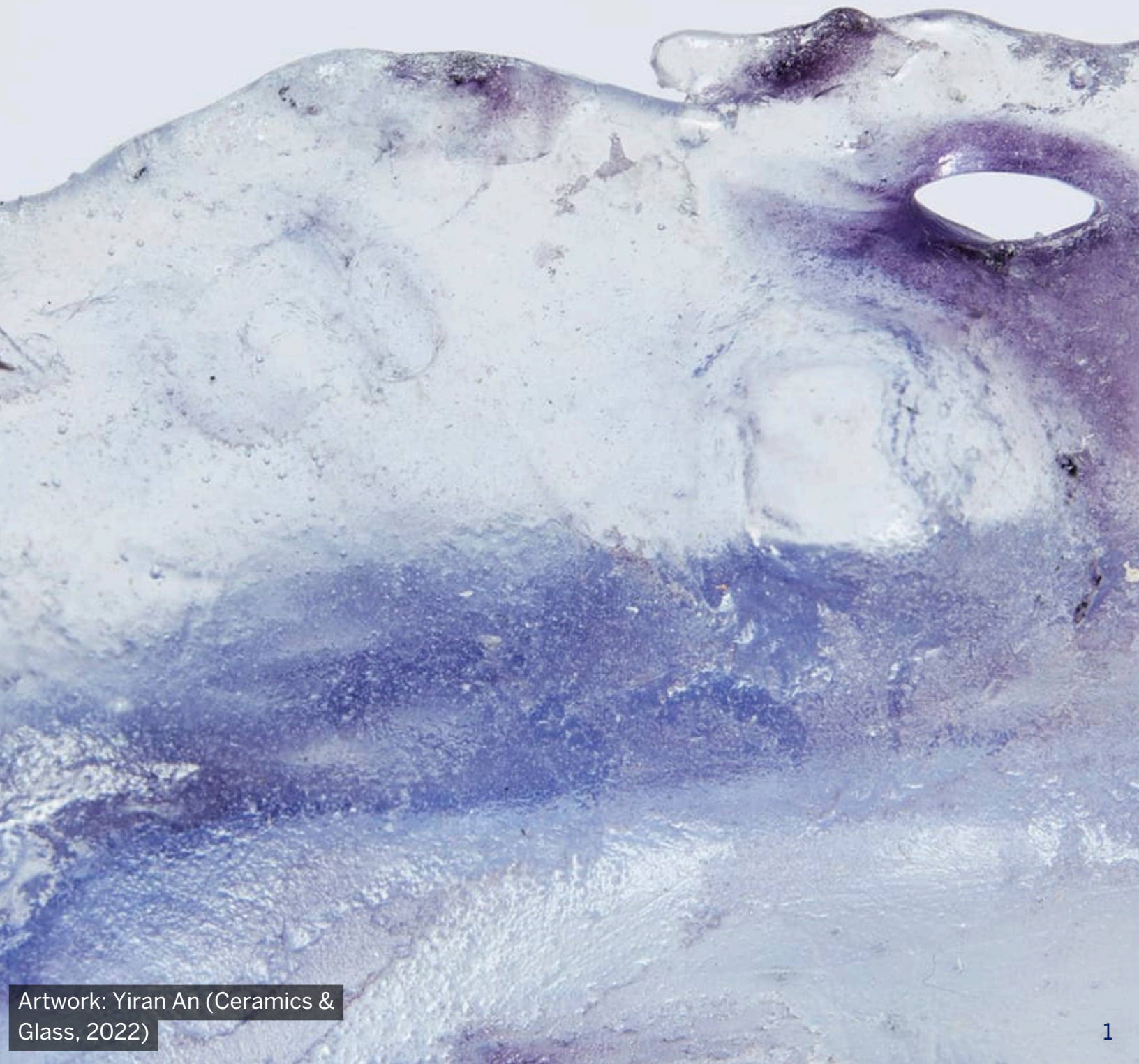


RCA

Dean of Creative Education July 2026



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 postgraduate-only community of art and design students. It has been ranked number one in the world 12 consecutive years (QS World University Rankings by Subject 2015-2026).

Studying at the RCA is the starting point for UK and global creative leaders. With more than 30,000 RCA alumni all over the world, the College's graduates form a diverse international network of artists, designers, creators and innovators.

Around 2,500 students are spread across three schools – Architecture, Arts & Humanities, Communication and Design - and in the RCA's Research Centres. The College creates an environment that champions exploration, collaboration and interdisciplinary learning - using art and design to reframe the possibilities of the humanities, technology, and ethics; and equipping graduates for new futures and opportunities

Research is at the heart of the RCA's impact. In active discussion with the world, the College brings interdisciplinary researchers and partners together in vital areas such as climate and sustainability, technology and society, and leads the field in practice-based research. As a result, the RCA is ranked as one of the most research-intensive specialist art and design universities in the UK [under the Research Excellence Framework 2014 and 2021].



