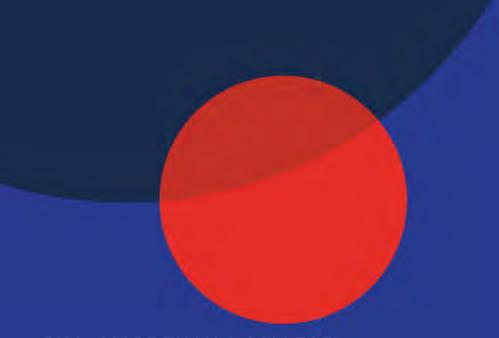


Education, employment and empowerment





RNC - MORE THAN A COLLEGE!

Did you know that RNC is a charity as well as a residential college of further education (FE)?

We rely heavily on grants from a range of trusts and foundations as well as individual donations including gifts in Wills. This extra income ensures we can continue to provide a range of extra-curricular activities, the latest equipment such as IT and VI teaching aids, as well as keep improving our campus facilities for current and future students.

If you can help, please contact our fundraising team via email fund@rnc.ac.uk

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Welcome

RNC is a unique place. Along with having HRH the Prince of Wales as its patron, It's somewhere that you can learn to be yourself amongst a peer group who have similar life experiences. It's a place where you will be valued for who you are now, and for the person that you are becoming.

Our dedicated, specialist staff and superb facilities enable us to deliver our programmes with a focus on meeting your individual needs, both in and out of the classroom. We are an international centre of expertise for people with visual impairments, and our broad curriculum combines academic and vocational subjects with specialist skills for life to help you to prepare for the future. This means we can offer a programme of study that is tailored to you.

We focus on independent learning and living, making RNC somewhere that you can develop the skills and confidence to thrive not only while you are here, but in your life after College.

RNC is a community where diversity is celebrated and each student is treated as an individual. We understand that the journey to overcoming barriers to achieving personal aims is unique to each student. We will work with you to help you find your own path to the future.

Lucy Proctor Executive Principal





Here at RNC we are all about the importance of both our academic progress and our personal development - we are offered a variety of opportunities to achieve our unique potential.

The staff realise that, although we may all have a visual impairment, we are all individuals with different needs, ideas and plans. There definitely isn't an assumption of 'one size fits all', students are able to pursue their chosen courses without having to worry about whether it will be accessible.

At RNC, you will find that everyone is given a voice. One of the ways is via the Student Representative Group (SRG). This is a regular student-led meeting whereby new ideas are discussed, any concerns are raised and dealt with and student voices are heard.

All students are welcome at these meetings and we have also attended national campaigning events to better the lives of people within the specialist education system.

The SRG has effective links with staff in order to ensure that any points raised in the meetings are carried forward

Abdul Eneser Chair of the Student Representative Group



Why RNC?

The College experience is more than vocational and academic qualifications. It's about achievement beyond the classroom, a time when you start to develop the self-confidence, personal independence and communication skills you need for your next step. This is your journey for your future.

Academic

Offering a range of subjects at Level 2 (GCSE, BTEC, NVQ, etc) and Level 3 (AS and A Levels, BTEC, ITEC, Cambridge Technical, etc) and with specialist teaching staff and small class sizes, RNC allows students wishing to pursue a traditional college path the chance to shine. We encourage independent learning and do not have teaching assistants within our classes, enabling you to realise your potential and leave with a true sense of personal achievement.

University preparation

In addition to excellent teaching, students benefit from a dedicated team who will guide you through university application processes, offer support for university visits and informed talks from Higher Education professionals. Living at a residential college is great preparation for university life.

Vocational

Our training programmes give you the practical skills and experience you need to follow specific career paths. At RNC we are proud of the range of qualified students who progress to careers in fitness, massage, business administration, technology and the media.



Why RNC?

Continued >>

Preparing for employment

Whichever path you choose, our team will guide you through CV writing and mock interviews to help you move into your future career. Being accomplished in your chosen medium of accessible technology, utilising time management practice and other independence skills will enable you to succeed within the workplace.

Learn English and experience British culture

At RNC, you will be able to develop your English language skills while experiencing what it is like to live and study in the UK. RNC is based in the city of Hereford, in the beautiful, rural county of Herefordshire, and just 15 miles from the border of Wales. It has direct trains to Birmingham, Manchester and Cardiff.

