

Equality & Diversity Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

- i) We are an equal opportunities employer and service provider. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.
- ii) The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant, member of staff or student receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.
- iii) We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All employees are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored and policies and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.
- iv) The Human Resources Manager has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.
- v) All employees, workers or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Company.
- vi) Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Company as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the Company.

2. OUR COMMITMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

- i) To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued.
- ii) Every employee, worker or self-employed contractor is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

- iii) Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- iv) Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- v) We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.

3. OUR COMMITMENT AS A SERVICE PROVIDER

- i) We aim to provide services to which all clients are entitled regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, offending past, caring responsibilities or social class.
- ii) We will make sure that our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our service users and clients by assessing and meeting the diverse needs of our clients.
- iii) This policy is fully supported by senior management.
- iv) This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.
- v) We have clear procedures that enable our clients, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated.
- vi) Breaches of our equality and diversity policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

4. OUR COMMITMENT TO STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Auditions

- i) We aim to provide the opportunity to include as many young people as possible in the audition process for full-time professional training. Although some applicants have had considerable previous experience and training, it is not a requirement for entry. All candidates are assessed on their employment potential.
- ii) Where there is any impairment or disability a member of staff at the audition will assist, wherever possible, to remove any barriers to completing the audition without disadvantage. Students **must** disclose any disability through questions posed in the medical questionnaire and equal opportunities questionnaire.
- iii) We will always work in depth with a student to meet their needs and will liaise with the relevant agencies to further that support.

Appeals

- i) We have an appeals structure in place for auditions and assessments. The applicant cannot appeal against the decision made by the panel but they can appeal about the audition process and/or the fairness of how the audition or assessment was conducted.

Monitoring

- i) We collect data from the application forms and auditions to monitor the number of applicants in terms of gender, race, disability and family background to ensure that we are continually promoting and attracting a wide variety of students without discrimination.

Racial Discrimination

- i) Students can be assured of an environment that is free from racial discrimination and abuse. Staff and students are drawn from a wide range of racial, cultural and religious backgrounds. Proven discrimination will lead to disciplinary action as outlined in the Staff and Student Handbooks. Educational and careers advice counselling is free of race bias.
- ii) Staff and students are required to identify and counter all forms of direct and indirect discrimination with Shockout. We seek to ensure that the curriculum content, teaching and library materials do not overtly or covertly discriminate against ethnic minorities. We will provide additional support for those students who do not speak English as their first language.
- iii) We welcomes applications from ethnic minorities both as staff and students. We keep under review the percentage of ethnic minority staff and students and aims for a balanced representation.

Religion

- i) Students are free to subscribe to any religion or not as they wish; every effort is made to ensure that the environment is friendly, harmonious and respectful of multi faiths.
- ii) Any religious or cultural requirements will be met wherever practicable. Guidance will be impartial and objective. Tutors will take into account the diversity of student background.

Sexism and Sexual Orientation

- i) We practices a non-discriminatory policy for both staff and students.
- ii) Sexist physical or verbal abuse will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action as set out in the Staff and Student Handbooks.
- iii) We seek to encourage an equally balanced female and male workforce. This is recorded and reviewed.
- iv) As there is a recognised lack of male performers in the dance industry we actively encourage them to apply to audition for the college/university.
- v) We welcomes staff and students regardless of their sexual orientation.

Disabilities

- i) We strive to ensure that students with learning difficulties will have access to additional learning support. Appropriate support services will be offered to provide a high quality service.
- ii) All printed information and documentation is available in large print for those with visual impairment.

Related Policies

Recruitment

Complaints

Admissions & Auditions

POLICY STATEMENT SUMMARY

AGE

We will:

- ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity;
- ensure that people of working age are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities; and
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

DISABILITY

We will:

- provide any reasonable adjustments in the work environment to ensure disabled people have access to employment opportunities;
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people; and
- seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation.

RACE

We will:

- challenge racism wherever it occurs;
- respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents; and
- actively promote race equality in the Company.

GENDER

We will:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about women and men;
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against women and men;
- offer equal access for women and men to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same; and
- provide support to prevent discrimination against transsexual people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

RELIGION OR BELIEF

We will:

- ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible; and
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

PREGNANCY OR MATERNITY

We will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of pregnancy or maternity;
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of our employees; and



- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of our employees' pregnancy or maternity.

MARRIAGE OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

We will

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of marriage or civil partnership;
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees; and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account the needs of our employees' marriage or civil partnership.

EX-OFFENDERS

We will:

- prevent discrimination against our employees regardless of their offending background (except where there is a known risk to children or vulnerable adults).

EQUAL PAY

We will:

- ensure that all employees, male or female, have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value.