

Sunningwell School of Art Equality and Diversity Policy

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Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

Sunningwell School of Art is committed to promoting Equality and Diversity in employment and in access to courses and services. Sunningwell School of Art believes that, although laws provide a minimum standard, tangible progress can only be made by demonstrating a routine commitment to equal opportunity within the organisation. Sunningwell School of Art's policy strives to develop and use the talent, skill and ability of all its employees, freelance practitioners and trustees to ensure that all individuals are treated equally and without discrimination. Employees, freelance practitioners, trustees, students, work experience students, volunteers and job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of protected characteristics such as age, disability, gender reassignment, gender identity, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

1. About This Policy

1.1 This policy applies to all areas of Sunningwell School of Art's activity and sets out our approach to Equality and Diversity and the avoidance of discrimination at the Art School. It applies to all aspects of employment and learning with us, including recruitment, pay and conditions, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.

1.2 This policy has been agreed and approved by the Board of Trustees.

1.3 This policy covers all trustees, employees, freelance workers, volunteers, work experience students and job applicants at Sunningwell School of Art as well as students participating in courses at the organisation.

1.4 This policy does not form part of any employee's or freelancer workers contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

2. **Who is Responsible for this Policy?**

2.1 Our Board of Trustees have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law. Trustees and directors will actively monitor the workplace for any discriminatory acts or practices. Day-to-day operational responsibility for this policy, including regular reviews of this policy, has been delegated to the Artistic and Administrative Directors, Allyson Austin and Vanessa Woodward.

2.2 All trustees and staff must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they work with adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives regarding Equality and Diversity.

2.3 If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Administrative Director.

2.4 This policy is to be reviewed annually by the Trustees and any amendments will be distributed to staff following the review process.

2.5 Members of Sunningwell School of Art staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the Administrative Director.

3. **Aims of this policy**

3.1 Mainstreaming equality into the school's strategic vision and future planning.

3.2 Promoting equality and diversity through internal and external communications.

3.3 Ensuring staff and student services and facilities are accessible for all.

3.4 Ensure any reasonable adjustments are made for anyone who interacts with Sunningwell School of Art with disabilities, visible or hidden.

4. **Discrimination**

4.1 You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, freelancer workers, job applicants, students, work experience students, volunteers, visitors and supporters. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with visitors, suppliers or other work-related contacts and on work-related trips or events including social events).

4.2 The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

(a) **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.

- (b) **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
- (c) **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- (d) **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- (e) **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, seen or unseen, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

5. Recruitment

- 5.1 Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Where possible, shortlisting should be carried out by more than one person. Sunningwell School of Art's recruitment procedures should be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.
- 5.2 Job description and person specification: Before advertising a post, a detailed job description should be drawn up. In the case of existing posts, the job description should be reviewed to ensure that it remains accurate and non-discriminatory. Job descriptions will specify the purpose, duties, responsibilities and reporting structure of the post. The person specifications will outline strictly relevant and objective criteria relating to the attributes, experience and skills required to undertake the role.
- 5.3 Advertising: Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. As a minimum, vacancies will be advertised externally on the Sunningwell School of Art website. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. Advertisements and Application Packs will clearly state that Sunningwell School of Art welcomes applications from all sections of the community. Advertisements will state that information is available in other accessible formats.
- 5.4 Shortlisting and interviewing: Members of staff involved in the recruitment process will be fully conversant with Sunningwell School of Art's policies, procedures and practices in relation to Equality and Diversity in recruitment and selection. Shortlisting selection will be based on the information contained in the application, applying the criteria set out in the person specification. Applications will be assessed against the ability to meet the essential and desirable selection criteria. Sunningwell School of Art will shortlist for interview the applications based on the highest ability to meet these criteria.

- .5.5 Interview questions relating to the essential selection criteria in the job description should be agreed in advance by the interview panel. Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.
- 5.6 Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions, which should only be used with the approval of the Administrative Director. For example:
- (a) Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
 - (b) Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
 - (c) Positive action to recruit disabled persons.
 - (d) Equality and Diversity monitoring (which will not form part of the selection or decision-making process).

Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check.

- 5.7 We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current employment legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available on request or from UK Visas and Immigration.
- 5.8 To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our organisation, we monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information is removed from applications before shortlisting, and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

6. Promotion and Conditions of Service

- 6.1 Any training needs will be targeted to meet the needs of the organisation and the employee/freelance worker. Employees will be encouraged to identify and discuss their own training needs. You will be given appropriate access to training where relevancy is identified and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.
- 6.2 Induction for all employees and trustees will highlight the existence of Sunningwell School of Art's Equality and Diversity Policy and its practical application. Employees will be encouraged to identify their own access requirements.
- 6.3 Training will take into account the different needs of all staff (for example, the physical accessibility of the proposed venue, the timing of the training day compared to the normal working patterns of participants, the suitability of training methods and materials

according to the access needs of the participants). All training, where a need is identified, will be provided by a third-party consultant.

