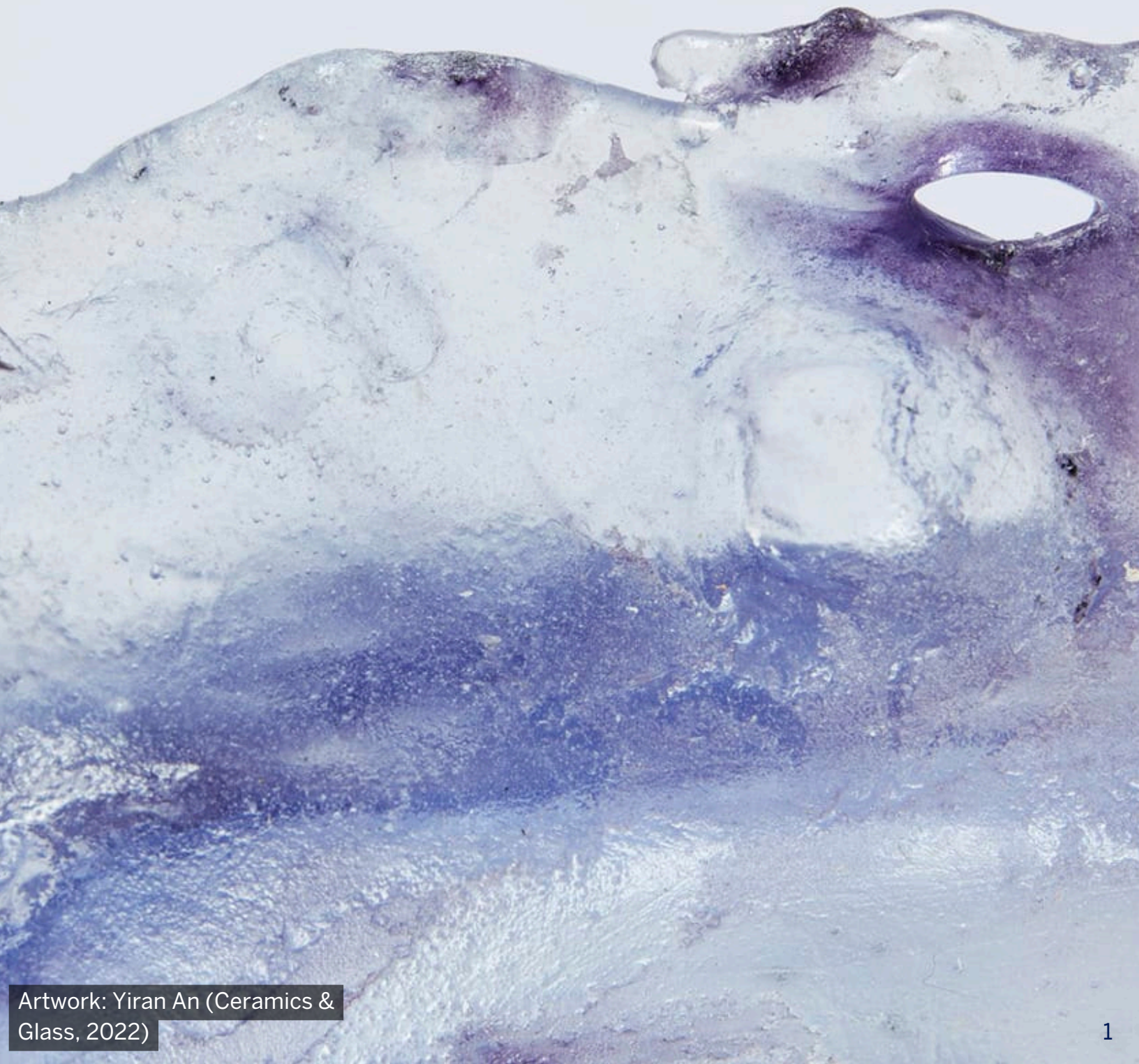


RCA

Human Resources Business Partner November 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 2021.

Studying at the RCA is the starting point for the world's creative leaders. With more than 25,000 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 2,800 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. 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 role of Royal Visitor to the RCA was taken on by The former Prince of Wales – now His Majesty The King – in 2018. The announcement of HM The King’s retained Patronage of the RCA marks the first anniversary of Their Majesties’ Coronation. As part of the official Coronation Concert in May 2023, the Royal College of Art along with The Royal Ballet, The Royal Opera, the Royal Shakespeare Company, and the Royal College of Music came together for the first time ever to create a spectacular one-off performance, with a striking visual backdrop of specially-designed artworks contributed by students from the Royal College of Art.

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 & Vice-Chancellor – the CEO of the institution – is Professor Christoph Lindner who joined the College 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.

People & Culture



BUSINESS PARTNERING AND ADVISORY TEAM

The Business Partnering Team provides expert advice to managers across the College on a range of people matters including workforce planning and change management. The team is responsible for ensuring successful implementation of College policy and process changes, appropriate governance of policy and ER decisions and monitoring and measurement of ER services and objectives. The team works closely with the Deputy Director of People & Culture working in partnership with the unions, to facilitate change activity and to seek resolution on individual cases, as appropriate.

The team provides expertise on all informal and formal casework matters across the College, using internal and external insight to develop strategy, policies and guidance.

