

1. Introduction

The Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that a public authority* must, in the exercise of its functions have due regard to the need to:

- *Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act;*
- *Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*
- *Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

People with caring responsibilities are also protected from discrimination by virtue of their association with people with protected characteristics.

**The provisions of the public sector Equality Duty (introduced in 2011) apply to any organisation that serves a 'public function', even if it is not technically a public sector organisation.*

2. Intended Audience

This Equality & Diversity policy is intended to be read, understood and complied with by all members of our community who work, study at or govern The Art Academy. It also applies to those who supply goods and services to or visit the Academy.

The Art Academy is committed to providing an inclusive and positive environment for all based on the principles of equality, dignity and respect, and to the integration of this ethos into all areas of policy and practice.

3. Our Equality and Diversity principles

- The Art Academy values the rich diversity of our students, staff and alumni, which is fundamental to our character. This diversity informs our teaching and learning and our employment practices, producing both inspired practitioners and leading professionals.
- We value diversity and we recognise that different people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge and culture, and that this difference brings great strength in an institution such as ours.
- We recognise that patterns of under-representation and differences in outcomes at The Art Academy can be challenged through positive action programmes.
- We respect the rights of individuals, including the right to hold different views and beliefs. We will not allow these differences to be manifested in a way that is hostile or degrading to others.
- We expect commitment and involvement from all our staff, students, partners and providers of goods and services in working towards the achievement of our vision.

4. Policy and Strategy Aims

In order to uphold these values and to sustain an accessible and inclusive environment for all students, staff, alumni, trustees, members of the public and partners in the community and commercial sector with whom we engage, we will:

- Celebrate the diversity of our community, recognising that it is integral to our success.
- Comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and demonstrate our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires us to have due regard to the 3 principles outlined in the introduction of this document.
- Challenge and address inequality, by prohibiting unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation as defined in the Equality Act 2010; in relation to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex (gender) and sexual orientation, whether such a characteristic is actual, perceived, or by association. This applies to all stages of the student and staff 'lifecycles' and to our engagement with service users, suppliers and external parties.
- Take seriously any allegation of breach of this policy and investigate it taking action via our disciplinary procedures, where necessary.
- Embed our Equality and Diversity principles in all our policies, strategies and processes, through active consultation with students and staff, and evaluation of the potential and actual impact.

4.1 Student experience

Ensure that the student experience is positive, fair and inclusive, in each of the following areas:

- Application and admission
- Induction
- Curriculum and course design
- Access to estate, services, website information etc.
- Throughout the courses
- Assessment
- Academic progression
- Withdrawal, interruption of study and transfer
- Complaints
- Student support
- Employment outcomes monitoring
- Any other activities - under the control of the Art Academy which students participate or which affects their ability to learn, work or socialise.

4.2 Staff experience

Ensure that the staff benefit similarly by the application of this policy, specifically in the areas of:

- Recruitment and selection
- Contractual status and work-life balance
- Job description, grading, pay and benefits
- Induction
- Probation
- Appraisal
- Employee relations
- Staff development
- Career progression
- Length of service and retention

5. Implementation and responsibilities

This Equality and Diversity policy and strategy is owned and endorsed by the Board of Trustees, which has corporate responsibility for the Art Academy's Equality duties and for ensuring that an inclusive culture is promoted throughout the School.

The Academic Course Manager and Operations Manager are jointly responsible for leading equality and diversity and for ensuring implementation of this policy (within their relevant areas of responsibility), and that appropriate action is taken against breaches of this policy; Practical implementation of the equality duties is managed by the Academic Course Manager for student and Academic staff related matters and the Operations Manager for general staff-related matters.

All students, staff and visiting tutors have an individual responsibility to support and foster the aims of this policy.

6. Complaints relating to alleged breaches of this Policy

All reported complaints relating to an alleged breach of this policy will be taken seriously, investigated and managed according to the Academy complaints procedure or, in the case of staff, via the grievance procedure. Serious breaches may lead to further action being taken under the relevant Disciplinary procedures.

Students who feel that they have experienced discrimination have recourse to the Academy's student complaints procedure, but should first contact either their Personal Tutor or the Academic Course Manager for information, advice and guidance. Informal resolutions should be attempted in the first instance where possible.

Employees who feel they have experienced discrimination can pursue the matter through the formal grievance procedure, but should first contact their line manager, or, if the complaint concerns their line manager, the Operations Manager for information, advice and guidance. Informal resolutions should be attempted in the first instance where possible.

Members of the Public who wish to make a complaint should contact the Operations Manager in the first instance.

7. Objectives of the Strategy and how they will be Measured

The Academy has set its initial equality objectives following consultation and engagement with staff, students and stakeholders and also by reviewing the equality information which we gather, or have available to us across all of the protected characteristics. (Annual monitoring reports are published as staff and student information become available). The aim of the objectives is to focus on the major issues and develop objectives with measurable outcomes. In setting objectives we have also considered sector benchmarking.

This policy and strategy will be implemented September 2017 reviewed every 4 years in line with the requirements of the Equality Act (relevant equality Data will be published and analysed annually as part of the Academy Self evaluation process). Amendments will be made in the interim, however, where legislation, case law or operational experience necessitate.

