

L A I N E
THEATRE ARTS

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
POLICY
2023

EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Laine Theatre Arts is one of the world's leading vocational dance and musical-theatre colleges. Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) lies at the very heart of the College's core values as an education and training provider. Laine Theatre Arts is committed to creating an environment representative of the society in which we live and recognises that fostering a diverse community allows us to learn from, and access, a rich tapestry of perspectives and experiences which are critical to the future reputation of the College as a world-class arts institution.

The College is committed to training and supporting students who demonstrate the highest levels of talent at audition. They are selected solely on their talent and potential to develop the skills required for a career in the dance and musical theatre industries. We also seek to provide all staff with the opportunity for career and personal development based on their ability, qualification, suitability for the work, and their potential to grow into a role.

We are therefore committed to promoting equal opportunities in both studying and employment and creating a workplace and study culture in which diversity and inclusion is valued and everyone is treated with dignity and respect. As part of our zero-tolerance approach to discrimination in any form, everyone will receive equal treatment regardless of age (save for maximum age restrictions of students), disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics). We are also committed to providing equitable treatment to all those we deal with as an organisation, including customers and suppliers.

This policy is the responsibility of The Senior Management Committee who will review it annually.

POLICY AIMS

The aim of this policy is to:

- Define the terms Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and explain why they are important to Laine Theatre Arts
- Describe the College's wider strategy for ensuring the principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion continue to contribute to its reputation as a truly inclusive training environment.
- Define and communicate the expectations of all LTA students and staff in this area.

TO WHOM DOES THIS POLICY APPLY?

This policy and its principles apply to the Laine Theatre Arts' Board, its students, potential students, employees, freelance workers, contractors, job applicants, and suppliers.

DEFINITIONS

What is Equality?

Equality means doing what we can to ensure people have equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of life and practice of the college. This we do by promoting Equality of Opportunity in both our College ethos and our legal duty to those who share one or more of the nine protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. Ensuring equality of participation may require Laine Theatre Arts to make reasonable adjustments to allow individuals to join, learn, or work with us

What is Diversity?

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance, respect and the recognition of individual differences. Differences can be related to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the uniqueness of what each individual has to offer.

Laine Theatre Arts aims to attract, retain, develop, and value high-quality students and staff from all backgrounds. It also aims to work in partnership with many sections of our local community.

What is Inclusion?

Inclusion can be defined as a sense of belonging. Laine Theatre Arts has committed to creating an environment in which all members of the college feel respected, valued for who they are, and feel an equal sense of belonging as they are nurtured to reach their true artistic potential.

What is Discrimination?

Discrimination is the unjust or prejudicial treatment of people who share one of more 'Protected Characteristics' (Equality Act 2010).

Laine Theatre Arts will not discriminate, or tolerate discrimination against people on the grounds of their:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Marriage, or Civil Partnership Status
4. Pregnancy or Maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or Belief
7. Gender
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Transgender or Gender Reassignment Status

Types of Discrimination:

1. Direct (where someone is treated less favourably than others because of a protected characteristic).
2. Associative (directly discriminating against another person because they are associated with someone who possesses a protected characteristic)
3. Discrimination by Perception (directly discriminating against another person because someone 'thinks' that another person possesses a protected characteristic).
4. Indirect Discrimination (this can occur when a rule or policy applies to everyone but disadvantages a person with a particular protected characteristic).
5. Harassment (Harassment can be defined as conduct relating to a protected characteristic that is unwanted and offensive and affects the dignity of an individual or group of individuals).
6. Victimisation (This is when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance).

STRATEGIC AIMS

Laine Theatre Arts' Strategic Plan includes the development of a robust evaluative process to ensure it approaches EDI methodically and systematically. The College's priority is to ensure courses are accessible to people from a diverse range of backgrounds and it is an ongoing aim to increase the ethnic diversity of future student and staff applicants. Progress is measured against the following priorities

1. A targeted increase in the representation of under-represented groups in pre-vocational and vocational musical theatre training within the college.
2. Evidence that the voices of under-represented groups are consulted in decision-making processes within the college, especially when new courses are introduced, or changes are made to current courses on the curriculum.
3. The continued development of the 'Lanes to Laine' outreach initiative which has been designed to increase accessibility to training opportunities for under-represented communities.
4. The development of short courses at Laine Theatre Arts to increase opportunity for students who are not yet ready for full-time vocational training
5. A consistent review of our audition process to assist with the development of Global Majority recruitment priorities within the College
6. A consistent review of the ways in which the College integrates racially connected themes into training whilst maintaining cultural integrity throughout.
7. The instigation of a staff/student development programme designed to address issues of unconscious bias.
8. The introduction and development of a fluid lexicon of racially appropriate language for staff and students.
9. A consistent review of all written information and guidance produced by the College to reflect the diversity of the student and staff body.
10. An annual review of the allocation of Access and Participation funding.
11. A targeted increase in the number of scholarships available for under-represented groups to access vocational training.
12. An annual review of the Access and Participation budget.

These priorities are evaluated regularly by the Governing Body and the Access and Participation Forum to assess their effectiveness and ensure that they continue to evolve to the changing needs of students and staff.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TRAINING

Managers and staff will be given appropriate training on recognising and avoiding discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, and promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in the areas of recruitment, training, development, and promotion of student skills. The HR Manager has overall responsibility for equality training as appropriate.

We will provide regular training to ensure that everyone is aware of and understands the contents of this policy and the Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy. Following the training, all member of the LTA community will be required to confirm that they have read, understand, and will comply with this policy and the Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.

EXPECTATIONS

It is vital that staff and students uphold the values of EDI in every aspect of their association with the College. It is the responsibility of all staff in their daily actions, behaviour and decision-making to endeavour to promote these concepts, to comply with all relevant legislation and to ensure that they do not discriminate against colleagues, customers, suppliers or any other person associated with the College.

The College will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination against any person who shares one or more protected characteristics, whether in the field of recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, career progression, training, transfer, or dismissal.

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- Will not tolerate acts that breach this policy and all such breaches or alleged breaches will be taken seriously, be fully investigated and may be subject to disciplinary action where appropriate.
- Fully recognises its legal obligations under all relevant legislation and codes of practice.
- Will enable staff to pursue any matter through the internal procedures which they believe has exposed them to inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy.
- Will ensure that all employees understand and maintain their responsibilities under this policy.
- Will offer opportunities for flexible working patterns, wherever operationally feasible, to help employees combine work with their domestic responsibilities.
- Will provide equal opportunity to all who apply for vacancies through open competition.
- Will select candidates on the basis of their ability to carry out the job, using a clear, open process.
- Will provide all employees with the training and development they need to carry out their job effectively
- Will provide all reasonable assistance to employees who are or who become disabled, making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to provide continued employment.

Laine Theatre Arts is dedicated to meeting and exceeding its legal obligations in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. By doing more than is required by law, the college will continue to build on its reputation for creating a truly inclusive training environment for all students and staff.

Policy reviewed by Board of Directors. Date of next review: September 2027.