Photo: Richard Haughton

The RCA champions exploration, collaboration and interdisciplinary learning - using art and design to reframe the possibilities of the humanities, technology, and ethics. We experiment, question and discover, putting research and practice at our heart, to equip students for new futures and opportunities and build on current knowledge.

Current 'real world' practices of our disciplines are fully integrated into our teaching delivery and student learning. The RCA model also consciously uses both the high research active levels of faculty, and the absence of undergraduate provision, to provide concentration and focus, in order to use research to creatively 'disrupt' the learning experience.

Our People



Photo: Richard Haughton

The strength of the RCA lies in its people: our students, academic community, researchers, technical specialists, professional services teams and our global network of alumni and partners.

The RCA's Chancellor is Sir Jony Ive, one of the world's most influential designers. The Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council is Sir Peter Bazalgette, and the President & Vice-Chancellor — the College's Chief Executive — is Professor Christoph Lindner, who joined the RCA in 2024.

The RCA's academic faculty bring world-leading expertise and industry knowledge to the College's model of teaching. All faculty are actively engaged in their relevant industries and professional practice beyond academia, and the RCA is the only specialist art and design university where all of our permanent academic staff are also research active and included in the RCA's submissions to the UK Research Excellence Framework.

The RCA has a total academic and research workforce of over 400 people, which includes Associate Lecturers, Visiting Professors and Guest Lecturers who bring 'live industry' experience into the taught curriculum

The RCA also employs a team of over 100 highly skilled technicians, many of whom themselves have postgraduate qualifications and are well established and recognised practitioners in their fields of specialism. Our skilled technical staff and technical resources are integral to delivering an interdisciplinary approach which is a key part of the student experience.



OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION: TOWARDS THE RCA AT 200 (2026–2030)

The RCA's new Strategic Plan sets out a transformational five-year phase as we begin our journey towards our bicentenary in 2037. Our ambition is to become the world's most influential art and design community, with a global footprint and a renewed approach to research, education, partnerships and organisational culture.

By 2030:

- The College will operate across two revitalised central London campuses, including a reimagined Darwin Building at Kensington.
- We will establish research and education hubs outside the UK for the first time.
- We will strengthen our global partnerships, increase access to scholarships and widen participation for students from all backgrounds.
- We will be recognised for leadership in emerging creative technologies, especially AI, and for our contribution to sustainability, regenerative practice and public good.

Our work is underpinned by the RCA's four values — Collaboration, Curiosity, Inclusion and Integrity — and by commitments to long-term resilience, financial sustainability, staff and student wellbeing, and a culture where creativity and innovation thrive.



The College's ambitions will be delivered through three Strategic Pillars:

Strategic Pillar One

Creating and delivering the best art and design education, dialogue and research.

Strategic Pillar Two

Championing a community with outstanding potential who are diverse, inclusive and connected.

Strategic Pillar Three

Convening transformational exchanges of art and design expertise and ideas.

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.



Role purpose

The Dean of Creative Education is a senior cross-College academic leadership role responsible for advancing the RCA's distinctive model of creative education, creative practice and postgraduate learning. The role provides strategic leadership for the cultures, conditions and frameworks that enable excellent creative practice, academic practice, teaching and learning innovation, student success, academic enhancement and inclusive education across the College.

The postholder will lead a cross-College portfolio that connects creative practice, pedagogy, academic development, student success, equity, diversity and inclusion, libraries, learning resources, academic literacies, technology-enhanced learning and educational innovation. The Dean will ensure that creative practice is understood not only as an outcome of study, but as a mode of enquiry, a form of knowledge production, a basis for curriculum design, and a defining feature of the RCA's postgraduate educational identity.

The role is intentionally cross-College and offers a unique opportunity to shape the educational experience across the RCA. It complements the School Deans' responsibility for strategic leadership of their Schools, programmes, staffing and disciplinary direction, while providing strategic leadership for educational priorities that benefit from a coordinated College-wide approach. Working in close partnership with Schools, Registry, Technical Services and professional services, the role helps drive innovation, excellence and impact across the institution.



Context

The Royal College of Art is a postgraduate-only, research-intensive specialist institution of art, design, architecture, communication and creative practice. Its academic model combines creative freedom, professional rigour, research-led teaching, specialist technical provision, and an international student community.

