**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**

**School of Arts Curriculum**

Written 2018; Revised 2020

The School of Arts at the University of Kent is committed to providing programmes of study that position arts subjects within their global contexts. Across our subject areas – Drama, Film, Art History, Media Studies and Music and Audio Technology – we offer a wide range of modules that allow students to engage with questions of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) via the artists and practitioners studied as well as the selected conceptual frameworks for analysis and scholars assigned in reading lists.

However, the School of Arts recognises that there is still a need for increased visibility for those who are habitually under-represented in the arts. This recognition takes into account the nine protected characteristics articulated in the Equality Act 2010 (i.e. age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex; sexual orientation) but also class, neurodiversity and migrant status – which are connected to, but arguably distinct from, these characteristics. We also seek to resist reducing under-represented groups to a single, essentialised identity but, rather, foreground issues of multiplicity and intersectionality.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Our curriculum aims have developed following discussions with our students and are updated every other year, reflecting how the process of change critically evolves.

1. Every module in the School of Arts will offer content that engages with issues of equality, diversity and inclusion. This content may be evident in the module’s title and description (e.g. ART522: Disability and the Arts or DR687: Sex, Gender and Performance: Beyond the Binary) but it may be included through interpretations of art works by situating them within the culture and society that produced them.
2. First-year undergraduate modules across all subject areas will introduce students to a diverse range of artists and practitioners. The core modules are especially important in terms of changing perceptions about what an artist or practitioner looks like and are key to informing student choice in the later stages of the degree programmes. Building on our 2018 statement, we aim to have at least 40% of the art works under discussion in these early core modules attributed to artists and practitioners who are women, and at least 25% by people of colour. Where this is difficult to achieve within the Western canon, academic staff will seek international examples of practice, and/or draw on relevant theories (e.g. postcolonial, feminist, critical race, queer and crip theory) to interrogate this canon.
3. Reading lists for all modules will include a variety of scholars, including those from under-represented groups. **There will be no module that features an all-male or all-white reading list** and we will work towards a greater level of inclusivity and diversity in all our reading lists year on year.
4. External guest lecturers are valuable to our programmes, bringing fresh and diverse perspectives on topics as well as offering individual expertise. We aim to ensure that at least 50% of guest lecturers are from groups currently under-represented within the School’s community.
5. Relationships with external organisations are crucial in terms of linking our curriculum with professional arts practice. We will consciously develop connections and partnerships with organisations that share, enhance and take forward our equality, diversity and inclusivity aims.
6. Approaches to teaching and assessment will also engage with issues of equality, diversity and inclusion. These approaches will include:
   1. careful consideration of group and pair work so that students have the opportunity to work with as many of their peers as possible throughout their studies;
   2. making use of internal guest lecturer and team-teaching opportunities so that students have access to a wide range of staff throughout their studies;
   3. facilitating student-centred learning, allowing different experiences and backgrounds to contribute to knowledge production in the classroom;
   4. a range of assessment methods, encouraging all students to fulfil their potential;
   5. careful consideration of how field trips within a module (e.g. exhibition visits, theatre trips) fit with the School’s equality, diversity and inclusivity aims.

We will monitor our progress on these aims each year. This will include an EDI-focussed question in module evaluations where students will be asked to reflect on whether they feel modules are doing enough to diversify content (case studies and readings) and be inclusive to all students.

Broader concerns regarding EDI matters can be reported in confidence to the Director of EDI for the School of Arts, Dr Lavinia Brydon, or the Head of Subject.

1. The term intersectionality was coined by Crenshaw (1989) to describe the way in which oppressions related to, for example, race and gender interact so that the experience of a woman of colour is fundamentally different to a white woman. This is applicable to other protected characteristics, but we feel it is important to contextualise this concept within critical race theory and feminist scholarship. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)