

Royal Scottish Academy
of Music and Drama

**Information for Disabled
Students and Applicants**

Our Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama is to produce musicians, actors and other professionals in music and drama well equipped to pursue a diversity of careers at national and international level.

Equal Opportunities Statement

The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama welcomes a diverse population of staff and students. The Academy is committed to promoting equality in its activities and it aims to provide a performing, learning, teaching, working and research environment free from unlawful discrimination against applicants, staff and students on the grounds of gender, actual or perceived, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, age and actual or perceived religious or similar belief.

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

Students' Experiences

“The disability service is very supportive; the meeting between myself, the Head of Department and the Academy Counsellor after my assessment made it clear to me what support I could expect from the Academy and what I needed to do for myself. I was able to buy a computer with my DSA which has proved invaluable for writing essays.”

Ayse, 2nd year student – BA (Contemporary Theatre Practice)

“Awareness has increased enormously – staff are very helpful and realise now that while there may be a number of students with dyslexia we all have different requirements and are affected in different ways. The disability service helped me apply for equipment, which made a huge difference.”

Pauline, Honours year student – BMus

Welcome!

We hope that you will find the information in this booklet useful. If you have any questions about the information please contact the Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser on 0141 270 8282 or j.balmforth@rsamd.ac.uk in the first instance. (Please see page 14 for full contact details.)

The Academy aims to ensure that equality of opportunity in all areas of its activities is extended to applicants and students who have a disability or special needs and that all Academy students with special needs are fully supported

If you are thinking of applying to the Academy and wondering whether to declare a disability, we encourage you to declare any disability/special needs on your application form so that we can contact you and discuss any support that might be helpful at audition or interview.

Alternatively, you may wish to contact the Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser to discuss any concerns or questions you may have before you complete the application form. If you would like to visit the Academy

before (or after) applying, we can arrange for you to meet staff and take a tour round the building.

We welcome feedback from students on provision in the Academy 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!

A comprehensive guide, *The Ultimate Guide to Disability Access & Transport within Glasgow*, is available from the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley Tourist Board at 11 George Square in the centre of the city. Tel: 0141 204 4400. You can also find this information on the website www.glasgowaccesspanel.org.uk

You can find out more information about Glasgow on www.seeglasgow.org.uk and about Scotland on www.visitscotland.com

If you would like further details on the range of facilities and resources in the city, please

contact the Academy Counsellor's office on
0141 2708 282 or j.balmforth@rsamd.ac.uk

Access to the Academy

The Academy is located in the heart of Glasgow close to the Theatre Royal and the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. As well as being a centre for music and drama students, the Academy is also a public building and provides access for audiences who attend the many plays, operas and concerts performed by students and guest performers.

We strongly encourage you to visit the Academy at an early stage in your application to assess the suitability/accessibility of facilities available.

As a general guide:

- There is accessible parking for disabled students at the Hope Street entrance of the Academy.
- There is level access with an automatic sliding door on the ground floor of the Academy on Renfrew Street. An accessible lift serves all floors.
- Accessible toilets are located on the first floor (main building and Opera School) and the second floor (Opera School.)

- The Fyfe lecture theatre, all auditoria and many teaching rooms are fitted with induction loops.
- Wheelchair spaces are provided in the Academy's three concert halls and two theatres.
- All Client Services staff receive disability awareness training as part of their induction training programme.

See page 20 **Equipment Provision** for more details of equipment available.

Applications and Admissions

The Academy welcomes applications from disabled people - if you would like further information about facilities and access please contact the Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser on 0141 270 8282. All applicants to the Academy are auditioned and interviewed.

If you would like to discuss arrangements for your audition or interview, you can contact the Deputy Principal or the Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser either by e-mail or by telephone. (See contact list on page 33.)

The Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser contacts all applicants who declare a disability on their application form – this is to give you the opportunity to discuss any arrangements for your audition/interview.

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

When you have been accepted onto a course at the Academy, a meeting will be arranged for you by the Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser with your Head of Department to draw up a written agreement of support, known as a Learning Agreement. The learning agreement is a statement of support including, for example, arrangements for exams, a note-taker for lectures, extended deadlines for written work etc. The Learning Agreement is reviewed every academic session.

Counselling & Disability Service

Jane Balmforth, Academy Counsellor, is also the Academy's disability adviser. Jane's room is located on the ground floor near the lift and is fully accessible.

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

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

The Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser is available to provide:

- counselling for students about any issue that may be causing anxiety
- individual support for students with special needs

Jane is happy to meet any student who wishes to discuss personal matters that may be causing uncertainty or unhappiness and all consultations are strictly confidential.

If you have a disability or special need, you are encouraged to contact the Academy

Counsellor to discuss any issues you may have, whether with your application, audition/interview or the course in general.

The Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser will contact you at the beginning of each academic session to ensure that effective provision is made to assist your studies. (See Applications & Admissions page 12.)

