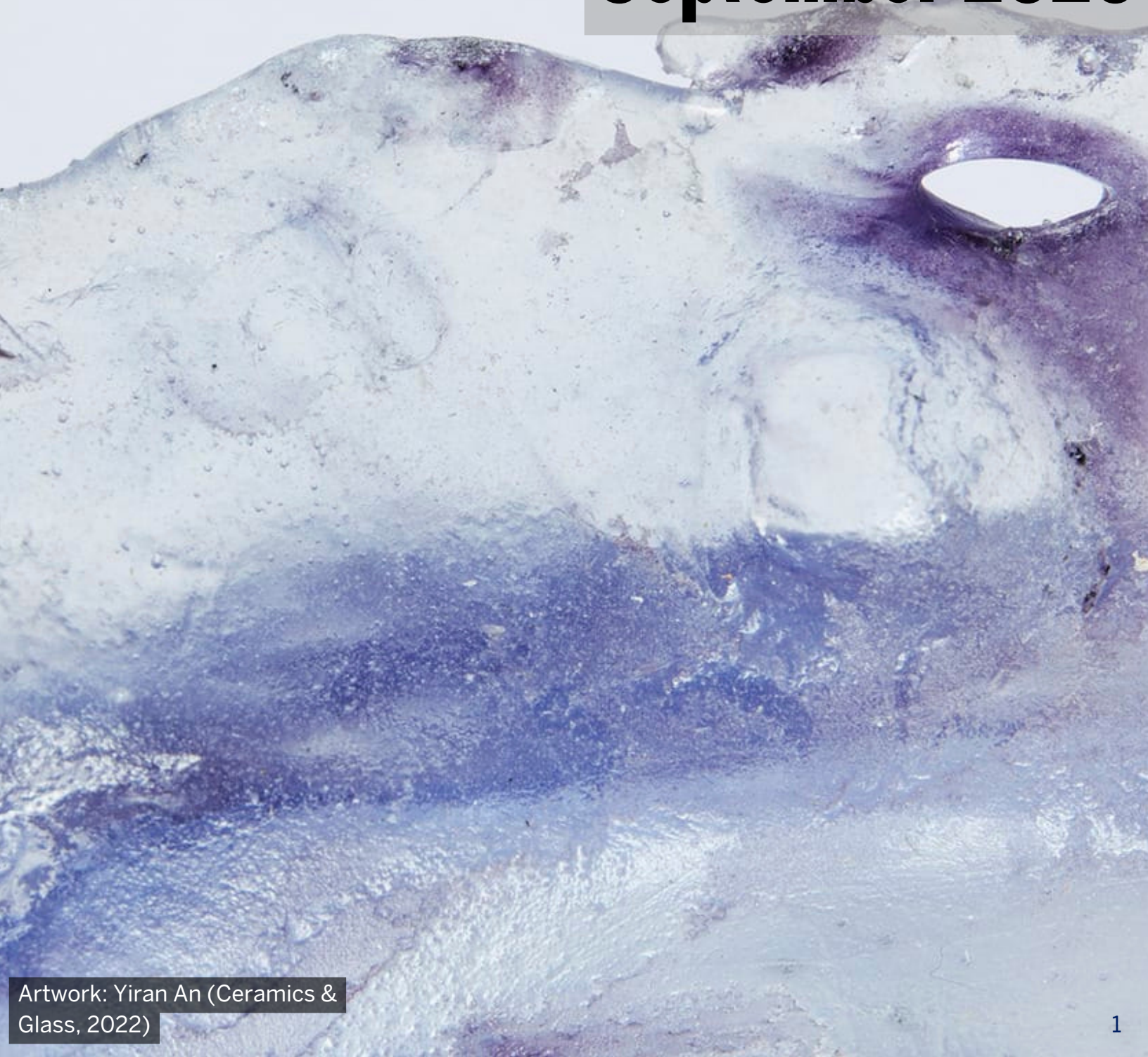


RCA

**Senior Research Fellow
(MA Architecture),
Riyadh University
September 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 & 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.