During your time at the College you will have opportunities to take part in activities, visit historical sites, enjoy British food and of course a nice cup of tea!

RNC has a lot to offer, but if you're keen to spread your wings and explore the rest of Hereford, then there are plenty of things for you to discover and experience. Hereford city centre is a short bus or taxi ride away from campus, or a 25 minute walk.

If you are just starting to develop your independence, then Hereford is a perfect place to build up your confidence. Hereford has been home to RNC since 1978 so many local taxi drivers, shop assistants and leisure staff have had visual impairment awareness training and will support you should you require assistance.

The RNC Difference

Independent Living Skills

Independent Living Skills provides a flexible programme that is tailored to build on your current skills and meet your future ambitions. Everything from money management to cookery skills, laundry to supermarket shopping, is covered, helping you to prepare for life as a confident, independent person. You may wish to embark on our self-catering scheme if you are planning to go to university or to live in your own home after RNC.

Mobility Training

Mobility Training gives you the opportunity to attend regular one-to-one sessions where you can increase your skills whilst learning how to access the RNC campus and the local area. Confident spatial awareness and mobility skills are central to your

independence; from learning to use a long cane and independent train and bus travel, to guide dog support and advice.

Functional English and Mathematics

Functional English and Mathematics lessons offer practical and relevant training to help you improve your skills, raise your confidence and support your study. A range of topics cover useful life-skills, including financial budgeting and letter writing, and will provide you with a qualification up to Level 2.

Work Experience

During the College's annual work experience week, you will gain valuable, real-world experience of what life is really like in the workplace. You will have the chance to discover the type of role and environment



The RNC Difference

Continued >>

that suits you through opportunities that are tailored to the career that interests you.

In addition to designated internal and external work experience, you will be able to take advantage of the regular work-based learning opportunities at RNC. Vocational courses have this as an active component, enabling you to gain skills for your future place of work.

Braille

RNC is the only place in the UK to offer Braille as a qualification. Tuition is provided by experienced, specialist teachers on a one-to-one basis. Lessons are individually tailored to each student so that you learn at your own pace.

Braille Technology

Braille Technology is open to anyone who is studying Level 2 Braille or who already knows Level 2 Braille and just wants to discover how the different specialist technologies work. You can explore the devices in a couple of workshops or delve deeper and become adept at using the equipment over the course of a year.

Students are welcome to bring their own devices. For those who are new to Braille Technology, RNC has a range to try, from the latest BrailleNote Touch to Braille Displays that can be used with PCs, laptops and Apple products. Some benefits of using Braille Technology are: devices are quiet, easy to use, good for proof-reading, portable, and ideal for using in lecture halls at university or in the workplace. The range of technology available means you will always have an option available to you.

The RNC Difference

The RNC Difference

Continued >>

IT - Information Technology

IT gives independence back to a person who has been reliant on assistance or who has only recently lost their sight.

So much of everyday life relies on our ability to use technology; increasingly, much of the information we need can only be accessed through electronic means.

By having skills in assistive technology, a person with sight loss can easily access these materials. At RNC we have a range of assistive technologies including:

- JAWS screen reader
- Supernova screen reader and/or large print
- Zoom Text large print

You may also have your own technologies which you are welcome to bring. Many of our students have mobile phones with speech or large print.

Help is at hand from your peers and staff, to enable you to get the best out of these technologies.

Most areas of the College are wi-fi enabled which gives you the freedom to use these technologies in any environment.

All students are taught in small groups but you work as individuals. We encourage peer support; you all have something to offer and at RNC you have the ability to support others.