The RCA's strategic direction emphasises global leadership in art and design education, interdisciplinary and research-informed practice, widening access, student flexibility, innovation, equity and inclusion, and the continued development of distinctive postgraduate provision. The Dean of Creative Education will play a central role in translating these priorities into educational culture, academic practice and institutional delivery.

The role is deliberately cross-College. It does not replace the School Deans' responsibility for academic leadership of their Schools, programmes, staffing and disciplinary direction. Rather, it provides senior leadership for those educational priorities that need to be designed, owned and delivered across the whole College, in close partnership with Schools, Registry, Technical Services and other professional services.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. Cross-College leadership of creative education and practice

Provide senior leadership for the RCA's distinctive model of creative education, ensuring that creative practice remains central to the College's identity, curriculum, pedagogy, research culture and student experience.

Champion creative practice as a mode of enquiry, experimentation, knowledge production, public engagement and professional formation.

Work with School Deans, Associate Deans, Heads of Programme, Technical Services, Libraries and Academic Enhancement to support the conditions in which excellent creative practice can flourish.

Develop shared College-wide principles for creative education, while respecting the distinctive disciplinary cultures of Communication & Design, Arts & Humanities, and Architecture.

Represent and advance the RCA's position as a leading institution for postgraduate creative practice and creative education.



Main Duties and Responsibilities

2. Academic practice and staff development

Lead the College's approach to academic and creative practice development, including teaching excellence, studio pedagogy, supervision, assessment, critique, practice-led research, curriculum leadership, technical engagement and recognition for creative education practice.

Lead the development and implementation of academic career progression and promotion frameworks, working closely with People and Culture to support clear pathways for academic staff development.

Oversee the PG Cert in Creative Education, institutional Advance HE Fellowship support, wider recognition and enhancement frameworks, providing robust opportunities for academic and relevant professional services staff to meet probationary teaching requirements, gain professional recognition and engage in continuing professional development.

Build communities of practice across the College that bring together academic staff, technical staff, librarians, learning support specialists and students around shared creative and educational challenges.



Main Duties and Responsibilities

3. Teaching and learning innovation

Provide strategic leadership for teaching and learning innovation across the RCA, including new pedagogic models, flexible learning, blended and digitally enabled education, interdisciplinary provision, assessment innovation and student engagement.

Oversee the Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching Team, working closely with Technology and academic colleagues to embed digital learning, AI-enabled education and responsible technology use as core elements of academic practice and pedagogy.

Support curriculum innovation that is educationally ambitious, operationally sustainable and aligned with the RCA's academic framework.

Ensure that educational innovation is evidence-informed, evaluated and connected to student experience, academic standards, staff capability and institutional sustainability.

4. Student success and educational outcomes

Lead the College's strategic approach to student success, working with the PVC Education and Student Success, School Deans, Registrar, of Student Experience, Students' Union and relevant professional services.

Develop and oversee cross-College approaches to student continuation, progression, attainment, belonging, engagement, employability and graduate outcomes.

Ensure that student success work is grounded in evidence, including student voice, student outcomes data, equality data, programme-level insights, PTES, NSS-relevant sector intelligence where applicable, and sector benchmarks.

Lead the College's response to PTES, ensuring that postgraduate student feedback is translated into meaningful academic enhancement, policy development and local action.

Work with the Students' Union and student representatives to ensure that student partnership informs educational strategy and delivery.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

5. Equity, diversity and inclusion in education

Line-manage the Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and provide senior sponsorship for the integration of EDI into academic practice, curriculum development, student success and institutional culture.

Ensure that EDI is embedded in educational policy, curriculum design, assessment practice, student support, staff development and academic leadership.

Work with School Deans and Associate Deans to support inclusive curriculum development, anti-racist and decolonial pedagogies, accessibility, inclusive assessment and equitable student outcomes.

Ensure that equality analysis informs major educational change, academic policy, curriculum reform and student success initiatives.

Support the College to meet its equality duties and to move beyond compliance towards meaningful cultural and educational change.

6. Libraries, academic enhancement and learning support

Line-manage the Head of Libraries and Academic Enhancement and provide strategic oversight of the contribution of libraries, learning resources, academic enhancement and learning support to the RCA's educational mission.

Ensure that library and academic enhancement services are closely aligned with curriculum development, research-informed teaching, student success, digital learning, academic literacies and inclusive education.

Work with Schools and professional services to ensure that students have access to high-quality learning resources, academic skills support, information literacy, digital resources and specialist guidance appropriate to postgraduate creative education.

Champion the role of libraries and academic enhancement as active contributors to creative education, research culture, student belonging and student success.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

7. Academic planning, portfolio development and educational strategy

Support the PVC Education and Student Success and School Deans in the development of academic planning, portfolio review and curriculum strategy.