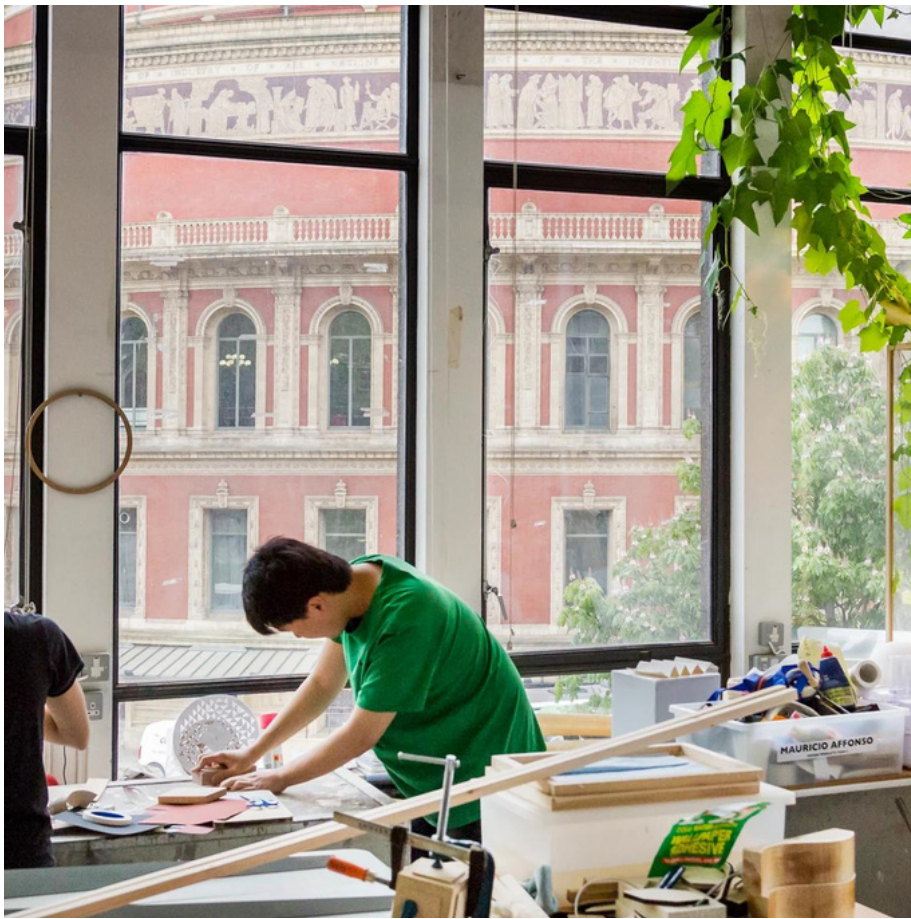
We celebrate diversity and embrace difference as a source of strength. We strive for an inclusive RCA community, removing barriers and challenging exclusionary and discriminatory practices.



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.



The main purpose of the post:

The post holder will contribute to a major applied pedagogical and research project investigating emerging urban design practices, professional competencies, governance models, pedagogical approaches, and urban design histories and knowledge within the Middle East. The project aims to generate new intellectual and creative leadership in urban design, shaping the foundation of an internationally leading MA programme that responds to regional transformation, climate, culture, governance, and innovation.

Working within an international academic partnership, the post holder will undertake original research, collect and analyse data, and engage with local stakeholders to inform programme positioning, curriculum development and specification, as well as new challenge-based learning models, research-led teaching, and practice-led research. The role requires the ability to move fluently between research, pedagogy, curriculum development, strategic thinking, collaboration, and structured delivery, while contributing ideas that extend the intellectual ambition of the programme.

The post holder will work closely with senior academics, professional teams, and external partners, operating both independently and collaboratively. The position offers an opportunity to develop a distinctive profile in applied urban research and pedagogical innovation.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Duties and responsibilities:

- To undertake high-quality, rigorous, and (where relevant) collaborative research projects which lead to robust research outcomes.
- To develop personal research objectives and interests, working with the Academic Lead to ensure these are in line with the strategic direction of the Project and of the College as a whole.
- Manage own research and associated project activities, coordinating multiple strands of work to meet agreed milestones and deadlines.
- Design and conduct applied research into contemporary urban design practice, education models, professional standards, and regional development, using appropriate qualitative and analytical methods (e.g. literature review, benchmarking, interviews, case studies, data synthesis).
- To develop research objectives for MA Architecture, working with the Academic Lead to ensure these are in line with the strategic direction of the Project and of the College as a whole.
- Contribute ideas that shape the intellectual positioning, creative ambition, and long-term relevance of the programme and associated research agenda.
- To prepare and submit substantial funding proposals to major UK and international research funders, industry partners and other funding sources, to support the Project's research agenda and the post-holder's own research career development plans.
- To manage any awards won, ensuring execution of proposed research, efficient management of resources, and effective delivery of research outcomes and impacts.
- To identify opportunities and work with academic, industry and third sector partners as appropriate on collaborative research and knowledge exchange projects.
- To act as a lead for engagement with any sponsor companies, undertaking collaborative research projects and contributing to working relationships to maintain a productive partnership.
- To produce and disseminate research outputs that are effectively shared with the world through appropriate channels (for example books, peer-reviewed journals, conferences) to the discipline.
- To produce research outputs that are suitable for submission to the national Research Excellence Framework (REF) exercise, with a quality of at least 3* as per the REF definition.
- To communicate research outcomes to a wide variety of audiences, showcasing the MA Architecture and Project overall, including through public engagement, tailoring content and style to a broad range of specialist and non-specialist audiences.



