

# Royal Conservatoire of Scotland submission of 22 February 2023

PE1982/C: Review funding arrangements for higher education to help ensure more funded places are available for Scottish ballet dancers at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

**The following information is requested by the Committee in respect of The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's BA Modern Ballet programme:**

- data on the number of Scottish applicants and granted places over the past 10 years;
- data on awarded places over the past 10 years broken down by Scottish, rUK and international students;
- information about the challenges faced by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in awarding places to students from Scotland; and
- how much of the Scottish Government's funding is allocated to funding Scottish places.

## **General comments:**

Before providing the specific information requested by the Committee it feels helpful to highlight points of inaccuracy in respect of the original Petition:

1. It is inaccurate to for the petitioner to assert *'there is currently a cap on funded places at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, with a maximum of 5 places available to Scottish domiciled student ballet dancers'*.

This is not the case. Entry to the programme is by audition and Scottish-domiciled dancers who have met the entry standards for the programme have been offered places. There is not 'a cap' 'with a maximum of five places'. Where the figure of 5 appears in the data sets this because the HESA rounding methodology has been applied. This means numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5. This is standard practice for any data circulated outside of RCS so that individual students cannot be identified.

2. The petitioner asserts ‘Scottish domiciled student ballet dancers are being discriminated against in Scotland in favour of overseas or English students’. This is also not the case. Scottish dancers presenting for audition at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and who meet the required standard have been offered places. It is also the case that not all Scottish dancers offered places at RCS choose to study here. Some Scottish dancers decline an offer of a place.

**Information requested by the committee:**

- data on the number of Scottish applicants and granted places over the past 10 years;
- data on awarded places over the past 10 years broken down by Scottish, rUK and international students;

	Scot	RUK	Non-UK
2009	5	5	5
2010	5	10	0
2011	5	0	5
2012	5	0	5
2013	5	5	0
2014	5	5	0
2015	0	5	0
2016	5	5	5
2017	5	5	5
2018	5	5	5
2019	5	5	5
2020	5	10	5

2021	5	10	5
2022	5	5	5

### **1. The challenges faced by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in awarding places to students from Scotland:**

The Modern Ballet Programme at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is an internationally regarded training programme for dancers focused on graduating from the programme to a professional career in a modern ballet company setting. All dancers who apply for the programme undertake the same audition process. Dancers who are offered places must demonstrate a high-level combination of physical and artistic attributes. This combination is required for dancers who aim on graduation from the programme for a professional career in modern ballet and the programme itself is focused on preparing dancers to enter the profession on graduation.

RCS does not discourage dancers who are unsuccessful on their first attempt from reapplying. The ballet programme is also open to – and regularly does – recruit dancers who meet the required competencies and criteria to the second and, occasionally, third years of the programme. Dancers who are offered places on the programme come from a wide range of training backgrounds in Scotland, the UK and internationally. The Dance School of Scotland is one of a number of Scottish routes to the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

### **2. How much of the Scottish Government's funding is allocated to funding Scottish places.**

All funded places for Scottish domiciled students to study at the Royal Conservatoire are allocated to the Conservatoire on an annual basis by the Scottish Funding Council.

These places are allocated to the Conservatoire as a total number which is then distributed across the two schools within the Conservatoire, the School of Music and the School of Drama, Dance, Production and Film (DDPF). Within the overall funded numbers, RCS must factor in places for continuing students, as well as meet targets for SIMD 20 & 40 to support inclusion. In the distribution of places, the Conservatoire must also balance a range of artistic considerations in terms of ensembles

and cohorts. This is particularly important in the School of Music in considering the constitution of instruments in chamber and larger orchestral groups, but also applies to the creation of optimum cohorts for learning and teaching purposes within the School of DDPF.

With regard specifically to the Modern Ballet Programme, there is no annual ascribed limit to the number of funded places for Scots. Indicative numbers at any time are based on previous experience of the number of Scots who meet the entry criteria, successfully audition, are offered and who have accepted places on the programme.