

ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC

Health & Safety Committee



The Coronavirus pandemic has impacted the function of the RCM where adjustments to college life had to be made within a short if not sudden timeframe to ensure the safety of all staff, students and other associated persons.

The RCM was already prepared to deal with a situation of this scale and uniqueness being quick to adhere to Government; Public Health Guidelines in terms of response. The college ceased regular operations on 17 March, ceasing all teaching and classes reducing service to student practice only.

Preparing for and responding to change in government advice, a five-phase plan was drawn up that could flexibly and dynamically respond to the changing situation. Phase 1 begun on 23 May and allowed access to the buildings for facilities, maintenance, cleaning operatives, ICT and piano technicians to prepare the site for reopening. Phase 2 commenced on 15 June, permitting students onsite to practice individually in a limited number of practice rooms. Phase 3 is due to commence on 6 July which opens more practice rooms, and allows two person capacities in rooms which are deemed suitable, which differs depending on faculty and the risks involved.

Stringent risk controls have been established well in advance with completion of specialist risk assessments covering all activities to mitigate against risks associated with COVID 19. These assessments have been successfully

implemented and continue to be reviewed and updated as the college moves forward in preparing and implementing further phases which can facilitate more teaching, music making, and student activities onsite. The Estates Team have inputted collectively and consulted on development of the risk assessments from creation of these by the Facilities & Operations Manager.

The majority RCM staff have been working remotely since the start of the lockdown. This in itself presents added risks linked with work station and ergonomic arrangements for homeworking. Support has already been given to a number of staff requiring suitable adjustments for safe working at home. The Health and Safety Manager is working with different teams and departments to ensure assessment of risks for all staff working at home. A Policy on Homeworking is due to be issued.

Just a few days before the lockdown, practical completion and handover of the Courtyard from Gilbert Ash place successfully on 20 March 2020 signalling the end of the works placing this area back into full ownership and control by the RCM.

Snagging, refurbishment decoration and other specialist works are currently in progress within certain areas of the courtyard. These are being carried out by sub-contractors under contract with Gilbert Ash. Risk assessments and method statements of individual contractors are reviewed. They are authorised to carry out the works. These were identified and addressed as required by the Health and Safety Manager.

Certain risks have been identified and profiled where associated with the function and operation of the Royal College of Music. In each case, suitable measures are in place to control these. Risks are accordingly.

Fire can have very serious or fatal effects and can also cause extensive damage to buildings. Risk of this occurring inside old historic buildings like those of the RC is even higher. Fire risk assessments are completed and reviewed to take account all changes to the RC estate. Procedural controls for fire evacuation, training and use of fire safety equipment are followed according to best practice. The RCM Permit to Work procedure is adhered to when Contractors require access to RCM zones.

Asbestos materials are contained in some areas of the RCM estate. Risk of exposure is very low where these materials are suitably managed and monitored. A full asbestos management survey and register is kept and reviewed. Contractors and any other persons at risk of exposure are made aware of locations where asbestos is contained.

The RCM operates on a twenty-four-hour basis with many events and activities taking place outside normal daytime periods. Likelihood of security related incidents occurring during these periods are higher. Control of access to college buildings is very important. Security operations are tightly controlled to cover all periods of occupancy.

strategies in place enabling prompt and efficient response to manage this situation. The college closed in line with government guidelines in March. Staff and students coped well given the circumstances with a flexible approach towards changed work and study arrangements. Unique risk controls relating to COVID – 19 were established and

Policy reviews have been taking place against the review schedule. Further review of these has also been necessary given additional risks and other aspects introduced with mobilisation of the new Courtyard Space. All policies are currently being consolidated for review and assessment by RCM external Insurers (Zurich Insurance)

The Health and Safety Manager has already made contact with the new building's manager of Prince Consort Village and is due to schedule a visit as soon as possible when access is allowed once the COVID Lockdown has been eased.

Full review of policy and other Health and Safety documentation has been carried out. Stronger and more regular lines of communication exist between PCV and the Estates Team towards monitor and communication of health and safety issues and procedures.

Ten accidents/incidents have been reported for 2020 which are representative of the college being closed since March due to the COVID 19 lockdown. During this period of reduced occupancy, external contractors have attended to complete routine and reactive maintenance of plant and equipment. Several incidents occurred involving fault with plant and equipment.

A serious incident occurred resulting in a fall from heights injury to the external contractor carrying out repairs to a lift inside RCM Jay Mews. Full report of this was made to the Health & Safety Executive under RIDDOR (Reporting of Incidents, Diseases Dangerous Occurrence Regulations)

Incidents involving plant related to temporary failure of the piano lifted due to a faulty auto dialler together with minor issues associated with function of other plant and equipment. In each instance these cases were resolved after

The incident reported to the HSE involved a visiting contractor of Summit Elevators falling through a loft hatch during examination of lift motor equipment before repair of this. The fall resulted in significant bruising injury, not more serious fracture injury. This was reported to the HSE where the injured person was taken straight to hospital for treatment plus the time of his absence from work exceeding seven days. The potential seriousness of this prompted immediate review of internal processes for induction and monitoring of contractors. New induction procedures have already been implemented. Use of the main loft access to lift motor equipment inside RCM Jay Mews has been ceased with immediate effect to avoid repeat of a similar incident.

Categories of incidents: January 2020 – July 2020

The Environmental Steering Group has focused on engagement with the Student Union President to help the college reach its environmental goals. More effective methods to present, interrogate and monitor energy usage data have been established.

The new Procurement Policy has been approved to align with Environmental initiatives. Longer term aspirations for reduced output of carbon emissions are realised towards eventual zero output.

Certain environmental and green focused incentives will be reviewed or retracted where could compromise newly introduced COVID 19 risk controls. This relates specifically to use of reusable cups and other containers in the event of potential cross contamination.

Everything will be done to make sure newly introduced controls are as combatable as possible to not unduly impact current incentives. This may be unavoidable in some cases. Control of cross contamination and infection control must take precedent.