- 6.4 Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all of you who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

7. Termination of Employment

- 7.1 We will ensure that redundancy criteria, policies and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.
- 7.2 We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.
- 7.3 Exit interviews will be conducted with staff where possible to monitor staff turnover for any patterns based on different characteristics. Information will assist in the future planning of the organisation.

8. Disabilities

- 8.1 If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.
- 8.2 If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact the Directors to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The Directors may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- 8.3 We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.

9. Part-Time and Fixed-Term Work

Part-time, freelance workers and fixed term staff should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent staff in terms of equality and diversity and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

10. Breaches of this Policy

- 10.1 It is the personal responsibility of all employees to comply with Sunningwell School of Art's Equality and Diversity Policy. We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

10.2 There must be no victimisation or retaliation against staff who complain about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

11 Code of Practice

- To ensure all our activities and services take place in an inclusive environment responsive to the needs of all participants.
- To make available all public and in-house information in accessible formats as appropriate to the need of the users.
- To ensure all marketing and publicity material reflects the diversity within the cultural environment.

• Conditions of Service

- Full terms and conditions of employment should be laid out and new staff briefed on these at the point of contract.
- Any required adaptations or employment aids should be acquired as soon as possible to support requirements for disabled people in post.

12 Induction and Training

- Training, once identified, will be targeted to meet the needs of the organisation and the employee. Sunningwell School of Art recognises that some training must be directly job related but staff also benefit from broader personal development.
- Staff will be encouraged to identify and discuss their own training needs.
- Induction for all staff and trustees will highlight the existence of Sunningwell School of Art's Equality and Diversity Policy and what it means in practice. Staff will be encouraged to identify their own access requirements.

13 Monitoring

- Data from Equality and Diversity Monitoring Forms used for recruitment of staff and trustees will be retained after the application process is complete to assess how effective the process has been at attracting applicants from a diversity of communities be they cultural, sexual, generational or impairment based, and will be kept on an on-going basis to help determine trends and changes. The records will also contribute to the annual review of the policy and procedures.
- Exit interviews should be undertaken with all staff when leaving Sunningwell School of Art to understand the underlying reasons both personal and cultural. Comparisons should be made between different ethnic groups, genders, disabled, non-disabled. Information gained should be used to identify issues and assist in the future planning of the organisation.

14 Relevant Acts of Parliament:

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society and replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It has replaced the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability

Discrimination Act. The Equality Act 2010 was amended on January 1, 2024, but it has not been superseded. The amendments were intended to ensure that employees retain the same workplace protections they enjoyed while part of the EU.

15 Please find below examples of the Equality and Diversity forms sent to job applicants.

JOB APPLICANTS' EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY RECRUITMENT MONITORING FORM

Sunningwell School of Art is committed to ensuring that all job applicants are treated equally, without discrimination because of gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, gender identity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age. This form is intended to help us maintain Equality and Diversity best practice and identify barriers to workforce equality and diversity.

This form is optional and you are under no obligation to complete it. If you do, the results will help with tracking equality and diversity and it should be returned with your application. The form will be separated from your application on receipt. The information on this form will be used for monitoring purposes only and will play no part in the recruitment process.

All questions are optional. You are not obliged to answer any of these questions but the more information you supply, the more effective our monitoring will be. All information supplied will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Thank you for your assistance.

Please tick the appropriate box:

Age range

What is your age (please tick)?

- 16-17 18-21 22-30 31-40
- 41-50 51-60 61-65 66-70
- 71+ Prefer not to say

Gender

What is your gender (please tick)?

- Male Female Prefer not to say

Gender Identity

Do you identify as transgender/transsexual or any other gender outside male or female?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

Ethnic Origin

How would you describe your nationality and/or ethnicity (please tick)?

A	B	C	
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White:		Mixed race:		Asian or Asian British:	
British – English, Scottish or Welsh		White and Black Caribbean		Indian	
Irish		White and Black African		Pakistani	
Other White Background		White and Asian		Bangladeshi	
		Other Mixed Background		Other Asian background	

D Black or Black British:		E Chinese and other groups:			
Caribbean		Chinese		Prefer not to say	
African		Other ethnic group			
Other Black background					

Sexual Orientation

How would you describe your sexual orientation (please tick)?

Heterosexual / straight		Bisexual		Prefer not to say	
Gay man		Gay woman/lesbian			

If you are lesbian, gay or bisexual, are you open about your sexual orientation?

	Yes	Partially	No
At home			
With colleagues			
With your manager			
At work generally			

Religion or Belief

Please describe your religion or other strongly held belief.

I would describe my religion or belief as:	
I have no particular religion or belief	
Prefer not to say	

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as a “physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.” An effect is long-term if it has lasted, or is likely to last, more than 12 months. Do you consider that you have a disability under the Equality Act (please tick)?

Yes		No	
Used to have a disability but have now recovered		Don't know	
Prefer not to say			

Thank you for your co-operation in completing this form.

