In-sessional

Language Support at the RNCM 2023

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**Introduction**

My name is Professor Jean Ammar, and I am the Head of English Language Support at the RNCM. I provide the in-sessional and pre-sessional English language support across the College.

In sessional support is offered to undergraduate students and postgraduate students who are studying MMus and MPerf Programmes.

This handbook describes the in-sessional support you will receive while studying at the RNCM and how you will be able to access this type of support.

## **The Placement Test**

If you are an International student and you do not have English as a first language you may be required to take an English language test in the first week of your course. The aim of this test is to see whether you will need English language support during your time at the College.

The placement test is in four main parts: grammar, listening, writing and an interview.

Tests 1 & 2 (listening and grammar) are published tests by Oxford OUP and are linked to the Common European Framework of Languages. The content of tests 3 & 4 (written and spoken) reflects the work of the conservatoire.

I will meet with you individually the week following the test to discuss your marks. You will be offered English language support if your placement test and your IELTS scores fall below a certain level. I will then make an appointment to see you in tutorial to discuss your Language Development Plan.

## **Language Development Plan**

Your Language Development Plan is a five-point plan which you will need to follow if you are to improve your English language skills: -

1. Attending 1-1 language support tutorials.
2. Attending Engagement with Learning classes.
3. Reading books from the RNCM English Language Reading Scheme.
4. Speaking in English with other students in the College.
5. Taking responsibility for your own language development in English.

Your progress in English will be reviewed at regular intervals throughout the year during tutorial support.

### **Attending 1-1 Language Support Tutorials**

The tutorials support your academic work at the college. You attend these tutorials individually or in small groups. The aim of the tutorials is to help you to express yourself fluently in English when writing essays or giving presentations.

**1-1 tutorials help you to:**

* Plan your essay or presentation
* Develop your ideas
* Write your essay or presentation
* Evaluate your work.

We will work together on part of your essay/presentation in each tutorial. You then complete your work by yourself and send to me for correction. I will give you deadlines when I expect to receive your finished work. These deadlines are usually 2-3 weeks before your formal submission deadline. This allows time for corrections to be made and for further tutorials to take place if necessary. It is important to keep to the deadline I give you.

Please write your name at the top of the document and the title of your essay or presentation. You must send your work as a **Word document.**

You need to book your tutorial(s) in advance. You can do this by e-mailing me at the following address: jean.ammar@rncm.ac.uk. Tutorials are held in College and over Zoom..

It is important that you attend all your tutorials as they support you in your academic work at the College.

**Please note**, English Language Support is **not** a proof-reading service. I will not look at any work sent to me after the date I give you**.**

### **Attending Engagement with Learning for International Students Classes**

Engagement with learning (EwL) classes are held from September until the mid-year recess in February. If your placement test and your IELTS scores fall below a certain level, you may be asked to attend these classes. The aim is to develop and extend your understanding of musicology and to help you to speak and write about music in English. You will start by reviewing the music terminology used in a western conservatoire and then move on to describing different genres of music. In each session, you be encouraged to share your ideas about music with the other students in the group. You will be expected to give an individual or group presentation about a chosen piece of music at the end of the course. The EwL classes are very important to your development as a musician, so attendance is compulsory.

### **Reading from the RNCM English Language Reading Scheme**

You can find the English Language Reading Scheme in the College library. The Reading Scheme is a series of graded reading books with a wide range of popular titles across a range of genres. The language in the books is simplified to help speakers of other languages to read and understand them. The books help you to develop your understanding of grammar and vocabulary from intermediate to advanced levels.

Research has shown that students who read in English improve in every area of language learning at a faster rate than students who don’t read. It is important therefore that you aim to read at least one book each month. I will ask you about the books you have read in your final tutorial.

### **Speaking in English with Other Students in the College**

You need to speak English well if you are to understand your tutors and other students in the College. Learning English is the same as learning to play a musical instrument. For example, you cannot learn by watching other people; you need to practice your instrument for many hours each day if you are to play well. Speaking in English with other students, especially native speakers of English, will give you the practice you need but must speak English every day if you are to make progress in the language. It is very important that you take every opportunity to speak in English in College and when socialising outside study hours.

Socialising with students who are native speakers of English is a good way to improve your spoken English. You might feel a little shy and uncertain at first but everyone at the College is very friendly and will want to speak to you. Do not be afraid of making mistakes. It also does not matter if your vocabulary is limited, and your pronunciation and grammar are not perfect. Making mistakes is a natural part of learning a language. Learn from your mistakes as you speak with other students, and you will find your English language skills will soon improve.

### **Taking Responsibility for Your Own Language Development in English**

Please remember that you are responsible for your own learning and language development. You need to work very hard to improve your English language skills, but this is something you need to do for yourself; just like learning your instrument.

You can improve your skills in College by following points 1-4 above. Other ways to improve might include:

* Reading through the Moodle pages on study strategies and academic integrity. You will find a wealth of information regarding essay writing which will help you develop your skills in English.
* Exploring websites which can help to develop your English language skills in different contexts:

These might include:-

**BBC Learning English bbc.co.uk/learningenglish**

BBC Learning English offers free audio, video, and text materials to learners around the world. The website contains activities which can help you to improve your listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills from basic to advanced levels. Working through the activities will help you to improve your skills in your chosen area.

**BBC News https://www.bbc.co.uk/news**

BBC News provides up-to-the-minute news, breaking news, video, audio, and feature stories. BBC News provides trusted World and UK news as well as local and regional perspectives. Visiting the news channel on a daily basis will help you to improve your English language skills, especially reading and listening skills.

**FutureLearn**

**https://www.futurelearn**.**com**

Future Learn provides free on-line English language courses. The courses are delivered one step at a time, and are accessible on mobile, tablet and desktop, which means you can study at a time that suits you. Courses which are particularly useful include:-

# A Beginner's Guide to Writing in English for University Study: Learn how to use English for study at university or college and develop your writing skills, vocabulary and grammar.

There are many similar courses for you to choose from. However, each course has a different start date so you must check dates and availability as soon as possible.

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In-sessional support at the RNCM enables you to improve your skills in English in a meaningful way which is relevant to your studies, but it is important that you engage with the advice given in this handbook if you are to benefit from the support provided. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is anything you are unsure about with regards language support.

**I look forward to working with you in the coming year!**

Professor Jean Ammar

1 September 2023