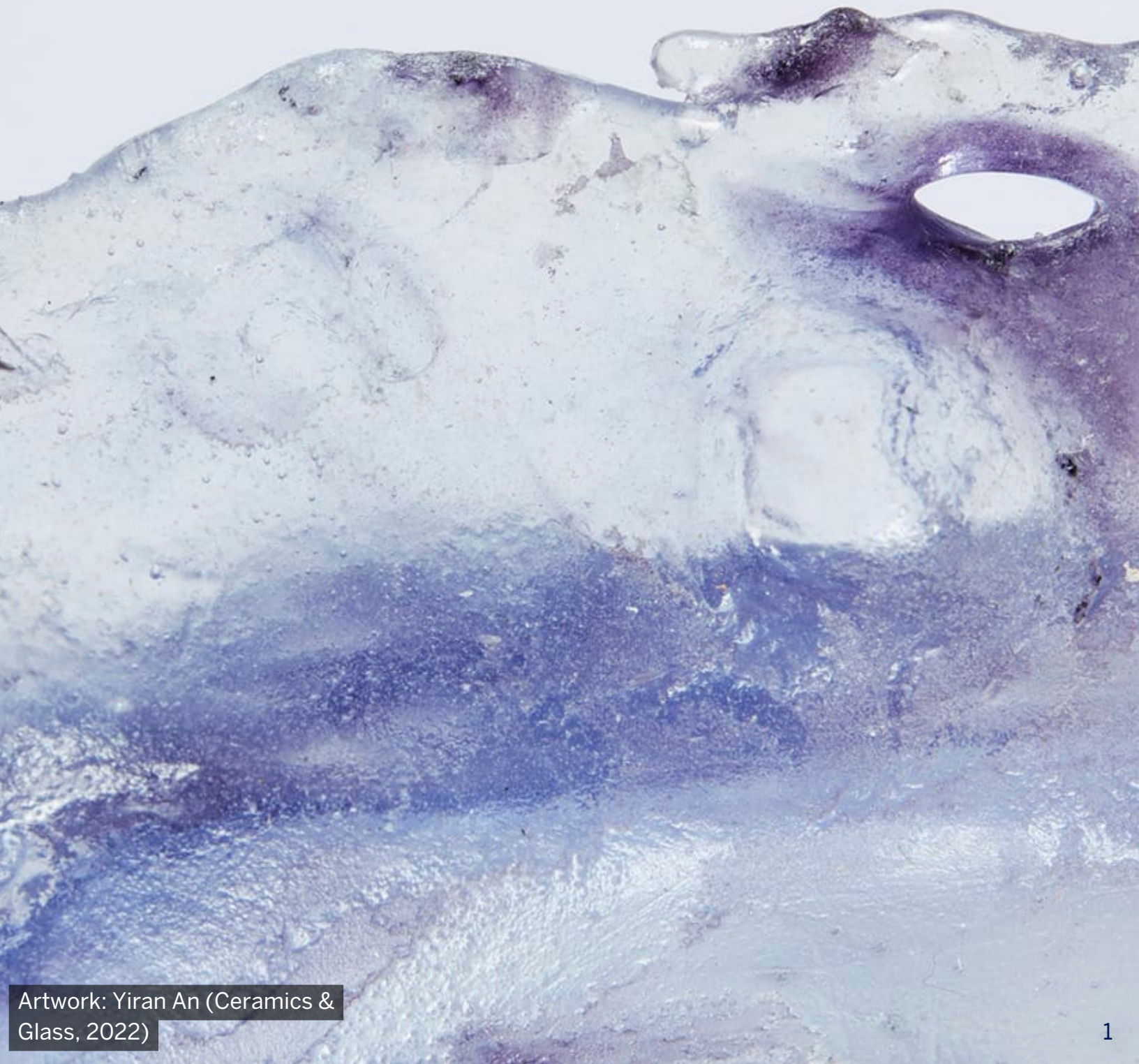


RCA

Disability Adviser April 2024



Artwork: Yiran An (Ceramics & Glass, 2022)

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Photo: Richard Haughton

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WELCOME TO THE RCA



Photo: Iwan Baan

Founded in 1837, the Royal College of Art is the world's largest community of postgraduate art and design students. It is also the oldest art and design university in continuous operation and has been ranked as the world's number one art and design university for a remarkable ten consecutive years, according to the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2024 – the worldwide survey of academic and industry opinion.