- Collaborate in the development of outputs including programme and course specifications, research reports, briefing papers, and presentations for academic, professional, and external audiences
- Analyse, interpret, and synthesise diverse data and evidence to inform learning, teaching, and research strategies.
- To actively engage with relevant academic, industry, government and policy networks, presenting the work of, and representing the Project, enhancing its profile – supporting consultation processes, workshops, and collaborative working.
- Represent the project in meetings, seminars, and external engagements, as appropriate.
- To participate in project team meetings and activities, events and workshops, leading ideas for development, delivery and promotion of projects.
- To contribute to and participate in the RCA Academic community through presentations or teaching in appropriate forums and participation in RCA-wide activities such as Across RCA or Committees and boards as requested.
- To identify opportunities and prepare material for the delivery of Executive Education courses and workshops.
- To act as supervisor (or co-supervisor) to an appropriate number of doctoral research students,, including those undertaking industry-facing doctorates, ensuring a high-quality research student experience, timely submission and completion of high-quality doctoral theses, adherence to best practice in research training and research career development, and compliance with College and funding body processes and reporting requirements.
- To oversee and mentor staff, including postdoctoral researchers, research associates or other project workers, ensure they are equipped to contribute effectively to the project and deliver agreed outputs within agreed timescales, are undertaking work at an appropriate level. To line manage staff and support the career development of these staff as appropriate.
- To support a team research culture, supporting the Project and team to professionally develop.
- To conduct all research reflecting best practice in ethics, integrity, research data management, and research governance, ensuring compliance with RCA policies and external funding terms and conditions and sector standards. To ensure strand/theme/space members are informed of and compliant with best practice standards.
- Embed principles of mutual respect, equality, diversity, inclusivity, and sustainability in all aspects of work; undertake training as required.
- To ensure compliance with RCA processes and procedures in relation to procurement and use of equipment and facilities, including health and safety policies, working with relevant departments across RCA.
- To ensure confidentiality of sensitive project information is maintained, through appropriate project data protection. To programme information is kept confidential.
- Maintain accurate documentation, data management, and version control of project materials.
- To undertake general administrative and other tasks relevant as part of the team's and the Project's work, as required by senior staff.



Skills, knowledge, and experience

Essential

- PhD in a relevant discipline of urban design, architecture, planning, urban studies, or a closely related field.
- Relevant subject knowledge in urban design, architecture, planning, urban studies, or a closely related field, evidenced through experience and research outputs.
- Evidenced experience of working at post-doctoral level in a research centre, either academic or commercial/industrial. Significant evidence of working as an independent researcher for part of the experience.
- Strong analytical and synthesis skills, including experience working with diverse data, conducting literature reviews, benchmarking, and interviews.
- Evidenced experience of carrying out research projects and publishing high quality research outputs in highly ranked academic journals.
- Evidenced experience of collaborative projects, preferably involving HE/industry collaborations in a relevant field.
- Evidenced experience of reporting on projects, including working with project budgets.
- Demonstrated ability to undertake independent research and manage multiple work streams and effectively work within teams.



- Strong organisational and project management skills.
- Demonstrable understanding of good practice in research conduct (including in research ethics, research integrity and handling research data).
- Demonstrable ability to be a leader of a research theme/strand/space and collaborative member of a broader team, working constructively with senior staff and supporting the work of less experienced staff or students involved in projects.
- Evidenced flexibility and confidence to tackle a wide range of tasks, with an open, pro-active, creative and problem-solving approach and the ability to support other staff members in approaching tasks.
- Evidenced excellent writing, communication and presentation skills, able to adopt an appropriate style for a range of specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Evidenced strong interpersonal, team-working, and mentoring skills.
- Genuine commitment to the aims of the Project .
- Experience of supervising doctoral students to a successful completion (in-house training is available through the RCA's PG Certificate in HE teaching and supervision).