Funding

We are delighted to welcome students drawn by our international standing as exceptional providers of specialist education and in recent years we have been joined by students from countries as varied as India, Nigeria, Norway, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

RNC offers:

- highly qualified teaching staff and experienced specialists in working with people with visual impairment
- an on site medical centre with a team of registered nurses and a BACP accredited Counsellor
- support with English language skills
- a wide range of courses and programmes

following the English national curriculum to suit every individual

- a tailored programme of independent living skills (cookery, laundry, money management, shopping, etc)
- a homely environment in one of the country's most picturesque small cities
- individual en-suite bedrooms
- an experienced safeguarding team
- a wide range of extra-curricular activities
- first class sporting facilities and training
- mobility and orientation training
- 24 hour residential staff on site

Funding

Funding

Continued >>

Application and Funding

Complete the application for RNC and advise us how you intend to fund your placement. As part of your application we will need:

- your latest school/college reports
- a copy of your passport information page
- an official translation of your birth certificate
- any other supporting documentation that would be useful to us - testimonials, certificates, medical reports

In order to study at RNC, international students must have their own funding in place. This can mean paying privately or securing sponsorship from your government or an employer. We are unable to subsidise your place by providing any funding ourselves and do not offer a scholarship programme.

You will be invited for an initial interview online via Skype/Zoom/Teams. Our team will then arrange an in-depth virtual Pre-Entry Assessment.

Pre-Entry Assessment

The Pre-Entry Assessment will consist of a series of meetings with key members of our staff including our teachers. You will also be expected to undertake a literacy and numeracy test.

During the process we will be able to establish the best way that we can support you and it will also give you the opportunity to ask lots of questions about RNC.

Funding

Continued >>

RNC Offer Letter

Once the assessment is complete, if we are able to offer you a place we will confirm the full cost and proposed start date and provide this information in writing for the benefit of the authorities in your home country and any sponsors.

Because your programme will be tailored to meet your personal needs we cannot confirm the cost before this stage, although we can provide a general indication of likely fees on request.

Visa Process

Three months prior to the start of your course we will issue you with a confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS).

Students applying for a student visa may require a UKVI-recognised English language qualification, referred to as a SELT (Secure English Language Test). For example, you may need to take the IELTS examination. With IELTS a minimum of 4.0 must be achieved in each discipline (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking) for you to satisfy visa requirements. Our team at RNC can offer assistance on concessions to help you access the examinations.

How to Apply

Start Looking Ahead

It's never too early to explore your options for Further Education and to gather information about the courses that will help you achieve your ambitions. Our website (www.rnc.ac.uk) has lots of information, including more detail on our academic and vocational programmes.

Funding Advice

Funding may be available from your government or other charities for your place at RNC. It is worth exploring these options to help cover the fees.

Visit RNC

If you are able to visit in person then it is by far the best way to experience what RNC has to offer. A tour of the College will allow you and your family the time and space needed to ask questions, speak to staff and students, experience our outstanding accommodation and get a feel for campus living. You may also choose to come on one of our free Have-a-Go weekends, which give you a taster of life at RNC with lots of fun and activities thrown in!

Discuss Your Options

Talk through your choices with those closest to you. If you need further advice, please email our Student Enquiries team (info@rnc.ac.uk) who will answer any questions or send you an application form. Alternatively, you can download an application form from our website or complete the online application form. Once you have applied, our Registry team will get in touch and support you through the process.



How to Apply

Continued >>

Pre-Entry Assessment

All potential students are invited for a Pre-Entry Assessment (PEA). This will be arranged virtually via Skype/Zoom/Teams. This is a two-way process. It gives us an opportunity to get to know your strengths, interests and support needs. It gives you an opportunity to meet staff and students and decide whether we can offer what you want. For more information on PEAs and the funding process, please visit the Student Journey pages of our website.

New Student Conference

Once you have an offer of a place at RNC you are invited to join all other new students at a weekend conference for both you and your parents or guardians. Taking place in July each year, it is a great opportunity to meet fellow new starters and familiarise yourself with your surroundings.

Start Your Programme!

As you settle into life at RNC, our experienced staff are on hand to ensure you receive all the support you need while you live and study away from home.



Tutor Groups

All students are assigned a tutor who will optimise their College experience. Your tutor will support and monitor your academic and personal development, and encourage forward planning to ensure positive transitional outcomes. You will be regularly advised to review and reflect on your progress and consider how to make certain your career and personal goals are met. Tutorials are also an opportunity for group discussions related to College events, community activities and national and worldwide current affairs.

Transition

All students receive transitional support. You will attend career development classes, which are small group sessions concentrating on individual career planning and preparation for the world of paid work, apprenticeships, volunteering and Higher Education.