The RCA is research-led, and recognised in the UK-wide REF (Research Excellence Framework) as the UK's most research-intensive institution – with an increased proportion of the College's outputs classed as 'internationally excellent' and 'world-leading' in the most recent REF assessment of 2022.

Studying at the RCA is the starting point for the world's creative leaders. With more than 20,000 RCA alumni across the globe, the RCA's graduates form a unique international network of artists, designers, creators and innovators. Every year, RCA alumni are recognised as leaders in their discipline, making national and international headlines for their work, which shapes the world we live in. Its graduate start-up incubator, InnovationRCA, is one of the most successful in the country with a high proportion of female start-up founders and a high 'survival' percentage after five years of trading.

More than 2,700 students are spread across four schools and research and academic departments, studying at Graduate Diploma, MA, MFA, MDes, MArch, MEd, MRes, MPhil and PhD levels, with plans for this to rise to 3,300 by 2027. The College's mix of professionalism and creative freedom, together with its renowned academic community and rigorous academic framework provides the ecosystem in which students flourish and achieve their highest potential.



Photo: Richard Haughton

In addition, the RCA has a number of established and planned research centres: the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design; the Material Science Research Centre (which includes the Materials Futures Research Group and the Textiles Circularity Centre); the Intelligent Mobility Design Centre, Computer Science Research Centre, and a future centre in Drawing. The RCA is also home to one of the UK's most successful university incubators, InnovationRCA.

The RCA espouses a hybrid approach, supporting 'traditional' making and technical skills in fine and applied art and design alongside the foundational sciences, engineering and technology which underpin designers' ability to solve today's global challenges. The RCA champions the value of interdisciplinary learning and was the first art and design university in the world to implement a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Design and Mathematics) academic vision, with investment in new faculty posts in Materials Science; Computer Science and Robotics alongside art and design disciplines. By applying creative insights to evidence-based science, its staff, students, researchers and start-ups are addressing major global challenges such as rapid urbanisation and transport; loss of biodiversity; ageing populations; unsustainable consumption and production; and the rise of AI.

Our Strategy

The RCA's strategic vision is to increase its influence on the world stage of globally ranked universities, punching significantly above its weight, and attracting, supporting and convening the world's most talented faculty, students, artists, designers and creative leaders. For more information on The RCA's Strategic Plan 2022–27, please click on this link: [Strategic Plan 2022–27](#).

Our People



Photo: Richard Haughton

The RCA's Chancellor is Sir Jony Ive, and the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council is Sir Peter Bazalgette (please see link to Council independent members' biographies). The RCA's President and Vice-Chancellor – the CEO of the institution – is Dr Paul Thompson, who joined the College in 2009, but will be leaving in May 2024. The incoming President and Vice-Chancellor is Professor Christoph Lindner, who joined the RCA in April 2024.

The RCA's academic faculty bring world-leading expertise and industry knowledge to the practice-based model of teaching. There is a core academic and research workforce of 196 FTE, supported by around 215 Associate Lecturers and a wide range of Guest Lecturers who bring 'live' industry experience into the taught curriculum – for example, Amin Taha of GrantOn design, whose work was twice shortlisted for the RIBA Stirling Prize, in 2017 and 2021, teaches in the School of Architecture; and Yao Yingjia, who is Vice President and Chief Designer at Lenovo teaches in the School of Design.

The RCA combines contemporary and industry-focused teaching perspectives. It also employs a team of 95 highly skilled technicians, many of whom themselves have postgraduate qualifications in their fields of specialism, which range from rapid prototyping and subtractive manufacturing to film and sound engineering, and from digital modelling to metal fabrication and jewellery making.

Our Values



Photo: Shaun James

The RCA community operates in line with four agreed values:

Curiosity

We have a tenacious commitment to innovation and openness to change. We positively interrogate ideas, assumptions and plans and welcome the honest scrutiny that is alive in a learning community.

Inclusion

We celebrate diversity and embrace difference as a source of strength. We strive for an inclusive RCA community, removing barriers and challenging exclusionary and discriminatory practices.

Collaboration

We value what happens together and we help and support each other to achieve our collective goals. We work in partnership with our students, staff, alumni, institutions and communities across the globe to make a lasting difference.