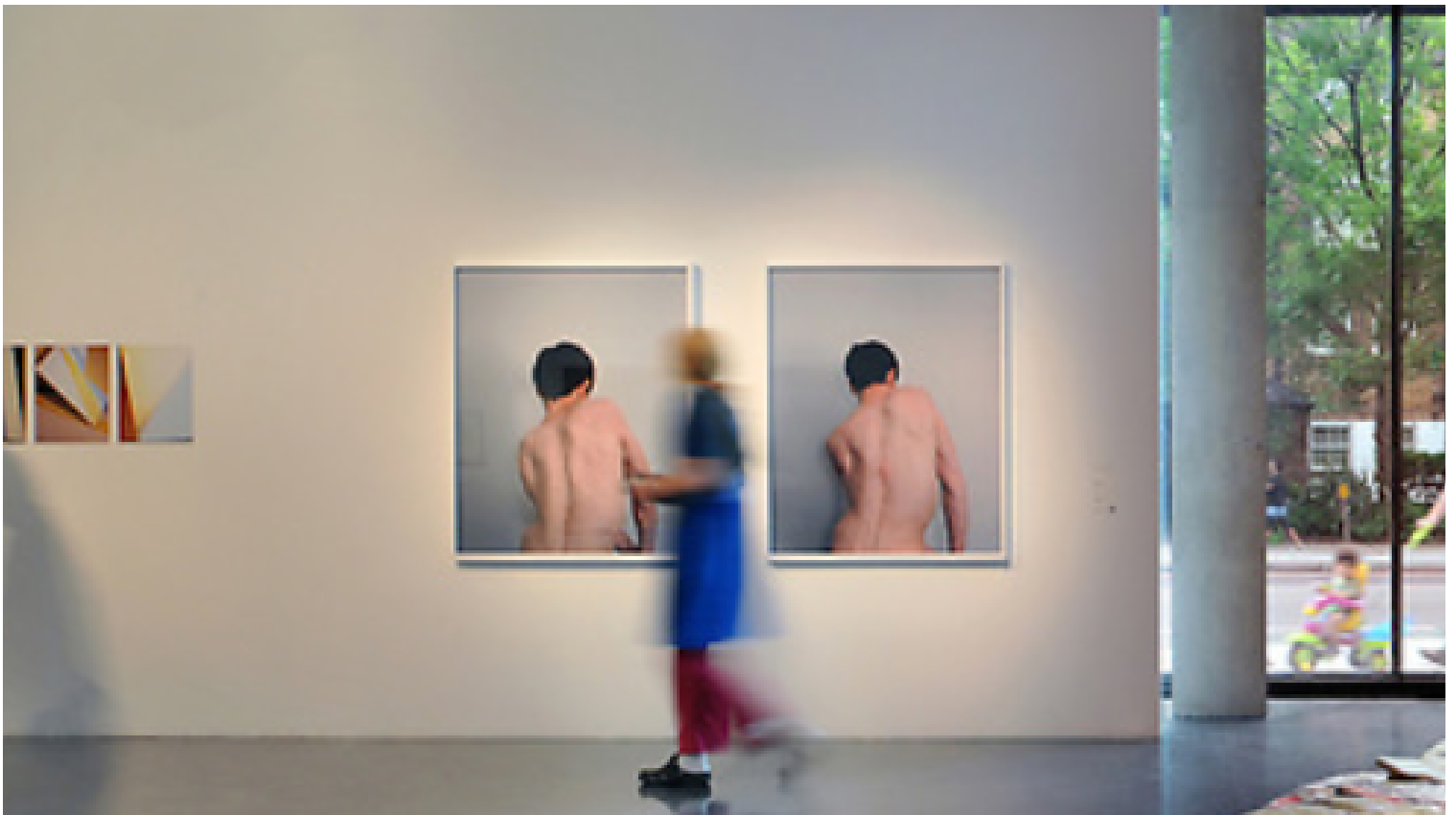
Desirable

- Familiarity with higher education programme development and professional accreditation.
- Experience engaging with external stakeholders or industry partners in architecture and design.
- Regional knowledge of the urban histories, practices, or transformations of the Middle East.
- Experience in academic writing and publishing.
- Arabic language skills.

Pay & Benefits

Additional Information:

- Full time salary - Grade 10: £64,900 - £72,402 per annum including London Allowance:
- 1 FTE - 1 year FTC
- 30 days annual leave plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter. Pro rata for part time employees
- A contributory defined benefit pension scheme and interest free season ticket loan are available, alongside many other benefits
- Location: Royal College of Art, London



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