

# **MOUNTVIEW**

ACADEMY OF THEATRE ARTS

## **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mountview is committed to creating an environment where diversity is celebrated and equality of opportunity is embedded for all students and staff regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or religion. Our aim is for our staff and student bodies to be truly representative of all areas of society.

Mountview is resolute to both meet and exceed current obligations under legislation. By doing more than is required by law we will continue to build on Mountview's current reputation and practice as a diverse and truly inclusive arts training institution.

Mountview recognises that a truly diverse community of staff and students will;

- Enrich the student learning and staff working experience
- Raise the quality of work and levels of attainment
- Cement Mountview's reputation as a world class drama school

The aim of this policy is to:

- a) Define the terms Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and explain why they are important in Mountview
- b) Communicate the expectations of all Mountview students and staff in this area

## 2. WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO

This policy and its principles apply to all Mountview Board, Executive, employees, students, freelance workers, contractors and also applicants/potential students.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

### 3.1 What is Equality?

Equality means promoting *Equality of Opportunity*.

In practice, this means doing what we can to ensure people have the same chance to participate. This may require Mountview to make appropriate and reasonable adjustments to allow individuals to join, learn or work with us.

Our commitment in this area extends to students and staff and also includes our legal duty to promote *Equality of Opportunity* to people who share one or more of nine 'Protected Characteristics' as defined in The Equality Act 2010. (Please see point 5).

### 3.2 What is Diversity?

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of 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 rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.

As a leading provider of international education, Mountview aims to attract, retain, develop and value high quality students and staff from all backgrounds. We also aim to work in partnership with many sections of our local community and to that end; this policy applies to both our internal and external activities.

### 3.3 What is Inclusion?

Inclusion can be defined as creating a sense of belonging by allowing people to feel respected / valued for who they are. In Mountview, we are committed to creating a safe environment where all students feel an equal sense of belonging and receive tailored support to reach their maximum potential.

### 3.4 What is Discrimination?

Discrimination is the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people (see Protected Characteristics below).

Discrimination occurs where people are treated less favourably and the treatment in question is not capable of being justified.

## 4. THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 – PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The Equality Act 2010 highlights nine 'Protected Characteristics'. Mountview will follow its legal duty in preventing less favourable treatment towards people who share one or more of these 'Protected Characteristics'.

Mountview will not discriminate (or tolerate discrimination) against people on the grounds of their:

- AGE
- DISABILITY (this includes physical, mental, sensory and learning difficulties)
- MARRIAGE OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP
- PREGNANCY OR MATERNITY
- RACE
- RELIGION OR BELIEF
- GENDER
- SEXUAL ORIENTATION
- TRANSGENDER or GENDER REASSIGNMENT STATUS

## 5. TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination can occur in many different ways. This includes:

- DIRECT DISCRIMINATION - *where someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic*
- ASSOCIATIVE DISCRIMINATION - *this is direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic*
- DISCRIMINATION BY PERCEPTION - *this is direct discrimination against someone because others think that they possess a particular protected characteristic. They do not necessarily have to possess the characteristic, just be perceived to.*
- INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION - *this can occur when you have a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a person with a particular protected characteristic.*
- HARASSMENT - *Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.*

◦ VICTIMISATION - *this occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance.*

## **6. ALLOWABLE DISCRIMINATION & EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY**

In pursuing our legitimate aims as a vocational drama school Mountview is committed to open and fair casting, staffing and opportunity. However it is expected that there may be occasions where we are required to make decisions based on certain characteristics or ability.

For example;

- defining certain standards of musical or vocal ability for a musical production

If you have any questions relating to our decision making criteria in Mountview, you should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with the Head of Course or line-manager for further consideration.

## **7. RESPONSIBILITIES & EXPECTATIONS**

We expect all Mountview staff, students, freelancers and contractors to:

- Uphold and promote the principles of this policy and champion equality, diversity and inclusion in all our activities.
- Challenge behaviour which may marginalise or exclude others
- Report behaviours or actions that contravene this policy

## **8. IMPLEMENTATION / E.D.I in PRACTICE**

To achieve a diverse community and environment Mountview is wholly committed to;

◦ Widening participation across all programmes to currently underrepresented groups in the Theatre and related arts.

*This is primarily done through the 'Mountview Outreach Scouting Audition Scheme'*

- Building upon our current International profile and recruitment of international students
- Effectively monitor data and reflect upon all aspects of equality and diversity (internally and externally)
- Representing Mountview's equality and diversity in all internal and external communications and promotions
- Ensuring that all managers and staff understand their responsibility to equality, diversity and inclusion and where necessary undergo appropriate training for their role

This is not an exhaustive list, nor can one policy or person be responsible for 'Equality, Diversity & Inclusion'. It is a collective responsibility and is embedded across all Mountview policies, procedures and working practices.

\*Applicants to Mountview are auditioned or interviewed and are offered a place to study at Mountview purely on their natural talent, individual merits and potential to acquire the skills necessary to succeed in their chosen profession (for more information please see Mountview Admissions Policy)

## **9. REPORTING CONCERNS REGARDING A BREACH OF THIS POLICY**

Any student or staff member may raise a complaint either formally or informally using existing complaints procedures within Mountview.

These are detailed in both our staff handbook and non-academic complaints procedure. Any complaints made by applicants or members of the public should be addressed directly to the Principal.