Integrity

We are always willing to listen, we offer constructive feedback and we promote accountability, building relationships of mutual trust and respect. We are resilient in the face of challenges, pursuing outcomes with individual, cultural, societal and economic impact.

Student Experience



Photo: Richard Haughton

The Royal College of Art (RCA) is committed to enhancing the complete student experience. We are on a journey to build a sense of belonging, pride, and community within our RCA student body by putting students at the heart of everything we do.

Members of the Student Experience team have extensive, ongoing contact with academics and other staff to work collegiately to provide integrated and effective support for postgraduate students and researchers at the College.

The service takes an innovative approach to delivery and support and is designed to promote independence and be accessible, flexible and enabling. The team take a leading role in supporting the progression and retention of students facing challenges throughout their time at the College.

We are a busy team of diverse specialists. A strong emphasis is placed on the values and skills associated with effective teamwork. The team provides a knowledgeable, responsive and friendly service with good continuity of support.

Disability Adviser



Photo: Richard Houghton

Purpose of the post:

To act as the College disability specialist, working collaboratively with students using the social model of disability. To provide expert advice and support on disability matters to students and staff, including Programme Leaders and Deans. To support students in their study, promoting independence and autonomy while maintaining a boundaried and professional approach to helping. To advise and collaborate with individuals and groups, as appropriate, on wider issues around inclusion and accessibility within the College.

To actively seek out student voices when developing projects or ideas that reflect their values, opinions, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds. To maintain close connections with our Student's Union, societies and networks such as the Disabled Student Network, BSL Society, and Neurodiversity Society.

To develop a centralised and coherent approach to the organisation and implementation of disability support ensuring clarity, ease of access and efficient administrative processes. Working with colleagues and students towards the promotion and development of an inclusive learning environment.

Working within a small team to also provide integrated advice and support to students on other welfare issues. To deliver a pro-active and professional service which is responsive to the changing needs of students and to work with the full College community and external providers to ensure coherent and effective support for all students.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

Disability Advice

- Establish, deliver and monitor high quality, expert advice and support for post graduate taught and research students with disabilities, including mental health and general health conditions.
- Provide information on how to implement support both through Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and internally.
- Ensure that appropriate anticipatory adjustments and any specific requirements arising from the individual DSA Needs Assessment (and/or other medical or diagnostic evidence), are accessible to the student, including the provision of study skills tutors, support workers, etc as appropriate.
- Successfully resolve potentially complex individual support challenges including reasonable adjustments and securing additional funding, including charitable funding by working collaboratively with colleagues and external agencies.
- To undertake in-house Needs Assessments for international and other non-DSA funded students.
- To take the lead in proactively contacting offer holders who disclose a disability on their application to encourage an early dialogue regarding support planning that ensures a successful transition to their academic programme and student life at the RCA.
- To support and provide feedback to students who undertake diagnostic assessments and needs assessments, ensuring an agreement on confidentiality.
- Establish, agree on, and coordinate Inclusion Plans when arranging support for students.
- Work closely with programme staff to ensure the implementation of support and make reasonable adjustments within a department to support a student's needs.
- Act as a key point of contact for students experiencing mental health difficulties, working flexibly with the Mental Health Coordinator to support students in crisis and coordinate responses across the campus.
- Develop effective links with other HEIs and external organisations, such as Student Finance England, SAAS, SFW and other disability practitioners groups.
- Advise individuals and groups across the College on accessibility and inclusion issues.
- Deliver disability awareness and disseminate information on support available for disabled students to academic departments across the College.
- Oversee effective and reliable records on all disabled students and ensure effective arrangements around confidentiality.



Photo: Richard Haughton

Main Duties and Responsibilities (cont):

- Review and assess data to monitor demand and inform strategic planning.
- Be curious, taking an evidence-based, innovative approach to developing new systems or project pilots which enhance the student experience.
- To work flexibly as part of the Student Experience Team, covering the Student Centre reception desk and our drop-in service at specific times across the year,

General Advice

- Provide advice and continuing support for students to interpret their enquiries, understand any underlying issues and help students take action to find resolution.
- Refer students sensitively and professionally to other specialist sources of support both within the College and externally as appropriate.
- Plan and organise, together with other members of the Student Experience team, appropriate one off events and activities for students e.g. orientation events for overseas student, housing events for new students, social activities and support workshops.
- Represent the Student Experience Team at College events such as Open Days, department forums, orientation, Registration and induction events.
- Actively develop and manage our web pages and intranet together with other supporting sources of information.
- Assist with College-wide student events such as registration and Convocation as reasonably required by the Academic Registrar.
- Work with colleagues in the Student Support team to ensure a consistent and appropriate presence across all RCA sites, including Battersea and White City.
- Undertake any other duties as reasonably required by the Deputy Head of Student Experience.