Registrar and the Personal Academic Tutorial System (PAT)

The Registrar, Suzanne Daly, is the manager who has responsibility for the service levels for students with disabilities. Suzanne can be contacted on 0141 270 8206 and is based in Academic Administration and Support on the ground floor of the Academy. E-mail: s.daly@rsamd.ac.uk

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

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

A team of Personal Academic Tutors (PAT) is available in the School of Music and the School of Drama for consultation at specified times. Under the PAT system students will

meet their tutors a minimum of four times in an academic year. The tutor will offer:

- guidance and support in academic matters
- assistance with the process of Personal Development Planning
- assistance with reflecting on and planning for learning, employability and personal development
- help to identify learning goals and become an independent learner

More information on the PAT system is available from the individual school.

Learning Support

The Academy provides a learning support service: the Effective Learning Tutor is available to assist all students. The service includes:

- Essay writing techniques
- Critical analysis
- Effective reading skills
- Note-taking
- Revision and preparation for exams
- Organising study schedules
- Research skills for assignments and dissertations
- “Life skills” – timetables, organisation skills

If you would like to arrange a meeting with the Effective Learning Tutor please contact Academic Administration and Support for details.

For students with disabilities, arrangements for exams and assessments are included in your Learning Agreement (see page 13). These arrangements will be based on the recommendations stated by the specialist who has carried out a needs assessment e.g. an Educational Psychologist, GP or consultant.

If you would like details of arrangements that can be made for support in meeting the examination and assessment requirements of your course you should contact the Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser.

Use of lap tops, scribes, extra reading and writing time and large print exams on different coloured paper are examples of what can be arranged as appropriate.

Equipment Provision

The RSAMD has a range of equipment for use by students with special needs:

- Vibrating pager fire alarms. In the event of a fire alarm being triggered, a signal is sent to the pager which vibrates to alert the wearer. This facility is useful for students who may find themselves alone in practice rooms in the remotest part of the building during a fire alarm.
- All performance spaces and the Fyfe lecture theatre are fitted with induction loops; the Whittaker Library and all public reception areas are also fitted with induction loops. A small portable induction loop is available for students to borrow.
- An infra red system for audio description is available for the Opera School and the New Atheneum Theatre.
- 25 personal computers with up-to-date software and Internet access are installed in the computer suite. Software available includes Texthelp Read & Write and Inspiration. You can request your

own individual profile for the computer if you have preferences regarding text size and background contrast. Please speak to the IT Support Analyst in the computer suite.

The Whittaker Library

The Information Services staff will endeavour to provide a fully equitable service to its users, regardless of ability. We aim to make all reasonable adjustments necessary to improve the learning experience of users, and have a number of measures in place to assist those with disabilities to make the most of their library and IT use.

We offer extended loan periods to dyslexic and other students, and offer a range of assistive technologies in both the research and the student IT suites. The student IT suite is equipped with 25 PCs incorporating the packages Inspiration and TextHelp Read and Write. These packages are available to all students, via their Academy login. Training on these packages is available to students on a one to one basis and can be arranged by contacting our IT Trainer, Julie Smillie (T: 0141 270 8202, E: j.smillie@rsamd.ac.uk).

Our student intranet site has also been designed with a range of options to improve accessibility, and the site conforms to W3C web accessibility guidelines. This site is designed to provide information about your course, your welfare and other Academy

related issues. We welcome feedback and suggestions, which can be directed to the IT Manager on 0141 270 8260.

The Whittaker Library and the student IT suite are located on Level 3 of the Academy, accessible via the lift located on the ground floor of the building near the reception desk.

We hope we can anticipate all our students' needs, and will endeavour to review our services to take into account advances in technology and changing needs. If you require any further information or assistance, please talk to any member of staff, or contact Caroline Cochrane, Head of Information Services (T: 0141 270 8269, E: c.cochrane@rsamd.ac.uk)

Accommodation

The Academy aims to offer all first year students a place in a hall of residence. The Academy ensures that accommodation is suitable for students with special needs.

Currently, it is possible to offer places in a private hall of residence in the centre of Glasgow. All students will be sent details and an application form for the hall of residence when they have accepted the offer of a place on a course at the Academy.

In addition, the Academy 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. This database may be accessed on www.accom.gla.ac.uk/pad

If you would like more information on suitable accommodation please contact Academic Administration and Support on registry@rsamd.ac.uk

Financial support

The Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) is the main source of financial assistance for UK undergraduates whose disability means that specialist equipment or additional personal help is required to enable them to pursue a course of study. All UK postgraduate students are also eligible to apply for DSA.

The Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser will help you complete the application form for a Disabled Students' Allowance. She also sends a supporting letter to the appropriate Local Education Authority, Library Board or Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) with the DSA form, and can arrange for an assessment of needs at a local Access Centre, if required.

If you require an up to date dyslexia assessment please contact the Academy Counsellor. The assessment is paid for by the Academy.

Hardship Funds are also available to help UK students facing financial hardship, and you can obtain an application form from Academic Administration & Support on Level 1.

