

## **Italia Conti Academy of Theatre Arts**

### **Equal Opportunities Policy**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The Academy is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all across and within all aspects of its activity. The Academy will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment.

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish, encourage and promote the core principles and indicators of equality that inform and support our working practices, our selection procedures and the pursuit of excellence.

The Academy provides education at secondary, further and higher educational levels. All policies are managed by the Academy Quality Board.

Each level of education will have specific guidance and application relevant to each level.

The following policy applies to:

**THEATRE ARTS SCHOOL (SECONDARY LEVEL)**

**PERFORMING ARTS COURSES (FURTHER EDUCATION LEVEL)**

**ACTING COURSES (HIGHER EDUCATION LEVEL)**

#### **CORE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES**

The Academy promotes an ethos of equality, valuing and fostering a diverse learning community, where considerations of widening participation inform its activities and strategies, shape our processes and practices and where diversity and individuality are respected as central to the success of the Academy.

Our central principles are that:

**Regardless** of age, colour, ethnic origin, disability, family responsibility, gender, marital status, nationality and race, religion, sexual orientation or socio-economic status:

1. All students applying to join the Academy at all educational levels will be given the same opportunities in audition and interview. Candidates will be selected purely on the basis of their aptitude, skills and potential.

Audition Codes of practice are published for each educational level outlining selection processes and criteria.

2. All students, according to their individual learning profile, will be given equal chance to acquire training and experience. This may include playing a range of contrasting roles.

Each Educational level maintains information about its casting principles within the specific handbooks for each level of study.

3. No student should be graded or assessed using different criteria from those used for another student, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

Each educational level operates a clear assessment strategy and SEND policy appropriate to the specifics of that level and the learning environment.

4. No student or staff member should be excluded from any activity, benefit or service. (excepting where benefits, activities and services are offered to identified groups by third parties as well as ourselves with a view to widening participation (which may include scholarships, bursaries, public financial support))

5. No student or staff member should be subject to any form of sexual harassment by another student, or by another member of staff.

6. No student or member of staff should at any time suffer less favourable or preferential treatment from staff or peers.

Each educational level actively promotes a clear code of conduct for staff members and students.

7. No member of staff or students should intentionally or unintentionally be allocated tasks, duties or responsibilities, or have these withheld. (However, in some cases, members of staff may be asked to undertake pastoral duties with respect to students of the same gender where this is deemed appropriate.)

8. The religious beliefs and practices of all students and staff members should be respected, provided that the exercise of these does not infringe the rights or opportunities of other students or members of staff.

9. No student or staff member should be subject to any verbal, physical or other abuse from staff or students.

The Academy and all educational levels maintain clear codes of conduct for staff and students.

10. All students and staff members should have equal access to information, according to the scope of the data protection policy.

11. The Academy is committed to the avoidance of any form of language, either written or spoken, which might be regarded as derogatory or offensive to any individual.

12. Any abuses of these guidelines should be dealt with via the Disciplinary, Appeals and Complaints procedure in with reference to the codes of conduct.

13 The Academy will provide in house and external training and development sessions with a view to actively promoting equal opportunities ethos and practice.

14 The Academy seeks to recruit and employ its staff from a diverse range of applicants, with open and transparent procedures and monitors applications data.

15 The academy positively promotes, discusses and encourages its equal opportunities ethos, beyond its statutory obligations and legal requirements.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES AND MANAGEMENT**

The Academy provides education at secondary, further and higher educational levels. It is expected that the working practices of the policy will fulfil the specific needs and statutory requirements appropriate to each level.

The Academy has established core principles in this policy in respect of key values and requirements, which are central and universal in application. Each educational level within the Academy provides guidance for the management and interpretation of the policy specific to each level.

The Academy devolves day to day responsibility for managing the appropriate dissemination of this policy as follows:

Secondary / Theatre Arts School: Karen Dwyer Burchill

Further Education / Performing Arts Programmes: Gregory Apostolidis

Higher Education / Acting Programmes:

Chris White

The Academy Quality Board is responsible for monitoring the cyclical review and updating of all policies, both at Academy and Programme level according to statutory and regulatory timeframes.

The following guidance is specific to the

**THEATRE ARTS SCHOOL (SECONDARY LEVEL)**

**PERFORMING ARTS COURSES (FURTHER EDUCATION LEVEL)**

**ACTING COURSES (HIGHER EDUCATION LEVEL)**

**IMPLEMENTATION AND WORKING PRACTICES**

Any infringements of the equal opportunities policy, and its expected behaviours and practices will be treated as a disciplinary matter, according to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures at all educational levels.

The Academy operates a zero tolerance approach toward unacceptable abusive or unprofessional behaviour or language which could be interpreted as harassing or discriminatory.

Any staff or student who experiences any form of discrimination or harassment has full and open recourse to the Complaints procedures to resolve this.

Active development of equal opportunities and widening participation matters are monitored and considered through the Academy Quality Board, as well as policy review, as a standing agenda item.

Student Recruitment and Selection procedures (including audition codes of practice) will be made publically available on the Academy website.

Equal Opportunities monitoring data will be collated and monitored (according to data protection policy), supplied to regulatory bodies as necessary and is used to inform the Academy Quality Board scope of review and development.

All educational levels will provide students with both formal and informal opportunities to contribute their perspectives, via official forums and anonymous questionnaires.

The physical learning environment will be maintained (short term) and developed (long term) to support the needs of a diverse learning community.

Resources and communal provisions (to include catering, IT, signage etc) will be maintained (short term) and developed (long term) to support the needs of a diverse learning community.

The curriculum and the teaching/learning strategies within the provision at all educational levels allows for appropriate flexibility and reasonable adjustments in order to accommodate the specified needs of different learners.

Monitoring and recording of reasonable adjustments is used to inform strategic planning within the scope of the Academy Quality board

The equal opportunities ethos and policy are used to inform the design and content of course materials, websites, adverts and all associated marketing literature and academy information.

Policies to be read in conjunction with this:

Disciplinary and Grievance procedures

Complaints procedures

Staff Codes of Conduct – education level specific

Student Codes of conduct- education level specific

Data Protection Policy

Recruitment Policy

Teaching, Learning and assessment policies - education level specific

Policy reviewed by Academy Quality Board; May 2015