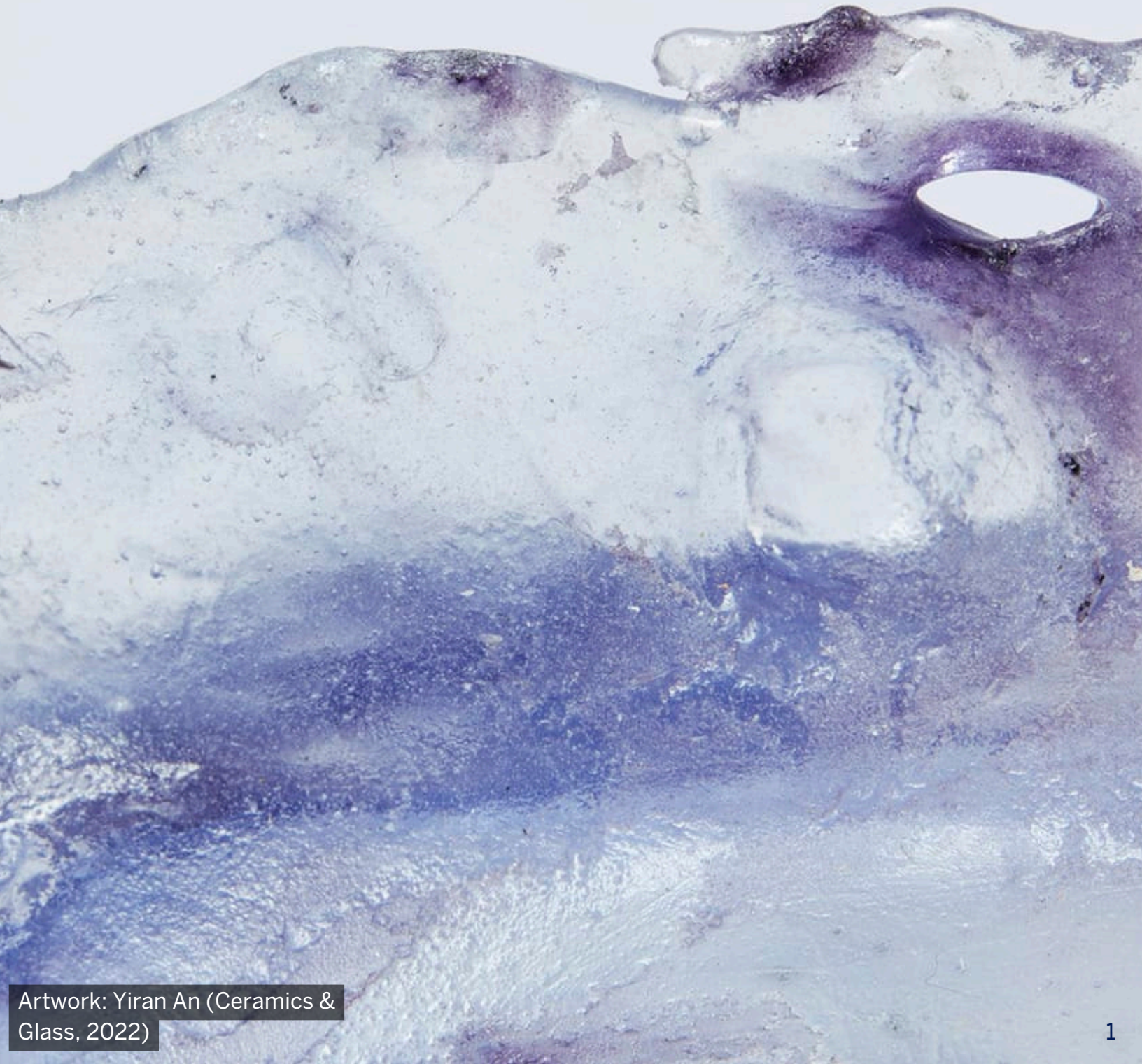


RCA

Lead Procurement Specialist April 2025



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 eleven consecutive years, according to the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025 – 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:



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.



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.



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.



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.

Lead Procurement Specialist



Purpose of the post

Reporting to the Deputy Director of Finance (Financial Operations, Accounting and Control), the Lead Procurement Specialist will be responsible for developing the College's strategy, policy, processes and practice in relation to the procurement of goods, services and works and the management of contracts and supplier relationships for the College. Within this, the role holder will ensure all procurement is carried out in line with the College's core values, strategic, financial and sustainability goals, whilst ensuring compliance with relevant legislation.

The Lead Procurement Specialist will lead the College's procurement, ensuring the College secures value for money from all its expenditure. The role holder will also be responsible for major contract procurement/management and consolidating and rationalising the College's supplier base.

The role requires liaison internally with College staff at all levels, but most notably with contract managers, budget holders and staff at Head of Programme/Department and Executive Board level. The role holder will also need to liaise externally with suppliers, purchasing consortia, framework providers and professional bodies, e.g. Higher Education Procurement Academy.