Contribute to the development of new programmes, pathways, modes of study and forms of provision, ensuring that educational rationale, student experience, quality, access, sustainability and delivery implications are properly considered.

Work collaboratively with the Dean of Communication & Design, Dean of Arts & Humanities and Dean of Architecture to support coherence across the academic portfolio while respecting disciplinary specificity.

Work with the Registrar, Quality team and Planning and Performance colleagues to ensure that portfolio development is informed by robust evidence, including recruitment, continuation, student outcomes, student feedback, resource requirements, technical requirements, estate implications and market insight.

Ensure that academic development work is undertaken in a collegial, transparent and coordinated way, with appropriate engagement from academic staff, students and professional services.

8. Governance, committees and institutional leadership

Contribute actively to the College's senior academic leadership through membership of relevant committees and groups, which may include Senate, Executive Board, Education Committee, Academic Standards Committee, Student Experience committees, academic planning groups and other forums as required.

Prepare and present reports, recommendations and strategic papers to senior committees, ensuring that educational strategy, student success, academic practice and enhancement activity are clearly evidenced and aligned with institutional priorities.

Provide advice to the PVC Education and Student Success and senior colleagues on educational strategy, academic practice, inclusive education, student success and cross-College academic development.

Ensure that major initiatives within the Creative Education portfolio are properly planned, governed, communicated, risk assessed and evaluated.

Act as a senior institutional voice on creative education practice, both internally and externally.

Manage delegated budgets and resources transparently and effectively, in line with RCA policies and financial regulations.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

9. External engagement and sector leadership

Represent the RCA externally in relation to creative education, postgraduate pedagogy, inclusive education, student success, academic practice and innovation in art and design higher education.

Build partnerships with sector bodies, cultural organisations, creative industries, international partners and educational networks where these advance the RCA's educational mission.

Support the development of research, knowledge exchange, funding bids and public engagement activity connected to creative education practice.

Contribute to national and international debate about the future of postgraduate creative education, including the role of art and design in addressing social, cultural, technological and environmental change.



Essential criteria

- A strong track record of senior academic leadership in higher education, preferably within art, design, architecture, communication, creative practice or a closely related field.
- A recognised profile as an academic, practitioner, researcher, educational leader or creative professional with credibility across a postgraduate specialist institution.
- A deep understanding of creative education, practice-led learning, research-informed teaching and the distinctive character of studio-based, practice-based and interdisciplinary postgraduate education.
- Significant experience of developing and delivering educational strategy in a complex higher education environment.
- Evidence of leading institutional or cross-faculty change in areas such as academic practice, student success, curriculum development, educational innovation, inclusion, learning support or portfolio development.
- Strong understanding of curriculum design, assessment, feedback, academic standards, student engagement and educational enhancement.
- Experience of improving student experience and student outcomes through evidence-informed intervention.
- A strong commitment to inclusive education and evidence of advancing equity, diversity and inclusion through curriculum, pedagogy, policy or institutional culture.
- Good knowledge of UK higher education quality assurance, academic standards, regulatory expectations and relevant sector frameworks, including TEF.
- Experience of contributing to senior academic governance, including committee reporting, policy development, quality enhancement and institutional decision-making.
- Ability to use data and evidence to inform educational planning, student success, academic enhancement and institutional decision-making.
- Proven ability to lead and develop senior teams, manage complex portfolios and create a positive, inclusive and accountable culture.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to build trust across Schools, professional services, students, senior leaders and external partners.
- Strong judgement, political awareness and emotional intelligence.
- Ability to manage resources, priorities and delegated budgets effectively.
- A postgraduate qualification or equivalent professional standing.
- A recognised qualification in learning and teaching in higher education, or willingness to obtain an appropriate qualification within an agreed period if not already held.