Human Resources Business Partner



Photo: Richard Haughton

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

Working collaboratively with senior staff and managers across a portfolio of Schools and Professional Services areas, to deliver current and future business needs that align with the College's strategic aims; anticipating people implications of current and forthcoming change; steering the development and delivery of workforce plans, supporting budgeting and forecasting and contributing expertise in complex cases applying a range of HR interventions.

HR Business Partners will contribute deep insight of their partner Schools/Professional Services areas to the activity of all functional areas of the People & Culture team and will support the implementation of new policies and practices in their assigned Schools/Professional Services areas.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Develop and maintain strong, effective and collaborative relationships with senior staff and managers within designated Schools and Professional Services areas to support the College's strategic objectives through effective people management and workforce planning;
- Develop and maintain a comprehensive understanding of the demands, objectives and operating environment of each designated School and Professional Services area, taking an active role in senior leadership teams planning and management activity and contributing specialist HR guidance at formative stages;
- Work in partnership with Deans and Directors to ensure that Schools and Professional Services areas' current and future workforce needs inform College-wide strategic workforce and talent management plans;
- Enable, coach and facilitate the acquisition and development of skills and knowledge in managers so that they are better equipped to be self-reliant in dealing with people issues;
- Regularly consult and be advised by EDI colleagues to ensure all expertise, advice and support provided to Schools and Professional Services areas is informed by best practice in relation to equality and inclusion and foster a positive employee experience.



Photo: Richard Haughton

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES (cont):

- Work collaboratively with managers, coordinate fairly and decisively on complex casework including discipline, grievance and absence management, ensuring best practice and consistent approaches.
- Promote and coach managers to resolve issues at informal stages where possible utilising internal and, on occasion external mediation services.
- Provide specialist advice and guidance to senior managers on matters involving complex employment issues, internal hearings or legal proceedings.
- Contribute to the development, review and implementation of policies and procedures that not only reflect good practice and legislative changes but that are also innovative and creative.
- Establish and maintain productive working partnerships with trade union representatives and support and coach managers to effectively inform, consult and negotiate appropriately on employment matters.
- Work in partnership with P&C colleagues to develop and deliver improved recruitment and induction processes, wellbeing initiatives and progressive learning and development activity that meets the needs of Schools, Professional Services areas and the College as a whole.
- Contribute to revised pay, benefits and performance frameworks that attract and retain high-performing employees in schools and departments.
- Work collaboratively with the HR Operations team to identify process and systems enhancements that will deliver streamlined administrative approaches to the management of HR data and people analytics.
- Utilise the support of HR Advisors in matters of less complex employee relations cases, developing and coaching them to develop their professional practice.
- Act as a role model for colleagues with the P&C Team and across the College by living the College's values and proactively ensuring that these are embedded in Schools and professional services areas.



Person Specification

Essential:

- Chartered member of the CIPD
- Good standard of education to graduate level or equivalent
- Experience of working as an HR Business Partner in a higher education institution (HEI) or similar environment
- Prior experience of workforce planning and change management
- Demonstrably successful HR generalist
- Experience of consultation with trade unions
- Excellent working knowledge of employment law
- Sound knowledge of key issues in HRM
- Evidence of effectively managing complex casework
- Ability to foster effective professional relationships and build credibility, trust and respect with senior managers
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Strong organisational skills and the ability to maintain high professional standards and behaviours when under pressure
- Significant experience of providing high level HR advice and support
- A track record of influencing and persuading senior management
- Evidence of effective dispute resolution, collective and individual, and holding difficult conversations
- Proven ability to think strategically and deliver effective solutions in a complex and demanding environment
- Ability to maintain high levels of confidentiality
- Proven analytical skills and able to interpret and explain HR metrics
- Commitment to excellent customer service
- Resilient, supportive and practical – able to challenge diplomatically and sensitively
- Strong digital literacy skills (including experience of google for work)
- Evidence of continuous professional development
- Demonstrable understanding of GDPR and principles of effective information security

Desirable:

- Coaching and/or mentoring qualifications
- Experience as a certified mediator
- Postgraduate qualification in HR
- Experience of iTrent or other web-based payroll/HR systems

Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Responsible to: Head of HR Business Partnering
- Full time salary: Grade 9 £53,954- £59,999 per annum including London Allowance.
- Permanent and full time role.
- 27 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, along with many other benefits.
- Location: Kensington (with travel to other sites)/hybrid
- Department: People & Culture



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

27 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 six weeks' paternity leave entitlement at full pay.

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.



Equality, diversity and inclusion - Disability and neurodiversity

Disability Confident

RCA is a Disability Confident Committed employer. You may recognise the logo from our job adverts.

Disability Confident is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit, retain, and develop disabled people. RCA was originally awarded the Disability Confident certificate in October 2022, which broadens and deepens our existing commitment as an employer.

As a Disability Confident Committed employer, we commit to the below core activities:

- ensure our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible
- communicating and promoting vacancies
- offering an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job
- anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as required
- supporting any existing employee who acquires a disability or long-term health condition, enabling them to stay in work
- at least one activity that will make a difference for disabled people





10 YEARS

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

QS World University Rankings by Subject 2015-24

Together, the RCA community can generate change now for a sustainable future everywhere.