

Examinations equality, diversity and inclusion policy

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy is designed to ensure that the Royal Academy of Dance Examinations Board establishes and maintains compliance with its obligations in respect of equality, diversity and inclusion, with regard to legislation, regulatory requirements, and best practice.

2 Policy

- 2.1 The RAD Examinations Board prides itself on its commitment to diversity and inclusion, and takes steps at all times and with respect to all its functions, policies and procedures to ensure that no learner is discriminated against on grounds of age, disability, marriage / civil partnership status, pregnancy / maternity, race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin), religion or belief (including philosophical belief), gender or gender identity (including gender reassignment) or sexual orientation. This includes ensuring that no unnecessary barriers are present which deny access to candidates who could otherwise enter for examinations and achieve qualifications.
- 2.2 The Royal Academy of Dance has a corporate, overarching *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy*. This Examinations Board policy operates within the framework established by the corporate policy, and describes the ways in which regard for diversity and absence of discrimination are built into the Examinations Board's work in developing, administering and awarding qualifications.
- 2.3 The Academy is mindful of its obligations under current UK legislation, particularly the Equality Act 2010, and equivalent legislation outside the UK. To that end the Academy has set up an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which, as well as keeping the corporate policy under review, is responsible for developing, implementing and keeping under review the Academy's *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy*.

3 Barriers

- 3.1 The following potential barriers to examination entry are identified:
- 3.1.1 *Financial*. Entry to examination may be denied to learners whose economic status prevents them from being able to pay the required fee.
- 3.1.2 *Disability*. Specifically: lack of physical mobility, visual impairment, and hearing impairment, all of which may prevent candidates from achieving learning outcomes in qualifications based on the physical performance of dance.
- 3.1.3 *Religious*. Candidates may, for religious reasons, be unable to take part in an examination on a certain day, or may wish to wear items of clothing or artefacts which may be unsuitable for an examination in dance.
- 3.1.4 *Age*. Candidates may be younger than the stated minimum age for entry to examination.

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3.1.5 *Gender.* According to the heritage of the art form, the requirements for males and females in ballet are different. Candidates may feel unable to enter for a particular unit or qualification if it is designed for a specific gender.

3.2 The RAD Examinations Board mitigates against these barriers in the following ways:

3.2.1 *Financial.* Examination fees are set at a level which is considered to be the minimum possible, given the need to provide a professional service and to ensure the long-term financial security of the organisation. The *Fiona Campbell Examinations Bursary* allows teachers to apply for a bursary on behalf of deserving candidates to the value of their next examination.

3.2.2 *Disability.* The RAD invites applications from candidates requesting reasonable adjustments on the grounds of disability. (See below, 4.2 – 4.3.)

3.2.3 *Religious.* RAD National Directors, National and Regional Managers, and RAD Representatives, whose remit includes the planning of examination tours, are instructed via the *Examination Annual Tour Planning Policy* to consider religious holidays. Examination specifications indicate that uniform for examinations is recommended rather than required, and where a candidate requests permission to adapt their dress for religious reasons, every effort will be made to accommodate such a request, while keeping the health and safety of the candidate, the safeguarding of the examination environment, and the integrity of the qualification, paramount.

3.2.4 *Age.* Minimum age requirements are laid down for health and safety reasons and in order to promote learner achievement. There are no upper age limits to RAD examinations, class awards, solo performance awards or presentation classes. The RAD is willing to consider requests for exemption from the minimum age policy when there are suitable grounds for doing so.

3.2.5 *Gender.* It is the policy of the Examinations Board to ensure that equal opportunities are accorded to males and females, in the context of the heritage of ballet. Candidates, including transgender candidates, may enter for their preferred syllabus according to the gender with which they choose to identify in relation to dance.

4 Procedures: development, delivery, review and withdrawal of qualifications

4.1 The *Policy and procedures for the development, delivery, review and withdrawal of qualifications* explains how compliance with relevant legislation and diversity requirements is ensured during these processes.

4.2 The Examinations Board has policies and procedures for candidates seeking reasonable adjustments to normal examination procedure, and/or who wish to apply for special consideration for a variety of reasons. The purpose of these policies and procedures is to ensure that any unnecessary barriers which would prevent candidates from taking examinations who would otherwise be able to do so are removed or mitigated as far as possible, whilst at all times protecting the integrity of the award.

4.3 All requests for reasonable adjustments and special consideration are logged, and records kept including:

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- the nature of the request, including the specific barrier identified
- the date the request was made
- candidate, teacher and qualification details
- any action taken.

4.4 Procedures are in place to ensure that the criteria against which candidates are assessed are applied consistently, regardless of the identity of the examiner, candidate, teacher, or location of the examination. See *Conflict of interest policy* and *Reliability of results policy*.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 The Director of Examinations, in consultation with members of the Examinations Regulatory and Standards Committee and other relevant staff, is responsible for the Examinations Board's compliance with equalities legislation, and for developing, reviewing and signing off this policy.

5.2 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, chaired by the Head of Human Resources, is responsible for managing and keeping under review the Academy's compliance with equality, diversity and inclusion requirements at a corporate level. The Examinations Board's representative on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is the Panel of Examiners Manager. Additionally, the Panel of Examiners Officer acts as serving officer for this working group and acts as representative in the Panel of Examiners Manager's absence.

5.3 The Examinations Business and Customer Service Manager is responsible for evaluating requests for reasonable adjustments and special consideration, escalating to the Director of Examinations when necessary. The Examinations Business and Customer Service Administrator processes such requests.

6 Monitoring and review

6.1 The Examinations Regulatory and Standards Committee monitors the Examinations Board's compliance with equalities requirements on an ongoing basis.

6.2 Monitoring is undertaken in the light of:

- equalities legislation, including requirements specific to Northern Ireland
- the RAD's corporate policy and *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy*.
- data derived from records for Special Consideration and Reasonable Adjustments, including the nature of specific barriers identified
- compliance with the requirements of the examinations regulators and any associated self-assessment or self-evaluation exercises
- the Examinations Action Plan
- any matters of public policy which impact specifically on the work of the Examinations Board
- any other issues or information which comes to light, from either internal or external sources

6.3 Monitoring takes account of the various functions of the Examinations Board including developing qualifications, the administration of examinations, and the awarding of credit and qualifications.

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- 6.4 Should it be felt necessary, the Examinations Regulatory and Standards Committee may invite an external consultant to advise on matters related to diversity, equality and inclusion compliance. This consultant will be identified by the Director of Examinations as an individual who can offer specific expertise and advice on one or more matters pertaining to equalities legislation.
- 6.5 Compliance with diversity, equality and inclusion requirements is monitored via the quarterly reports of the Director of Examinations to the Artistic and Examinations sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees. These reports may include data related to applications for Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations, together with any other matters of relevance.
- 6.6 In the event of any area(s) of non-compliance being identified, action to be taken is determined and incorporated within the Examinations Action Plan. This is the responsibility of the Director of Examinations.
- 6.7 Matters related to equality, diversity and inclusion are also included in the Examinations Risk Register as appropriate and managed via the Risk Management Policy.
- 6.8 The policy is reviewed on an annual basis and is signed off by the Director of Examinations as Chair of the Examinations Regulatory and Standards Committee.

Policy Adopted Date: April 2019
Policy Review Date: February 2020

Circulation:

- National Directors, National and Regional Managers and RAD Representatives
- RAD examiners
- RAD websites
- SQA Accreditation



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