

Policy name: Admission and Transfer Policy and Procedure

Approved: 25th November 2016

Revision 1 approved 10th March 2017

Revision 2 approved 9th November 2018

Revision 3 approved by Trinity Academic Council 13th May 2020

1. Context

- 1.1 All undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered by the Royal Irish Academy of Music, hereinafter referred to as RIAM or the Academy, are delivered by RIAM and validated by the Designated Awarding Body, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, hereinafter referred to as Trinity. RIAM is an international music conservatory which aims to promote and enable access to music education for those who show an aptitude for it, and wish to achieve successful careers as professional performing musicians, composers and teachers.
- 1.2 Admission is subject to the [General Regulations](#) of the Academy.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy provides information to applicants and other interested parties about RIAM's admissions and Transfer principles and procedures. Students may access further guidance on each programme's admissions criteria from the programme handbook, which is available [online](#). Students may also attend Open Days and discuss queries with the Head of Faculty.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy supports the enrolment of suitable qualified students and the creation of a diverse student body. It meets the requirements of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) policies, actions and procedures for the promotion of access, transfer and progression (March 2003), which was restated by the QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) in 2015, further to the introduction of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012.
- 3.2 This policy sets out RIAM's admission and transfer protocol for managing and processing programme application and transfer requests for all Irish and overseas applicants, and applies to all third-level programmes awarded by Trinity.
- 3.3 Admission and transfer to programmes delivered and certified by RIAM are beyond the scope of this document.
- 3.4 Specific admission requirements for each programme are provided in the relevant Programme Handbooks.

4. Benefits

- 4.1 This policy makes clear to prospective students how the recruitment, selection and admission process will be conducted.
- 4.2 This policy is a point of reference to support transparent, fair, reliable, professional and consistent admissions and transfers, in line with principles of equality and diversity.

5. Principles

- 5.1 Recruitment, selection and admission of applicants is informed by the strategic priorities of RIAM.
- 5.2 All programmes delivered by RIAM are aligned with the appropriate level of the National Framework of qualifications (NFQ) and the European Credit Transfer System.
- 5.3 Selection of applicants will be conducted in a professional and consistent manner by suitably authorised, trained and competent representatives of RIAM, which include Heads of Faculty and senior faculty members.
- 5.4 The Academy makes a Definitive Programme Document available to prospective students detailing the entry requirements and content of its programmes.
- 5.5 RIAM is subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (EU-GDPR) to ensure that personal data is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner and will be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of personal data. [See [RIAM Privacy Policy](#) for further information.]
- 5.6 RIAM reserves the right to plan changes to curriculum in accordance with its regulations and any amendments to the delivery of programmes will be notified to applicants in good time to inform their decisions. RIAM cannot guarantee that programmes will continue, as advertised, where students request to defer their entry.
- 5.7 RIAM's commitment to equality of opportunity and the promotion of diversity in the recruitment of students is recognised as beneficial to the entire learning community.
- 5.8 RIAM adheres to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and acknowledges the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) which is defined as a process whereby prior learning is given a value (European Commission 2008; NQAI, 2005; OECD 2004). Recognition of Prior Learning can operate to provide recognition for advanced entry and non-standard admissions to educational pathways and can also be used to award credit for elements within programmes.
- 5.9 The selection of students is based on assessment, by audition, of an applicant's suitability and aptitude for specialist music training, taking account of both current achievement and assessed potential, but is also subject to the strategic decisions relating to programme availability and cohort viability.
- 5.10 In compliance with QQI Statement on Access, Transfer and Progression, unsuccessful applicants have the right to Appeal the decision of the audition panel to the Head of Faculty.

6. Admission Policy

- 6.1 RIAM ensures that all sections and groups within society have access to its programmes and is committed to fair, transparent and professional admission process. For each programme, RIAM will publish in a standard and accessible format:
 - (i) The arrangements for eligibility to enter, including a statement of the knowledge, skill and competence needed by the learner as a basis for successful participation on the programme.

- (ii) Arrangements to assess learner's eligibility to enter.
- (iii) Further selection arrangements, where these apply.
- (iv) A statement of arrangements available for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), for entry to each of their programmes, and for access to an award. [See RPL Policy]
- (v) Possibilities for transfer and/or progression associated with the programme, including any relevant specific progression linkages.
- (vi) Details of learning support available for specific learner groups such as learners with disabilities, or learners whose mother tongue is not English.

All information and publicity documentation referring to a programme leading to an award will include a statement of the arrangements for entry, and a description of the transfer/progression possibilities into and out of the programme.