You will learn how to write a CV and supporting statement, and practice your job interview skills.

All students complete a minimum of a weeklong experience placement each year. You may also attend regular placements provided by local employers, or internal/external work-based learning projects, where you can further develop your employability skills.

Residential Living

On campus there are halls of residence designed to suit different age groups. Stephens and Dowdell halls host 18 to 25 year olds, with students aged 16 to 18 in Campbell Hall. Stephens Hall has a number of self-contained flats. The flats have their own kitchen and provide the opportunity for you to experience an increased level of independent living.



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Residential Support

Our team of Residential Support Officers and Wellbeing Support Officers provide a point of contact for students in each of the halls. They ensure that moving away from home and living more independently is a smooth and exciting process for you.

As part of our commitment to safeguarding our students' welfare, waking night staff ensure that students are safe 24/7.

Health and Wellbeing

RNC has a medical centre on site which provides the following services:

A team of registered nurses based on campus provide daily support and advice on managing

your individual healthcare needs. The nursing team can also support you to access local NHS medical provision while you are studying at RNC and will liaise with relevant parents/guardians and professionals as appropriate.

On campus we have a BACP accredited counsellor. You can be referred for counselling via Pre-Entry Assessment or you may access the counselling service during your time at College. The Counsellor has long term experience of supporting young people within education and also with emotional adjustments relating to sight loss.

Meals

Lunch and evening meals are provided at the RNC Kitchen. Our bistro-style eatery offers an extensive menu and caters for all dietary requirements.

Continued >>

At some point you may wish to progress to a full or partial self-catered arrangement. This may be done using the shared kitchens on each floor of the halls of residence. Stephens Hall also contains some self-catered flats (comprising an en-suite bedroom, small kitchen and living area); these are particularly useful for students going to university or thinking of living independently.

Multi-Faith Provision

People of all faiths are welcomed to the College community. Religious and cultural support is provided and links are established with local provision wherever possible. Students are enabled to access local places of worship and can discuss an individual prayer or dietary requirements with support staff. There is a multi-faith prayer and reflection room which is available to all staff and

students who would like space for prayers or quiet contemplation.

Student Voice

Students are encouraged to be active participants in the running of the College. All students are invited to be a part of the Student Representative Group (SRG). Representatives are nominated from the student body for the following groups:

- Safeguarding Committee
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group
- Health and Safety Committee
- Education and Skills Quality Assurance Committee (ESQAC)

We also have a group of Student Ambassadors and an annually elected Student Governor who attends meetings of the Board of Trustees.



Continued >>

Student Life

Everything we do is designed to develop your self-confidence. Building self-esteem and gaining practical experience will help you as you progress towards employment, self-employment or Further/ Higher Education. Social events and clubs are a large part of this. Whilst we provide many activities, students are encouraged to start up their own clubs, based on their interests.

Student Bar

A student group runs the bar, welcoming all to enjoy the evening entertainments. Alcohol is only available to over 18s, but there is a range of soft drinks for those under age or those who do not wish to drink. Fun, sociable activities take place weekly, with student DJs, karaoke nights and fundraising events put on by fellow students.

Local Shops

As well as learning routes around campus, the Mobility Team will help you negotiate your way to the nearest shops, which include two convenience stores, a post office, a hairdresser and a chip shop.

Entertainment Off-Campus

Students are not restricted to the campus. The nearby city centre has a range of shops, cafés, bars and restaurants, as well as a cinema, theatre, swimming pool and bowling alley. Offering the best of both worlds, there are parks close to town and the countryside is just a short walk away. Major cities are easily accessible by train, with Cardiff, Bristol and Birmingham all less than 90 minutes away.



Something for Everyone

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is the world's leading youth achievement award. A fun adventure and a major challenge, we offer two progressive award levels of Bronze and Silver. This will push your boundaries as you develop lifelong friendships, gain new skills and enhance your CV and university applications by going that extra mile. RNC is a licensed centre for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme which is run by experienced and qualified staff and can be adapted so is accessible for all students at RNC.

Internationally Renowned Sports Academy

For many students, attending RNC is their first opportunity to fully participate in sports. There are a variety of activities on offer, from boccia to goalball,

tandem cycling to angling. Students can engage with individual or team sports (like VI cricket) in a fun and inclusive way.