Photo: Richard Haughton

Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. Strategy and Policy

- 1.1. To develop, implement and manage procurement strategy for the RCA, engaging support and agreement from key internal stakeholders.
- 1.2. To influence managers and budget-holders to take full account of and pro-actively manage commercial risk arising from their expenditure, the selection of suppliers and the management of established supplier relationships.
- 1.3. To act as the College's primary source of advice and guidance for managers and budget-holders on the application of commercial risk management, procurement and negotiation strategy and good practice.
- 1.4. To lead the development and implementation of procurement policies and systems to support tendering, contract management, spend analytics and supplier performance management and to develop terms and conditions of contracts as appropriate for various spend categories.

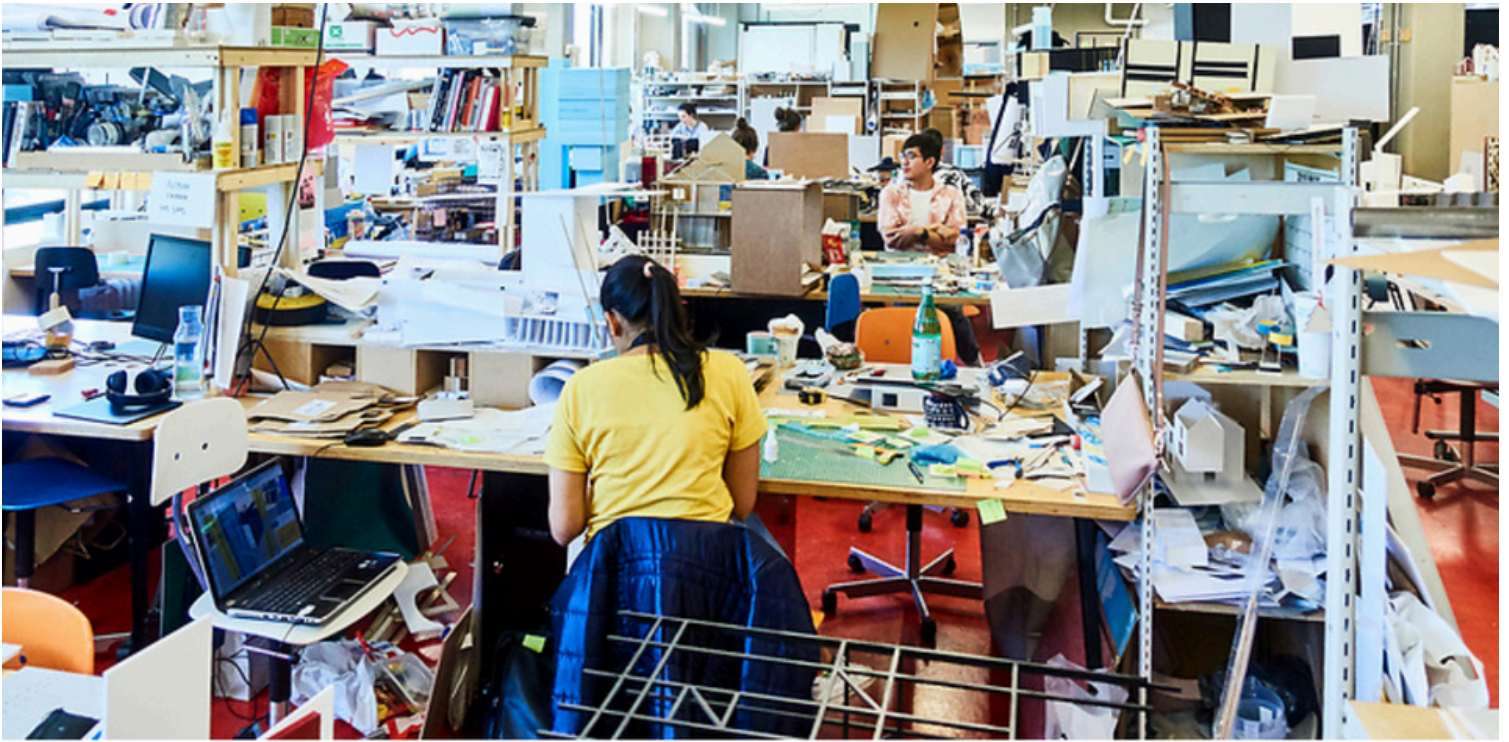


Photo: Richard Houghton

Main Duties and Responsibilities (cont).

- 1.5. To provide visibility for key stakeholders of RCA's most critical suppliers, both in terms of contract value and operational importance, and monitor and report on the developing picture of commercial risk for RCA, making recommendations for mitigating action as appropriate.
- 1.6. Ensure legal and regulatory compliance of procurement policy, practice and supporting documentation including public procurement procedures (where these are employed) and General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) in relation to procurement.
- 1.7. Design and implement internal policies and associated training resources, e.g. 'how-to guides' as appropriate for all staff related to procurement and purchasing.
- 1.8. Develop and maintain the College's Responsible Procurement Policy to complement procurement strategy, minimising the carbon footprint of and mitigating the risk of labour rights abuses in RCA's supply chains.
- 1.9. Proactively advise the CFO and Deputy FD - Financial Operations, Accounting & Control of opportunities to simplify procurement processes and improve service levels for budget holders within available resources.

