

MUSEUM ACCESS POLICY

Approved by Collection Committee on 22 October 2024
Due for revision in October 2029

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1. Document history and review: Access Policy

Name of museum: Royal College of Music Museum

Name of governing body: The Council of the Royal College of Music, delegated to the Collections Committee

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 22 October 2024

Policy review procedure: The collections development policy will be published and reviewed at least once every five years. It will be published on the Museum website.

Date at which this policy is due for review: Collections Committee, October 2029

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

This document follows the template developed by Arts Council England and issued in July 2014.

2. Our commitment

This document outlines the Royal College of Music Museum's commitment to the widest possible access to its internationally significant music-related collections representing a range of music-making activities over a period of more than five centuries. We aim to ensure that our gallery interpretation, learning activities and resources are accessible to as wide a range of people as possible by addressing physical, intellectual, social and economic barriers to participation, and creating equal opportunities for volunteer applicants.

3. Access to the gallery

Step free access to the RCM site and the Museum has been achieved through a recent building development. The same applies to lift access to the Museum and between the two floor levels within the gallery. We have recently reviewed access information on the RCM website and ensured this information is more visible. In addition, the museum is producing a visual story, a step-by-step guide designed to help certain audiences plan their visit and know what to expect, to help increase confidence if visiting for the first time. Museum signage is designed to be as legible as possible and displayed at optimum vantage points. Admission to the museum is free. An Access Plan includes up-to-date information about how we address barriers to access within the museum.

4. Access to the collection

The museum strives to provide information in forms that are accessible to all visitors and cater for most needs. We offer information in alternative formats and review this regularly. The museum display features a variety of interpretative methods to exhibit the collections. Label content has been delivered according to best practice standards in terms of intellectual content, wording and accessible graphic design and is displayed at an accessible vantage point for wheelchair users. Large print guides of the label content are also provided and clearly displayed at the museum entrance. Audio visual content is delivered via an audio guide which has been designed to contain different layers and levels of information in text, audio, and visual formats. The audio guide is compatible with hearing aids. Gallery videos help place the collections and interpretation in a wider context and appear with subtitling. The museum also shares collections content digitally using digital exhibitions on the Google Arts & Culture platform. The museum catalogue is available online and as a printed publication. Access to the collections is facilitated through a wide range of learning activities and resources, from concerts using the playable instruments in the collection to object-based learning workshops and guided tours.

5. Equal opportunity recruitment and training

The RCM is an equal opportunities employer. The museum volunteering programme aims to make sure all volunteers are welcomed, respected, and given opportunities to grow in knowledge, skill, and experience. We are currently undertaking a review of the types of people that volunteer with us, and producing a new volunteer engagement strategy for 2024 – 29.