Where we don't have the facilities on site, we can support you to access them locally. For example, rock climbing, swimming and athletics.

Leisure and Learning Options

Within your weekly timetable, there are opportunities to engage in interests that are not central to your chosen courses. You may wish to try out a new sport, indulge in the arts or learn a language. Current activities are: Art; French conversation; football; goalball; gym; horticulture; music; radio; Spanish conversation and Tech Novice Café.





thePoint4

At RNC we like to offer you something different. Enhancing a variety of the courses that you can choose from, we have a public leisure facility that offers unique work experience opportunities on site.

thePoint4 is a fully accessible, international standard sports centre which has hosted many large events, including the Blind Football World Championships in 2010 and the Blind Football European Championships in 2015. thePoint4 is open to the community, who attend exercise classes and use the gym, sports hall and astro pitch facilities.

Students can take advantage of these facilities for their personal use, yet they also provide valuable work placement opportunities. So if you are interested in catering, you can work on the Pod. This is our public café. It gives you the chance to work with our catering partners Baxter Storey. For anyone wanting to develop customer service skills, the Point 4 reception is a busy hub with a constant stream of customers and telephone enquiries to deal with.

If you are a student on one of the sport and recreation courses, you will get the chance to practice your developing skills on members of the public. Personal trainers work with clients in the public gym and group exercise classes are run during term time by students for members and non-members alike.

As a massage and complementary therapies student, you will also provide a weekly sports massage clinic, giving you valuable work experience and contributing to the Point 4 community.

Michael Fadeyi Lagos, Nigeria

Studied: Computer Studies, Massage and Complementary Therapies, Music, Performing Arts

How did you adjust to the culture shock of moving to a new country?

The biggest thing about moving to the UK was the weather. I came in the winter. My best season is spring and then winter. The food was very different too. I am very picky with food and in Nigeria you tend to get rice and meat and that's pretty much it. In the UK there is so much choice, especially puddings. I also like to drink water and I particularly liked flavoured water.

How did you find the academic courses at RNC?

Some of the tutors were really good and technology

was helpful although I think that the tech will have moved on a lot in ten years. Without a doubt there will be something unique that you can get at RNC that you can't get anywhere else.

What was the social life like at RNC?

The social life was really good! There was definitely some level of freedom!

What did you do next?

I previously worked for a news broadcasting organisation, Voice of Nigeria, in Lagos as Chief Producer and after I left RNC I returned to that role. I started using some of my experiences that I gained from RNC within my everyday life. Because of my experience I got interested in further study in the UK and I returned to complete my Masters in Communication for Innovation and Development at the University of Reading. I am now completing

Continued >>

a PhD in Gender Studies at the University of Brighton. My aim is to explore gender balance and make a comparison of gender bias.

What do you do now for a career?

I am aiming to be an academic with a particular interest in disability advocacy.

What is your best memory of life at RNC?

I really miss my tutors and I miss the extra-curricular activities, particularly the football.

What is the best advice that you could give to a young person with a visual impairment who is currently going through the careers process?

You need to put extra effort in to achieve the same standards as a sighted person, if you do then nobody will remember your disability any longer. In spite of the challenges there is an inability of society to meet the needs of a visually impaired person so you also have to speak up and guide and navigate your way through the world on your own.

It is not a blind world, it is a sighted world so you need to let people know your expectations.

Life at RNC

Continued >>

Caecilie Valla Broman Copenhagen, Denmark

Studied: Level 1 Braille, IELTS English Language, Independent Living Skills, IT, Massage and Complementary Therapies, Mobility

How did you adjust to the culture shock of moving to a new country?

It was definitely a massive culture shock moving to England from Denmark. I had lost my sight only a year prior to coming to RNC, so that alone made it daunting. My English has always been quite good but it made me quite tired adjusting to speaking in a new language and I often called home to talk to my friends and family. However, while I felt homesick at first I very quickly got used to being there and I really enjoyed it after just a couple of weeks.

How did you find the academic courses at RNC?

The academic courses were brilliant. I loved that the classes are small. This meant that the teachers had more time for each student, and I really felt that they gave the best support so that we were able to use our full potential.