Main Duties and Responsibilities (cont):

2. Lead the RCA's procurement

- 2.1. Establish and manage future demand, capacity planning and risk management.
- 2.2. Act as the lead negotiator and principal conduit for formal communications with bidders and suppliers during key procurement processes. Delegate further communications to internal contract managers as appropriate.
- 2.3. Either directly or working in partnership with key staff across the College, lead the management of major procurements for all categories of spend, College-wide, collaborating with colleagues across the College who manage supplier relationships on a day-to-day basis.
- 2.4. Collaborate with other HEIs, industry/professional procurement organisations where there is a demonstrable benefit to the RCA.
- 2.5. Drive continuous improvement, best value and quality improvements across the College. Challenge existing practices and actively seek ways to achieve better outcomes to ensure key performance and financial targets are met and corrective action is taken where necessary.
- 2.6. Ensure the procurement service secures quantitative and qualitative feedback from all stakeholders, analyses this information and can demonstrate actions taken to address issues raised.
- 2.7. Identify and address procurement training needs across the RCA, proactively training all new staff who have budgetary responsibilities in good procurement practice.



Main Duties and Responsibilities (cont):

3. Value for money

- 3.1. Generate value for money for the RCA.
- 3.2. Work with RCA's Environmental Sustainability Manager to ensure that responsible procurement practice, e.g. whole-life costing, is understood and applied in procurement activities.
- 3.3. Lead the development of innovative, optimal approaches to the efficient and effective acquisition of goods, services and works for the RCA.
- 3.4. Leverage resources to support business goals, bringing all expertise necessary to address the College's challenges and to safeguard against unmanaged contractual and commercial risk.

4. Supply chain management

- 4.1. Develop excellent and effective collaborative relationships with key internal stakeholders, external providers and other agencies to ensure strategic and operational needs are fully understood and incorporated.
- 4.2. Implement the use of appropriate frameworks including but not limited to those managed by the London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC) and Crown Commercial Service (CCS).
- 4.3. Develop and maintain a system for measuring and monitoring the performance and financial standing of critical suppliers and taking appropriate preventive and remedial action where necessary.
- 4.4. Develop and implement strategies to consolidate and rationalise the RCA's supplier base, prioritising important spend categories such as Estates to allow teams to call off small works efficiently and effectively.
- 4.5. Conduct analysis of spend by supplier, commodity and other relevant categories to understand supply chain risks and opportunities for future improvements to procurement efficiency and effectiveness.

Main Duties and Responsibilities (cont):



5. Reporting

- 5.1. Report to relevant committees as may be required from time to time to provide up to date status reports on procurement to include commercial risk management, demonstrating value for money and compliance with regulatory requirements, including Anti-Bribery, Corruption and Fraud.
- 5.2. Participate in the annual Performance Review.

6. Other duties

- o 6.1. Actively support and promote the College's values and equity, diversity and inclusion.
- o 6.2. Undertake other duties not specifically stated, which from time to time are necessary without altering the nature or level of responsibility.
- o 6.3. To deliver services effectively, a degree of flexibility may be required in the duties performed to meet the service levels required. Job roles may naturally develop over time. Ongoing substantial changes to a role will be discussed between line managers and their staff with job descriptions updated as and when appropriate.

Person Specification

Essential criteria:

- A qualified procurement professional (MCIPS or equivalent).
- Demonstrable ability to influence, able to challenge stakeholders at all levels when needed and build trust-based relationships with stakeholders and the RCA's senior leadership.
- A seasoned negotiator with extensive procurement expertise, having operated at a strategic level with a strong track record of success in delivering financial savings, managing commercial risk and experience of ethical and responsible sourcing.
- Detailed knowledge of procurement legislation, supplier and contract management, with extensive experience of tendering and managing contracts and a broad working knowledge of spend categories including, but not limited to, facilities management, construction and IT/Digital. Experience of procurement implementation and use of procurement systems, and previous experience of conducting business process re-engineering.
- Team player, with exceptional interpersonal skills, able to work with a diverse and broad range of stakeholders across the organisation.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, ability to put complex issues into layman's terms for non-specialist audiences.
- Enthusiastic, self-confident approach.
- Strong system skills, including intermediate MS Excel skills.

Desirable criteria:

- Project Management experience/qualifications.
- Knowledge/experience of higher education sector.
- Experience of using the Delta eSourcing Portal and the Unit 4 ERP finance system.



Photo: Iwan Baan

Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Responsible to: Deputy Director of Finance - Financial Operations, Accounting & Control
- Full time salary: Grade 9 - £54,263 - £60,459 per annum including London Allowance.
- 1FTE, 35 hours per week, permanent role.
- 27 days annual leave plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter, at the discretion of the College. Pro rata for part time employees
- A contributory defined benefit pension scheme and interest-free season ticket loan are available
- Location: Kensington/Hybrid
- Department: Finance



Photo: Philip Vale

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





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

QS World University Rankings
by Subject 2015-25

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