

Policy name: Equality and Diversity Policy

Approved: 25th November 2016

Revision 1 approved 10th March 2017

Revision 2 approved 7th March 2019

Revision 3 approved by Trinity Academic Council 13th May 2020

1. Context

- 1.1 This policy is developed in accordance with the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 and Equal Status Acts 2000-2015, which prohibit direct and indirect discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment and victimisation in relation to nine equality grounds: gender, family status, civil status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, ethnicity and membership of the traveller community (hereafter referred to as ‘the nine equality grounds’). The Employment Equality Acts prohibit discrimination in employment regarding recruitment, promotion, pay and other conditions of employment. The Equal Status Acts prohibit discrimination in access to and provision of services or accommodation, and discrimination by educational establishments.
- 1.2 Pursuant to the ethos of these legislative requirements, the Royal Irish Academy of Music, hereinafter referred to as the Academy, welcomes and promotes an inclusive working and learning environment based on the principles of equality, dignity and respect. It is the Academy’s policy that individuals are afforded equality in how they are treated, in terms of their working/educational life and in access to services available from or through the Academy. Any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will not be tolerated.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to:
- (i) All registered students;
 - (ii) All applications for student places;
 - (iii) All employees, all applications for employment, and all persons who are engaged for work by the Academy (e.g. contractors);
 - (iv) All visitors, customers and clients of the Academy (hereinafter referred to as ‘service users’).
- 2.2 This policy relates to:
- (i) the provision of all services to such students, including teaching and supervision, assessment, progression, and award and support services;
 - (ii) all decisions in respect of the admission of students;
 - (iii) all areas of employment practice including recruitment and selection, training and development, progression (including promotion), pay, employment conditions and retention;

- (iv) all services provided by the Academy in its diverse activities, both internal and external.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy is to enable the Academy to meet both its legislative obligations and its own commitments. The Academy strives to promote equality and to ensure that staff and students from a variety of backgrounds are present within its community. The Academy promotes positive working relationships through which all members, students, staff and service users are valued and respected. The Academy is committed to ensure that that inequality and discrimination, if they occur, will be appropriately and effectively dealt with.

4. Benefits

- 4.1 The concept of equality is central to the Academy's ethos of achieving excellence across all of its activities and ensuring that its students and staff reach their full potential. A diverse community of staff and students where people are encouraged to feel valued will lead to a more creative environment which affords artistic, educational, and social benefits.

5. Principles

- 5.1 The Academy will seek to provide high-quality services in an inclusive, accessible and flexible manner to the diversity of the student, staff and service user population.
- 5.2 The Academy will seek to accommodate the diversity of students, staff and service users from across the nine equality grounds and other under-represented groups by:
 - (i) Actively identifying and addressing the needs of individuals. Various data, feedback and consultation methods will be used for this purpose.
 - (ii) Providing reasonable accommodation for students, staff and service users with disabilities and providing integrated access to services where practicable.
 - (iii) Exploring barriers to participation for students, staff and service users.
 - (iv) Taking positive action measures to promote equality of opportunity for disadvantaged persons where necessary.
 - (v) Ensuring flexibility in the operation of systems and services.
 - (vi) Embedding inclusiveness within all activities and academic practices.

6. Policy

- 6.1 The Academy's Governing Body, has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Academy operates within a framework of equality of opportunities and that this policy is fully implemented.
- 6.2 Students, staff and service users at all levels have a duty to give effect to this policy to the best of their ability, in particular by:
 - (i) Properly acknowledging and having an awareness of this Equality and Diversity Policy;

- (ii) Incorporating the aims and values of this policy into all aspects of the Academy;
- (iii) Ensuring their conduct towards others is at all times respectful and free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- (iv) Appropriately challenging instances of discrimination, or drawing it to the attention of members of staff, senior staff and/or the Governing Body; and
- (v) Contributing to a respectful environment that embraces diversity.

6.3 The Governing Body is responsible for:

- (i) Promoting the requirements and spirit of this policy to the Academy's staff and/or students, and fostering an inclusive culture where a diversity of contribution is valued and welcomed;
- (ii) Ensuring staff, students and service users are encouraged, supported and enabled to reach their full potential;
- (iii) Dealing promptly with discriminatory acts or practices which are brought to their attention, ensuring that they are reported through the appropriate, established channels;
- (iv) Ensuring schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to equality and diversity issues;
- (v) Ensuring that decisions affecting individual staff and students are made on objectively justifiable, relevant criteria.

6.4 All staff, students and service users are provided with a copy of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

6.5 The Academy will actively seek feedback on the implementation of this policy from students, staff and service users. This feedback will inform future development and implementation of the policy and should be submitted to the Academy Secretary in the first instance.

6.6 Any staff members who feel that they have experienced discrimination should pursue the matter through the Grievance Procedure, and any informal resolutions should be attempted in the first instance where appropriate.

6.7 Any students who feel that they have experienced discrimination should pursue the matter through the Student Complaints Procedure, but where appropriate should first contact a member of staff for information, advice and guidance.

6.8 Service users should raise any complaint in accordance with the Academy's published Complaint's procedure.

6.9 The Academy will ensure that any alleged act of discriminatory behaviour will be fully investigated which may, dependent on the circumstances of the case, result in disciplinary action being taken against individual(s) or, where appropriate, a change in policy.

7. Responsibility

- 7.1 The Academy Secretary is responsible for overseeing this policy and its operational procedures.
- 7.2 Further responsibilities for all of the Academy's staff, students and governors are referred to sections 6.1 to 6.3.

8. Legislation and Regulation

- 8.1 [Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015.](#)
- 8.2 [Equal Status Acts 2000-2015.](#)
- 8.3 [The Universities Act 1997.](#)
- 8.4 [Disability Act 2005.](#)
- 8.5 [Code of Governance of Irish Universities 2012.](#)
- 8.6 [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012.](#)
- 8.7 [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(2005\).](#)
- 8.8 [Code of Practice for Provision of Education and Training to International Learners \(2015\).](#)
- 8.9 [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\).](#)

9. Related Documents

- 9.1 Employment of People with Disabilities Policy.
- 9.2 Complaints Policy.
- 9.3 Dignity and Respect Policy.
- 9.4 Staff Disciplinary Policy.
- 9.5 Staff Grievance and Mediation Policy.
- 9.6 Staff Recruitment Policy.
- 9.7 Student Complaints Policy and Procedure.

10. Document Control

Approved by Board of Studies 25th November 2016.
Revision 1 approved by Board of Studies 10th March 2017.
Revision 2 approved 7th March 2019.
Revision 3 approved by Trinity Academic Council 13th May 2020.
Next review: Academic year 2020/21.