

Anti-racism at Mountview

Mountview is committed to developing an actively inclusive, anti-racist dramatic training.

Racist actions, left unchecked, become racist structures. —White Colleagues Listen! (2020)

We acknowledge that conservatoire training has failed students by accepting and perpetuating white supremacist culture. We recognise that racism is experienced by Black and Global Majority staff and students at Mountview. We will take active steps to dismantle racist attitudes, behaviours, biases and practices.

Under the leadership of Principal Sally Ann Gritton, an Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) committee was established in Spring 2023 to pick up and drive forward the work initiated by the Black Lives Matter working group set up in 2020 in response to movements protesting anti-Black violence, which highlighted discriminatory and abusive behaviours in the UK drama school sector.

Though they have commonalities, we are aware that anti-racism is not synonymous with equality, diversity and inclusion. Notwithstanding, a priority of the EEDI committee is to examine racist actions and structures and put strategy together for people within the institution to action change. The EEDI committee will take a proactive approach to advancing an anti-racist ethos throughout Mountview and engage with staff and students at regular intervals to review progress and ensure that improvements are being made. At the same time, we understand that becoming an anti-racist organisation is ongoing, with no one single stopping point.

We recognise the interconnected and intersectional nature of racism, ableism, classism, hetero-sexism and sexism. The EEDI committee will work to address oppression in its various forms for our community of staff and students, with many, often intersecting, identity positions.

The strategic pillars of equity and inclusion, transparency and accountability, and collaboration and innovation will guide our actions to move towards a more racially just institution with anti-oppressive values and practices embedded throughout.

Diversity is something we *have*. Inclusion is something we *do*.

1. Equity and Inclusion

First and foremost, the strategic direction of Mountview's dramatic training is built on the idea that equity and inclusivity in all forms are the most important element of a dramatic training. Equity recognises that there are unequal starting places and considers power, access, opportunities, impacts, and outcomes. We embrace people from all backgrounds, with different identities, lived experiences and positionalities. Prioritising equity and inclusivity will drive curricular, artistic, and cultural change. This includes innovation of the curriculum, pedagogic practices and delivery of courses that reimagine dramatic training.

Equity and Inclusion will be reflected in:

- An inclusive population, driven by student recruitment and enrolment, as well as staff recruitment and hiring
- A culturally competent staff and student body, with ability to interact effectively with people from different cultures and backgrounds, as expressed through daily interactions, creating and holding safer spaces for one another, and an inclusive experience evidenced in various areas including curriculum design

- A plurality of practices engaged across courses, meaning teaching a variety of texts and training techniques that go beyond Euro-Western canons as well as contextualising those canons within a critical and global framework, which will drive the reinvention of curriculum and performance programming

2. Transparency and Accountability

Transparency is key in dismantling hierarchies and guruism in dramatic training, which can obstruct learning, skills acquisition and lead to exploitation. We will be open and honest with our information and processes, from auditions, interviews and recruitment onwards. We will centre transparency in our daily practices and Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy. We operate on a 'there are no secrets' basis; activity in classrooms and rehearsal rooms is not a secret and must not be positioned as such.

Transparency and Accountability will be reflected in:

- An environment where staff and students feel supported and equipped to challenge problematic ideas and/or unacceptable behaviours (including microaggressions, offensive or intimidating behaviour, unwarranted criticism and unjustified punitive measures)
- Our data collection processes in respect of recruitment and enrolment
- Reporting of how new funds are used to create opportunity and increase access
- A staff appraisal system that takes account of anti-racist and inclusive work
- Peer review/lesson observations both formal and informal across courses that demonstrate knowledge and application of anti-oppressive and inclusive practices

3. Collaboration and Innovation

Collaboration is at the centre of Mountview's ethos and is key for cultivating change. We will work together, share creativity and resources. We will collaborate across courses and departments to maximise and combine strengths to engage change. Innovation will occur at the intersection of critical thinking and creativity, different cultures, disciplines, forms and training methodologies. We commit to creating meaningful change through critical pedagogies and progressing the curriculum.

Collaboration and Innovation will be reflected in:

- Developing innovation through educational and performance programming
- Developing collaborations with external organisations and international conservatoires that share our values to exchange knowledge and resources
- Investing in innovating dramatic training and creating opportunities for teaching artists/practitioners from diverse backgrounds
- The hyperlocal approach to working with artists and participants in Peckham and across Southwark, and a proactive approach to creating bespoke partnerships around the UK