What was the social life like at RNC?

RNC has a really strong community. Everybody knows each other, so it almost became like a family. There was always someone to hang out with and there were so many opportunities to socialise. I loved always having someone to talk to, but it was also nice that everybody had their own room so there was space for relaxing and doing work by yourself.

What happened after you left RNC?

I went to the University of Worcester, where I

Life at RNC

Continued >>

completed a BSc in Single Honours Psychology. Going to university straight from RNC was quite challenging. It took time to adjust from being at a specialist college where you were in the same boat as everybody else, to going to a much larger scale mainstream university. I feel that my time at RNC gave me a good understanding of what extra support I may need for succeeding, and I am so grateful that I learned to use JAWS at RNC, as that was the main tool that I used at university. I graduated in June 2020 with a First in Psychology.

What do you do now for a career?

I am currently volunteering for several charities and organisations to gain relevant experience. I recently did a placement with a blind psychologist in Denmark and my English boyfriend and I are hoping to move to Copenhagen soon where I will apply for an MSc in Psychology.

What is your best memory of life at RNC?

The social life was unique and I don't think I'll ever experience the same sense of community as I found there

What is the best advice that you could give to a young person with a visual impairment who is currently going through the careers/transition process?

Grab any opportunity that comes your way, as it will only be an advantage if you have that extra level of experience. It can be quite overwhelming to think too far ahead, so focus on the next step that you would like to take and remember to think about everything you have achieved already. If there is anything that you find difficult, then don't be afraid to ask for help. I always find that it does not take long to adjust to new challenges. Have a positive mind set.

Our Courses

Further information on courses can be found online at www.rnc.ac.uk/courses. Don't despair if the subject you want isn't listed, contact our Student Recruitment Team who will be happy to talk through your options tel: +44 1432 376 621 or email: info@rnc.ac.uk

ASPIRE Study Programme

Audio Media Production

Biology

Braille

Business and Administration

Business Studies

Cisco Networking Academy

English

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

Health and Social Care

History

Home Cooking Skills

IT - Information Technology

Massage and Complementary Therapies

Mathematics

Modern Foreign Languages

Preparation for Higher Education

Psychology

Sociology

Sports Academy

Diploma in Sporting Excellence (DiSE)

Sport and Recreation







A world where every person with a visual impairment has true equality

Our Mission

Education, employment and empowerment for all people with a visual impairment

Ofsted

RNC is proud to have achieved a 'Good' rating from Ofsted during its inspection in 2017.

The large majority of students achieve their personal goals and make good or better progress from their starting points. Students develop skills that prepare them well for life after they leave the college. Last year, the large majority of students progressed on to employment, further or higher education or voluntary work. The number of students moving into paid employment has significantly increased. Students develop self-confidence, social skills and independent learning skills very effectively and are prepared well for their next steps.

Get in Touch

You will have lots of questions but please don't be afraid to get in touch; we are here to help you. For further information, please contact our Student Enquiries team on +44 1432 376 621 or email info@rnc.ac.uk or visit our website at www.rnc.ac.uk

We also have active social media channels:

- **f** /RNCHereford
- @RNC_Hereford
- RNCHereford

Situated in the West Midlands and just 15 miles from the border with Wales, you will find us at:

The Royal National College for the Blind, Venns Lane, Hereford HR1 1DT

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

RNC welcomes a diverse population of students and staff. We aim to ensure that our college environment is free from prejudice and harassment. In all aspects of delivery and employment, no individual or group will be discriminated against on the grounds of gender, marital status, gender reassignment, age, disability, race, religion and belief or sexual orientation.

In 2015, RNC was recognised with an Investors in Diversity award.

In 2016, we ranked 6th in the Top 100 organisations for best EDI practice at the National Centre for Diversity Grand Awards and named Specialist College of the Year.

For further information on our policies on Equal Opportunities and Diversity, please contact us or visit our website: www.rnc.ac.uk

This prospectus is available in other formats: Braille, large print and audio.

Please contact our Student Enquiries line on +44 1432 376 621

The information provided is correct at the time of going to print.

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The Royal National College for the Blind Venns Lane Hereford HR1 1DT

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