8. Objectives of the Strategy

Objective 1: Increase the participation and attainment of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students at the Academy

KPI 1: A 1% increase each year in the percentage of new student entrants from BAME groups.
Our current % is 12.9% of long course students are from BAME background, which is close to the National Statistics Demographic split for England and Wales which is 14%

Programme Activity:

Create a widened outreach programme to attract more students from BAME background, with progress to be reviewed annually. This annual report will track application rates of BAME, and monitor student experience, staff experience and community activity. The start of this process is to roll out and clarify for staff and students the founding culture of the Academy, which celebrates and supporting a diverse community of artists and with our founding aim to "give creative opportunities to the wider community". This is going to be entrenched in all HR documents, onboarding procedures and staff will have this clarified for them. Marketing material to be reconsidered to reflect and attract a higher number of students from a BAME background. Initiatives designed to engage with the our central london inner city community, working in partnership with Better Bankside to attract

local communities through their outreach channels and festival initiatives throughout the year. Targeted school talks in local inner city London schools for our Foundation programme. (Lead: Marketing)

Outcome:

A 1% increase each year in our percentage of BAME groups. Like for like feedback experience from BAME students and staff, in our feedback gathering metrics. Yearly increases in the amount of community outreach activities we are running.

E&D Lead: Sophie Posgate, Marketing Manager

Progress:

Objective 2: Improve the provision of reasonable adjustments for disabled students and staff across the Academy

KPI 1: To ensure that by 2018, each Academy site has made suitable provision for disabled students and staff requiring additional access requirements.

Outcome: Ongoing

E&D Lead: Operations Manager

Progress: We have engaged Assemble to work with us to improve the current school buildings and facilities. As part of this we have had Burdus Access Management complete an access audit. The results of this audit will inform future decision on the renovation of our spaces which will allow for better access for those with disabilities.

Objective 3: Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to the Equality Act 2010.

KPI 1: Train all managers and support staff through a Managing Diversity Skills Programme

KPI 2: Train all teaching staff on E&D best practice in the learning environment

Outcome: Ongoing

E&D Lead: Academic Course Manager

Progress:

Objective 4: To meet the needs of students, staff and visitors who require Quiet Spaces.

KPI 1: To ensure that by 2018, each Academy site has made suitable provision for students, staff and visitors who require access to a Quiet Space or private room for:

- Prayer or personal reflection
- Rest, due to pregnancy or disability
- Other disability or health related requirements.

Outcome: Ongoing

E&D Lead: Operations Manager

Progress: We have identified area where we intend to create quiet spaces and a prayer room. These will be developed as part of our building refurbishment.

Our access audit will be making recommendations to improve access for those with mobility problems.

We have engaged a professional cleaning company to improve the hygiene standards of the school and reduce the amount of dust and other irritants. We also supply safety equipment to all those using material that could cause any health problems. We have reviewed the use of certain chemicals which can affect ongoing health issues, as well as chance how we handle this chemicals we have also sourced substitute less harmful ones.

Appendix A: A guide to the Equality Act (Great Britain)

What is the Equality Act?

The Equality Act is applicable in England, Scotland and Wales. The main provisions of the Act were implemented in two phases: The first phase became law on 1 October 2010 and in broad terms it harmonises, updates and amends previous anti-discrimination legislation, providing greater protection for all individuals across a wide range of 'protected characteristics'. The second phase became law on 5 April 2011 and enacts a new 'public sector equality duty', which amends and expands the existing duty to cover a wider range of characteristics.

What is 'prohibited conduct' under the Act?

Direct discrimination and indirect discrimination, continue to be prohibited, but are now extended across all of the characteristics, with the exception of pregnancy and maternity. Pregnancy and maternity now has specific protection for the duration of pregnancy and up to 26 weeks after birth. Students are explicitly protected from less favourable treatment if breastfeeding.

Protection from *harassment* is extended to all characteristics with the exceptions of pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership. Individuals are protected from victimisation, where a person makes an allegation or brings proceedings under the Act, and suffers a detriment as a result.

Discrimination by *association* is extended to cover all the characteristics, with the exception of pregnancy and maternity. For example, carers are protected because of their association with someone with a protected characteristic, such as a disabled person or an older person.

Similarly discrimination because of *perception* is extended to the same characteristics. This means that individuals who are treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a characteristic are protected, even though they don't have that characteristic.

It continues to be unlawful not to make a *reasonable adjustment* for a disabled person and a disabled person no longer has to show that their impairment affects a capacity, such as mobility or manual dexterity. It continues to be lawful to treat a disabled person *more favourably* than other people.

It is now unlawful to ask disability or health - related questions during a selection process, with some exceptions.

A new protection, *discrimination arising from disability*, has been introduced. It means that unfavourable treatment because of something connected with a person's disability is unlawful, for example, refusing to allow a student to use a recording device in a tutorial. In practice, providing that reasonable adjustments are made, discrimination should not arise from disability.

What are the positive action provisions?

The positive action provisions in the Equality Act replicate those in previous equality legislation. Where we reasonably think that people who share a protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage, have different needs, or have disproportionately low rates of participation in an activity, we may take action to overcome or minimise this, providing any action taken is proportionate. This provision applies to all functions, including employment and education, and we have and will continue to use these provisions where appropriate.

Policies and documents that supplement and reference this document:

Quality Handbook
Student Handbook
Staff Handbook
Student support and guidance (including tutoring policy)
Admissions Policy
PREVENT Policy
Freedom of Speech Policy
A guide to Student Engagement
Teaching and Learning Strategy
Fitness to study procedure
Academic Misconduct and Extenuating circumstances Policy (student version)