

## **Deferral of Study Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

The Royal College of Art (RCA) understands that circumstances may arise that prevent applicants from commencing their studies as planned. This policy outlines the process, eligibility criteria, and conditions for deferring an offer of admission.

### **2. Eligibility for Deferral**

2.1 Applicants who have received an offer of admission and have paid their deposit may request a deferral of their place for one academic year.

2.2. Requests will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

2.3. Deferral requests are considered based on personal, medical, or professional reasons, including but not limited to:

- Serious health-related issues of the offer-holder, or serious illness of the offer holder's partner, parent or guardian, or child.
- Unforeseen financial difficulties or a change in personal financial circumstances outside of the offer-holder's control.
- Exceptional personal circumstances (i.e. maternity/paternity leave, adoption leave, bereavement).
- Where the offer-holder is directly personally affected by natural or human-made disaster (i.e. war, flooding, wildfire, earthquakes).
- Visa-related delays (for international students).
- Unforeseen professional opportunities directly relevant to the applicant's field of study.

- 2.4. All deferral requests should be supported by documentary evidence.
- 2.5. Deferrals are granted at the discretion of the RCA and are not guaranteed.
- 2.6. Further periods of deferral will not be permitted.

### **3. Deferral Request Process**

- 3.1. Offer-holders must submit a written request for deferral, including a clear explanation and any supporting evidence, to the Admissions Team at: [admissions@rca.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@rca.ac.uk)
- 3.2. The deadline for submitting is no later than 60 days prior to the programme start date.
- 3.3. Requests made beyond this point will not normally be considered.
- 3.4. If your request to defer your place is accepted your deposit will be carried forward to the next academic year.
- 3.5. If you have been granted a temporary deposit exemption you will need to pay your deposit before your deferral can be confirmed.
- 3.6. Offer-holders who are granted a deferral will receive a revised offer letter for the following academic year, subject to any changes in tuition fees, programme information, or admission requirements.
- 3.7. It is your responsibility to meet the conditions of your new offer.
- 3.8. If you were required to fulfil the conditions for English language as part of your original offer, and the results of previous tests have expired prior to your deferred start date, you will be required to update these.

### **4. Conditions of Deferral**

- 4.1. Deferrals are granted for a maximum of **one academic year only**.
- 4.2. Deferral approvals are specific to the programme for which you originally applied. A change of programme will require a new application, and you are not guaranteed a place.
- 4.3. If you do not enrol in the academic year following your deferral your deposit will not be refunded to you.

4.4. Tuition fees for your year of return will be subject to any annual adjustments made by RCA, and may be higher than your year of application.

4.5. If you are in receipt of a scholarship from the RCA it is possible that your scholarship may not roll over to the following year if your request for deferral is approved. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and is subject to the conditions of the individual Scholarship.

4.6. If you are in receipt of external funding (non-SLC) it is your responsibility to understand the conditions of this funding, and the impact that a deferral may have.

4.7 It is possible that there may be changes to your programme in the deferred year. Changes that occur as part of the usual cycle of updating programme information will not be specifically communicated to you. Programme information is available on the website in advance of the start of the academic year. It is your responsibility to check this.

4.8. Any changes which are considered major (i.e. significant changes to the programme structure, length of the academic year, wholesale changes to the learning outcomes) will be communicated to you. You will be given the opportunity to withdraw, and your deposit will be refunded to you.

4.9 If your programme is suspended or withdrawn in your deferred year, the RCA will inform you and your deposit will be refunded to you.

## **5. Conditions Specific to Graduate Diploma Offer-Holders**

5.1. Requests for deferral are subject to all eligibility criteria described in point 2 of this document.

5.2. Offer-holders for the Graduate Diploma are permitted to either:

- i) defer for one full year (e.g. if your offer is for September entry you may defer to the next September intake), or

- ii) defer entry to the next intake (e.g. if your offer is for September entry you may defer to the January intake, but you may not defer to the May entry point).

5.3. If you choose to defer by a full academic year, no further deferral will be permitted (i.e. if you defer your entry point from September to September, you will not be permitted to further defer until January).

5.4. If you choose not to return at your deferred entry point and wish to return at a later point you will be required to re-apply.

## **6. Conditions Specific to Postgraduate Research Offer-Holders**

6.1 Requests for deferral are subject to all eligibility criteria described in point 2 of this document.

6.2 Approval of deferral will be dependent on the availability of suitable MPhil/PhD supervisors for you at the deferred entry point. This will be decided on a case-by case basis by the RCA.