



GUITAR circus Disability Policy

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PURPOSE

1. This Disability Policy reinforces GUITAR Circus's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for the diverse student and staff and to review its policies and practices in light of developments in the legislative framework.
2. This document outlines GUITAR Circus's duties and the options available to staff and students with disabilities in seeking support or adjustments to their working and studying environment.
3. GUITAR Circus is committed to working towards an understanding of the Social Model of disability; this includes addressing the barriers to inclusion (structural, cultural, organisational and attitudinal) which adversely impact upon disabled people, affecting the ability to meet their needs, rights and requirements.

AIMS

4. This Disability Policy sets out GUITAR Circus's commitment to disabled students and staff, providing a framework to contribute to the ongoing development of an enabling environment for all staff and students. This policy addresses some of the specific operational aspects and aims to provide a guide for trustees, staff and students. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES

5. GUITAR Circus is responsible for the well-being of current disabled staff and students, together with actively encouraging disabled students and staff to join GUITAR Circus. These responsibilities are shared by all the trustees and staff of GUITAR Circus.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

6. The disability equality legislation outlines a number of required duties. The Equality Act 2010 incorporated all nine separate pieces of equality legislation including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on all learning institutions to promote disability equality. Under these duties GUITAR Circus is required to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate harassment of disabled people
- promote equality of opportunities between disabled people and other people
- involve disabled people in the formulation of actions
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment



GUITAR circus Disability Policy

- identify and analyse potential discriminatory policies, practices and procedures in all aspects of GUITAR Circus's activities.

7. GUITAR Circus supports an anticipatory approach which requires pro-active consideration of disabled access to services and facilities to ensure adjustments are made in advance of individual disabled people attempting to use the service or access education.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

8. The Equality Act 2010 uses a wide definition of disability which includes those with physical or mobility impairments, visual impairments, hearing impairments, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, AD(H)D, medical conditions, mental health difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, M.E. and 'unseen disabilities' (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, heart conditions, diabetes). The formal definition included in the Act is:

"A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities"

9. The definition of "day to day activities" includes mobility, manual dexterity, lifting, hearing, eyesight, speech, memory, and the ability to concentrate, learn or understand. The Act defines "substantial" as being more than trivial and "long-term" as being more than twelve months or likely to last twelve months. An impairment which would substantially affect a person, but which is controlled by medical treatment or prosthesis, is still covered by the definition of disability.

10. The definition includes cancer, HIV/AIDS and Multiple Sclerosis effectively from the point of diagnosis.

11. Discrimination and harassment is not limited to those people who are themselves disabled but also applies to those associated with disability i.e. a carer for a disabled child.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

12. GUITAR Circus welcomes disabled people and those with specific learning difficulties. We encourage existing and potential students to declare a disability or specific learning difficulty in order that they can be made aware of possible entitlements and the support that is available to assist them to achieve their potential. Information provided to GUITAR Circus is held in confidence and is shared with colleagues only with students' written permission.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

13. GUITAR Circus is required to make reasonable adjustments when a disabled student may be placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a person who is not disabled. Adjustments may include specific examination arrangements, provision of additional support for learning, adjustments to assessment practices, accommodation arrangements, and specific access issues such as the use of guide dogs.

14. Similarly there is an obligation to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees or potential employees to ensure that they are not disadvantaged. Adjustments may include reallocation of duties, altering working hours, changing work location,



modifying equipment e.g. providing an adapted keyboard or telephone, consideration of other roles.

15. Consideration should also be made for those employees associated with persons with a disability.

HARASSMENT AND OTHER FORMS OF UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

16. The general legal duty also requires GUITAR Circus to have due regard to the need to eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disabilities or to the disabilities of others associated with them. Harassment may take the form of verbal abuse or other actions which make an individual feel uncomfortable, intimidated or degraded.

MONITORING

17. GUITAR Circus encourages staff and students to declare any disability in order that they can understand what the potential requirements and needs of staff and students with disabilities may be and in order to fulfil the anticipatory duty. Unless GUITAR Circus is aware of a disability it is difficult to consider what support or adjustments may be required.

CONFIDENTIALITY

18. All information given to GUITAR Circus by disabled staff and students will be treated with respect and confidence and in accordance with Data Protection legislation. A disabled student or member of staff may volunteer a disability and ask that the information is kept confidential. The responsibility of the staff member informed is to ensure that the disabled person is aware that this is likely to have an effect on any reasonable adjustments which may be required and to document this.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

19. GUITAR Circus recognises its responsibility to ensure that no-one is discriminated against or disadvantaged, through membership of any particular group, or on the grounds of age, disability, gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

20. The Disability Policy has been assessed as being of high relevance to our duties under the quality Act 2010 and GUITAR Circus will review its impact on disability equality and diversity, identify any inequalities by annual monitoring, and will take action where necessary.

CONTACTS

21. Further information on supporting disability in GUITAR Circus is available from Georgina Bashford on georgina.bashford@guitarcircus.org.uk

REVIEW

22. GUITAR Circus will review the Disability Policy for Staff and Students on an annual basis.