The Students' Union

The RSAMD Students' Union (SU) is able to provide support and information. The SU runs campaigns and keeps leaflets on various topics of interest to students and you can drop in to the SU office to request information.

The website is www.rsamd-su.org.uk which can also be accessed through the Academy's website www.rsamd.ac.uk and then via the link to Studying.

The SU is affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS) which has a very informative website with links to NUS Scotland www.nusonline.co.uk

The SU also runs clubs such as the hill-walking club, yoga and contemporary dance, and organises the annual Summer Ball.

The SU office is on Level 3 of the Academy near the Library (room number 3.13). If you would like to contact the SU, you can drop by the office or phone on 0141 2708 296 or e-mail on SUPresident@rsamd.ac.uk

Careers Advice

Careers and vocational advice in the RSAMD should be seen in the context of a student body which, from enrolment, has fairly clear ideas as to career aspirations.

The same students, throughout their various courses, have daily contact with teachers from the Music and Drama professions and therefore have access to the most meaningful form of career advice. This advice will take account of the whole range of individual needs. There is also provision of careers advice built into courses in both Schools.

If you have any questions on careers you should consult your Head of Department in the first instance.

Medical Services

Woodside Health Centre is only a short distance from the RSAMD at:

Woodside Health Centre
Barr Street
Glasgow
G20 7LR

Tel: (0141) 531 9560

Staff from Woodside Health Centre will visit the Academy during Freshers' Week to register new first year students staying in the hall of residence. The Health Centre provides a wide range of services including Dentists, Physiotherapists and an X-Ray department.

If you are not staying at the hall of residence you should contact your local medical centre to register with a GP. You can call the NHS helpline on 0800 224 488 for help finding your nearest GP.

The Academy has a register of medical specialists in all fields relevant to performance in Music and Drama. If you have a medical problem that is causing difficulties in your studies, arrangements can be made by the

Registrar for you to see a specialist. It is the Academy's policy to pay for the first consultation.

You should first consult your Head of Department about this service if you feel you would like to see a specialist.

The Academy is also a member of the British Association of Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM), which provides specialist care and advice for performers. See www.bapam.org.uk for more information or phone the Helpline on 0845 602 0235.

Students with Special Needs

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

In 2007/08 a total of 110 students declared a disability/special need. The largest single grouping was dyslexia (86 students), followed by unseen disabilities, which includes mental health issues, asthma, epilepsy, ME, rheumatoid arthritis and diabetes.

The Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser holds regular informal meetings with students to discuss provision for students with special needs and feeds back issues to the Reachability Committee. The Reachability Committee, which reports to Academic Board, has 3 student representatives, and is responsible for monitoring equal opportunities and access to all aspects of the Academy.

Students may also take academic issues to the Monitoring, Evaluation and Review Board (MER); provision for students with special needs is specified in the remit of the MER, and student representatives are selected by student nomination.

Equal Opportunities at RSAMD

The RSAMD is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the Academy community, as declared in the Equal Opportunities statement on page 2. The Academy's Equal Opportunities Officer is responsible for ensuring that the Academy's environment and facilities are fully accessible and that any barriers to equal opportunity are removed.

The Reachability Committee reports to Academic Board and monitors the Academy's provision for students with special needs. Membership of the Reachability Committee includes representatives from throughout the Academy and includes 3 students with special needs who are elected every year.

The Academy Counsellor & Disability Adviser reviews annually the provision and service to students with specific additional needs and reports her findings and recommendations to Academic Board. The report is also submitted to the Development Committee, which has a responsibility for the preliminary consideration of Academy policy in regard to strategic planning and is involved in the initial drafting of

the institution's strategic planning documentation.

If you would like any further information or would like to discuss any of the information in this booklet, please contact Jane Balmforth on 0141 2708 282 or j.balmforth@rsamd.ac.uk

Useful Contacts

RSAMD Tel: 0141 332 4101
www.rsamd.ac.uk

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

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

Sherelyn Hallam, Welfare & International Student Adviser. Tel: 0141 270 8281 E-mail: s.hallam@rsamd.ac.uk

Maggie Kinloch, Deputy Principal & Director of Drama. Tel: 0141 270 8212
E-mail: m.kinloch@rsamd.ac.uk

The RSAMD publishes this Disability booklet on its Web Page: www.rsamd.ac.uk

Relevant sections of the Statement are also incorporated in other publications including the Prospectus. This Information booklet is sent to every applicant to the School of Drama. Applicants to the School of Music may access the booklet through www.rsamd.ac.uk and the CUKAS website also has further information: www.cukas.ac.uk

Further Information

Further information can be obtained from the following organisation:

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

Chapter House
18-20 Crucifix Lane
London
SE1 3JW

Information service: 0800 328 5050
Monday-Friday 1.30 – 4.30pm

e-mail: info@skill.org.uk

www.skill.org.uk

A useful guide for dyslexic students, *Understanding Dyslexia: An Introduction for Students in Higher Education* is available from Jane Balmforth at RSAMD or on the Internet: www.shefc.ac.uk/shefc

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

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