- 6.2 Applicants will be supported, in-line with the Academy's Equality and Diversity Policy. No applicant will be discriminated against on the basis of their gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, caring or parental responsibility, age or beliefs on any matters such as religion or politics.
- 6.3 All applications are made directly to RIAM by [online](#) application and are processed centrally through the Registry. Details will be shared with Trinity following acceptance, in line with the EU-GDPR and agreed data transfer protocols to verify that they are compliant, eg IELTS/Leaving certificates and results etc.
- 6.4 Admission to the programmes is subject to fulfilment of the Minimum Entry Requirements (as set out in the programme handbooks) and selection by audition unless, in exceptional circumstances at undergraduate level, where a student does not meet the Minimum Entry Requirements but shows an exceptionally high standard at audition, RIAM can apply to the Senior Lecturer, Trinity, to permit non-standard student admission. Such approval is not guaranteed.
- 6.5 RIAM recognises formal, non-formal and informal prior learning as relevant for admission to Level 7 and 8 undergraduate programmes and to Level 9 and 10 postgraduate programmes. See RIAM [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) for further information.
- 6.6 Mature students are welcomed to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Such applicants, as with all other applicants, are required to convince the auditioning/interviewing panels that they have the ability and potential to cope with the demands of the course which they wish to pursue.
- 6.7 International Students are subject to fulfilling the visa requirements of the [Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service](#).
- 6.8 RIAM recognises that it is not in the interest of an applicant to be admitted into an English Language taught programme of study without the required level of competency and has an English language minimum requirement for admission to its programmes to ensure that all students admitted have a realistic chance of completing the programme. This requirement is IELTS 6.5.

- 6.9 RIAM provides students with opportunities to participate in professional placements or experiential learning, which may include interactions with minors. Students so participating may require Garda Vetting.
- 6.10 RIAM is committed to the consistent and fair implementation of its admission procedures and outlines these in its programme handbooks and online on the [RIAM Website](#).

7. Deferred Entry and Transfer procedure

- 7.1 Requests for deferred entry and transfers are subject to approval by the relevant audition panel and are not guaranteed. Grounds for refusal to permit deferred entry and transfers may include, but are not limited to, the strategic decisions relating to programme availability and cohort viability.

7.2 Deferred Entry

- 7.2.1 RIAM allows students who are offered a place on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes to defer entry for a period of one year, subject to approval by the Head of Faculty.
- 7.2.2 A request for deferred entry must be made in writing to the Administrative Officer, Registry, on or before 20th August in any year for undergraduate programmes and on or before 1st April in any year for postgraduate programmes.
- 7.2.3 Students who have been offered a scholarship in a given year (a discount off tuition fees) must re-apply to the Administrative Officer, Registry for the scholarship the following year. The awarding of a deferred scholarship cannot be guaranteed to carry on to the second year.

7.3 Transfer

- 7.3.1 Undergraduate students who wish to transfer from one RIAM programme to another must put their application to the Administrative Officer, Registry, and may so apply at any time during the academic year.
- 7.3.2 An evaluation panel consisting of the Heads of Faculty will audition and interview the candidate and will make the decision on the level of their skill in the course they wish to transfer to.
- 7.3.3 The Administrative Officer, Registry, will notify Trinity of the changes to the student lists.
- 7.3.4 The Academy offers only one Masters programme and only one Doctorate programme, hence the possibility of transfer does not arise.

8. Responsibility

- 8.1 The Chair of Board of Studies is responsible for overseeing this policy, which is subject to three yearly review. The Head of the Administrative Office (Registry) is responsible for the associated operating procedures in relation to all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

- 8.2 Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their application fulfils the admission requirements of the programme. This includes, but is not limited to, attendance for entrance examinations, auditions or interviews and certification of previous educational achievements, as relevant.

9. Appeals and Complaints

- 9.1 RIAM provides transparent entry requirements and aims to provide applicants with relevant feedback on their applications. Should an applicant be dissatisfied with the feedback provided, they may request to Appeal the decision by contacting the Administrative Officer, Registry in the first instance.
- 9.2 RIAM aims to maintain excellence at the heart of its activities and seeks to resolve complaints in a fair and timely manner. Feedback from applicants will be used to improve the Academy's services.

10. Monitoring and Review

- 10.1 Admissions and entry data will be monitored by Registry and reported to the Heads of Faculty and the Board of Studies. The effectiveness of these procedures will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated on a regular basis to ensure accurate and reliable dissemination to applicants.

11. Legislation and Regulation

- 11.1 [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012.](#)
- 11.2 [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(2005\).](#)
- 11.3 [Code of Practice for Provision of Education and Training to International Learners \(2015\).](#)
- 11.4 [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\).](#)
- 11.5 [QQI Access Transfer and Progression - QQI Policy Restatement 2015.](#)
- 11.6 [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Act 2012.](#)

12. Related Documents

- 12.1 Academic Assessment and Progression Policy.
- 12.2 Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.
- 12.3 Garda Vetting arrangements (RIAM website).
- 12.4 Student Complaints Policy and Procedure.
- 12.5 Appeals Policy and Procedure.
- 12.6 Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 12.7 Privacy Policy.

13. Document Control

Approved by Board of Studies 25th November 2016.

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Next review: Academic year 2020/21.