Desirable criteria

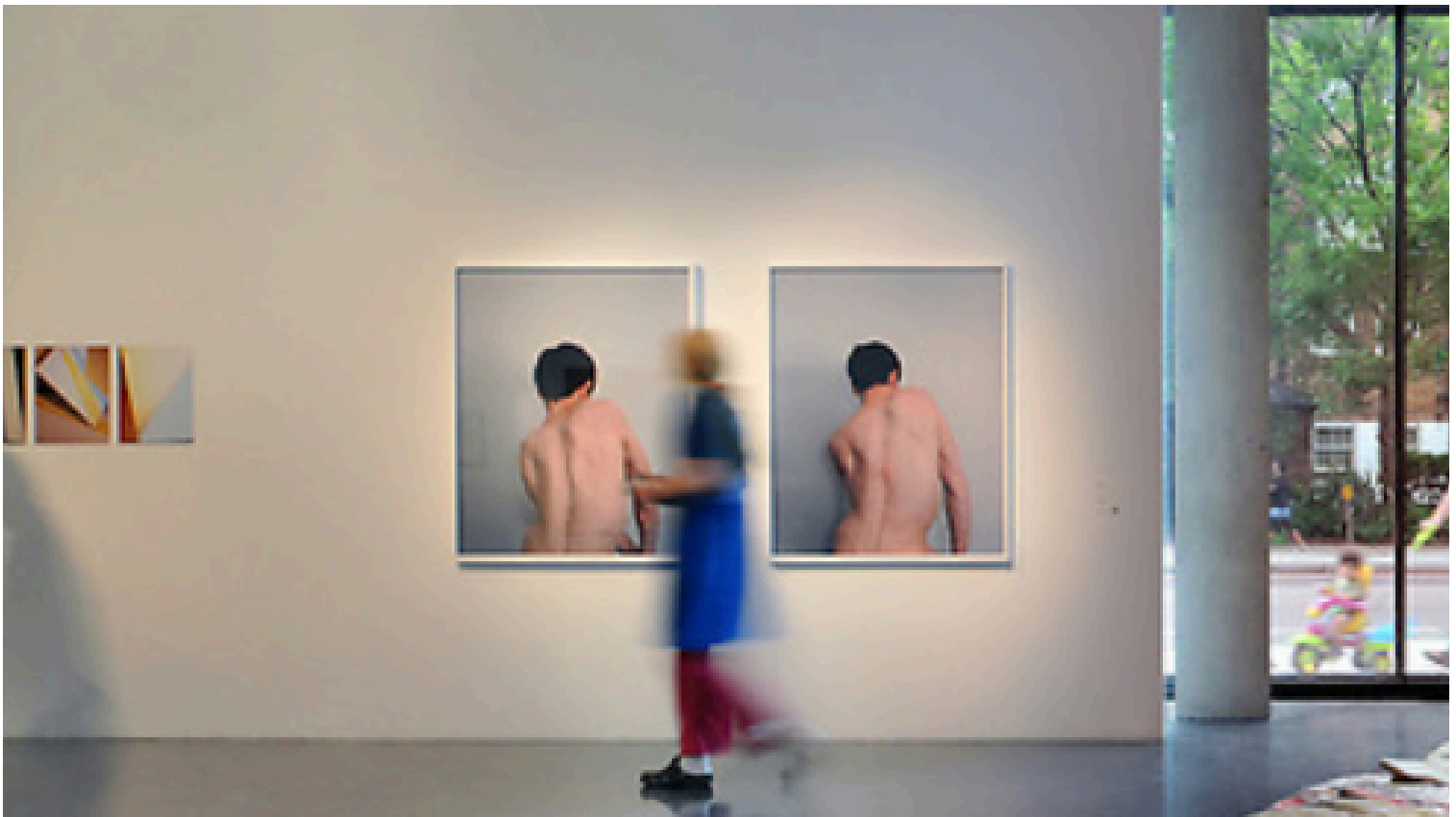
- A doctoral qualification, professorial standing or equivalent evidence of senior academic achievement.
- Principal or Senior Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy.
- Experience in a postgraduate-only or specialist creative arts institution.
- Experience of leading academic enhancement, educational development, student success or inclusive education at institutional level.
- Experience of working closely with libraries, technical services, student support, Registry or academic quality functions.
- Experience of developing flexible, blended, low-residency, interdisciplinary or professionally engaged models of postgraduate education.
- Evidence of pedagogic research, scholarship of teaching and learning, creative education research, or public contribution to debates about art and design education.
- Experience of supporting academic career development, recognition, mentoring or professional development frameworks.
- Experience of working in an international educational environment.



Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Responsible to: Pro Vice-Chancellor, Education and Student Success
- Responsible for: Head of Libraries and Academic Enhancement; Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; Associate Deans with cross-College responsibility for Academic Practice, Teaching and Learning Innovation, and Head of Student Success and Experience; and other roles as assigned within the Creative Education and Practice portfolio.
- Works closely with: Dean of Communication & Design; Dean of Arts & Humanities; Dean of Architecture; Academic Registrar; Head of Technical Services; Chief Operating Officer; Students' Union; and relevant professional service leads.
- Location: Battersea, Kensington and White City, London
- Contract: Full-time. Appointment may be for a fixed leadership term, with an underlying continuing academic appointment where appropriate.
- Grade: SM1



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

30 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





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

QS World University Rankings by Subject 2015–26

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