Person Specification

Essential characteristics of the postholder:

- Knowledge and understanding of student disability issues including an up-to-date understanding the Equality Act and other relevant legislation and frameworks, specifically, the College's responsibilities within these areas.
- Ability to communicate effectively and enthusiastically with wide range of people, including in challenging situations, for example; working with people with complex and sensitive conditions.
- Strong networking skills to work sensitively with individuals (including senior members of staff) and teams to ensure the best possible provision of seamless and coherent support for disabled students within available resources.
- Ability to use high level creative and problem-solving skills, in particular to manage complex decisions in responding to the needs of disabled students.
- Able to consistently demonstrate a high level of self-motivation and an initiative-taking approach.
- Ability to empathise and work effectively and sensitively with students in difficulty.
- Excellent team working skills and a friendly and open attitude to working with others.
- Excellent administrative and IT skills including experience of working with complex systems.
- Excellent organisational and time management skills and the ability to use initiative to work independently.
- Excellent customer service skills.



Person Specification

Desirable characteristics of the postholder:

- Experience working in a Higher Education setting.
- An advice and guidance or coaching qualification.
- A qualification or experience of undertaking professional development opportunities in autism awareness, specific learning differences, or neurodiversity.
- Experience and working knowledge of the Disabled Students' Allowance.
- Experience in delivering disability awareness training.
- Experience and understanding of other welfare areas such as international advice or housing.
- Experience working with both home and international postgraduate students and an awareness and understanding of their specific needs.
- Experience working with social media or other communication channels to develop engaging, creative, innovative content.



Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Responsible to: Deputy Head of Student Experience
- Salary: Grade 7- £42,205 - £45,732 per annum including London Allowance
- FTE: 1 - Normal hours will total 35 hours per week, Monday to Friday, 9.30am and 5.30pm with an hour each day for lunch.
- Occasional out of hours work may be required e.g. start of year, outings, evening events. Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) will be authorised by the line manager.
- 25 days annual leave plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter, at the discretion of the College.
- A contributory defined benefit pension scheme and interest-free season ticket loan are available
- Location: Kensington/Hybrid, London
- Department: Student Experience



Pension

The Royal College of Art is a member of the Superannuation Arrangements of the University of London (SAUL) which is a contributory defined benefit pension scheme. The college will contribute a sum equal to 16% of your salary while you pay 6%.

Holiday

25 days paid leave a year plus bank and public holidays normally observed in England and Wales. In addition, the college is normally closed for six days a year, one day on either side of Easter and the remainder between Christmas and New Year. Part-time staff will be entitled to the pro rata equivalent.

Season ticket loans

Interest-free loans are available for staff to purchase annual season tickets.

Enhanced maternity and adoption pay

Qualifying employees are entitled to enhanced maternity/adoption pay: 26 weeks' full pay, 13 weeks Statutory Maternity/Adoption Pay. This compares to the statutory provision of 90% of average pay for 6 weeks followed by Statutory Maternity/Adoption Pay for 33 weeks.

Enhanced paternity pay

Qualifying employees are entitled to two weeks' paternity leave entitlement at full pay. This compares to the statutory provision of two weeks' pay at the statutory rate.

Enhanced sick pay

Occupational sick pay after three months' service is three months full pay/three months half pay.

24/7 confidential support

Staff and family members in their household have access to a free, external confidential support service for work, financial, legal, family and personal problems 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Occupational health

Occupational Health support for the College is provided by Imperial College's occupational health service at their South Kensington Campus.

Life Cover

Active members of the SAUL pension scheme automatically receive life cover. A lump sum of four times your salary together with a refund of your contributions and a 2/3 pension for your dependent/spouse is payable should you die whilst in employment.

Library

All staff are welcome to join the college library.

Events

All staff are welcome to attend exhibitions, lectures and private views held by academic schools and programmes.



10 YEARS

as the world's N°1
University for Art & Design

QS World University Rankings by Subject 2015-24