursary and fee waiver support to students. However, in line with the guidance from OFFA, our new policy specifically targets support at students from low-income households (below £25,000 or between £25,001 and £33,500 per annum) who may well be deterred on financial grounds from undertaking study at the Academy.

At the time of their auditions, all students are considered for merit-based scholarships. In addition to these, means-tested needs-based fee waivers will be offered to all students who fall into the following categories:

Household income up to £25,000	= £3,000 fee waiver
Household income between £25,001 and £33,500	= £2,000 fee waiver
Household income over £33,500	= no fee waiver

Some students will be entitled to both merit scholarships and needs-based fee waivers; Students from households with income below £25,000 would be entitled to receive a combined scholarship/fee waiver award of up to £6,000 per annum (£3,000 merit scholarship plus £3,000 fee waiver).

The Academy has been awarded three NSP scholarships for 2012-13, and the Academy's match funding will provide additional fee waiver support for the same three students. The recipients of these awards will be from families with household income up to £25,000 and will be identified through our audition, scholarship and bursary processes. These three students would in their first

years of study receive a £3,000 fee waiver from the NSP, a £3,000 matching fee waiver from the Academy, and may also be eligible to receive up to £3,000 in merit-based scholarships.

## **5. Targets and Milestones**

As highlighted in Section 3 above, the very small number of entrants to the Academy's first year undergraduate programme has tended to produce wide statistical variance from year to year. To mitigate this effect, we are proposing to use the four-year mean figures shown above as our WPPI benchmarks and we will compare the four-year mean figures year-on-year over the next five years to measure our success against both milestones and targets.

For our outreach work delivered through Open Academy and Junior Academy we have set the following targets and milestones (as per Annex B Tables 5a and 5b):

- i. from a baseline of 1359 participants in 2010–11, our target is an additional 650 participants over 5 years (150 additional participants per annum);
- ii. from a baseline of 9 regular project partners our target is to increase this to 14 over 5 years (1 additional partnership per annum);
- iii. from a baseline of 20 projects our target is to increase this to 35 over 5 years (3 additional projects per annum).

## **6. Monitoring and evaluation arrangement**

### ***Overall Monitoring Arrangements***

Within the Senior Management Team, the Deputy Principal has overall responsibility for the delivery of the agreement. He reports to both the Senior Management Team and to the Standing Committee of Academic Board, which is the academic committee responsible for widening participation strategy. The Standing Committee includes student representatives.

### ***Monitoring of Milestones and Targets for Entrants***

Monitoring of our targets for WPPIs and for students from low income households will be undertaken by the Academy's Registry, and the outcomes reported to the Standing Committee of Academic Board through the submission of the annual Access Agreement.

### ***Monitoring of Widening Participation Projects***

In 2009–10, widening participation initiatives were evaluated largely using questionnaires for both school staff and young people to attempt to ascertain the impact of the projects on the participants' perceptions of the Academy, their level of engagement, and perceptions of their own musicianship and creativity. While providing useful and interesting feedback, their usefulness is limited if not placed within a context of wider research and understanding. Anecdotally, through conversations with school staff and the Music Advisor for Westminster, much evidence was gained as to the socio-economic profile of the young people taking part in our projects, their opportunities to experience live music, their opportunities for creative self-expression, and their more general aspirations concerning higher education. Our projects were placed with schools on the advice of the Music Advisor as to where they would be most "fit for purpose".

For our outreach work, we are currently piloting several methods by which we hope to capture this information more effectively and measurably. We are now undertaking evaluation with more of an awareness of the base line from which young people are experiencing our projects. We are therefore carrying out dialogic interviews with a study group of project participants and teachers before, during and at the end of projects, alongside questionnaires for all participants. We are also collating data on the socio-economic background of our project participants, to ensure that we are successfully targeting our widening participation work. For 2011–12 we will also consider the use of case studies of participants as a tool for evaluation. The analysis of this information, along with recommendations for future outreach priorities will form part of the annual department report of Open Academy, and will in turn inform the annual Access Agreement.

We are also in the process of establishing (in consultation with Westminster Music and Arts) a cohort of 3 to 4 schools with whom we plan to work more consistently over a period of 3 years, so that we can attempt to measure the effects of longer-lasting relationships, which by their nature will enable us to be more responsive and adaptable in delivering our work.

## **7. Provision of information to prospective students**

Information about the Access Agreement 2011 and its contents will be made available in various ways. These will include the following:

- I. Royal Academy of Music prospectus.
- II. Royal Academy of Music website ([www.ram.ac.uk](http://www.ram.ac.uk))
- III. Guide to Student Finance booklet.
- IV. Information for Entry Guidelines for New Students (with offer packs).

The Academy will also provide information about student finance in general to demonstrate borrowing entitlements, as well as link to the BIS website regarding information on repayments.



