

Guildhall School

Ethics Policy

This policy is of relevance to students / staff / applicants / general public /

Approved on	February 2018
Approved by	Senior Management Team
Written by	Marketing & Communications
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Last Amendment	Editorial, plus Additional reference: to related policies and procedures. Additional consideration: for student and staff support regarding programming, for unlawful content, for contractors regarding staff code of conduct.
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Guildhall School Ethics Policy

This ethics policy was approved in February 2018 by the Senior Management Team which is responsible for the strategic direction, management and operation of the Guildhall School. The policy is to be adhered to by all staff and students, and applies to every area of School activity.

The Guildhall School is a department of the City of London Corporation and this policy is supplemental to all other corporate policies and procedures, including the City of London Corporation's Employee Code of Conduct.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the School's ethos and commitment to specific principles in everything that we do, and to refer the reader to relevant policies that apply to specific activities.

Our vision

Craft, creativity and learning at the forefront of cultural change

Our mission

To be a conservatoire for the 21st century: empowering artists to realise their full potential; developing distinctive artistic citizens to enrich the lives of others and lead cultural change

Our guiding principles for programming, creating and performing

Programming a range of experiences and discussion/debate

We believe that cultural leadership requires us to present work that speaks to a broad range of lived experiences and that is inclusive and representative of people regardless of their background, status or identity.

As a conservatoire for the 21st century, we believe it is our responsibility to ensure students are trained to create and perform work that responds to our fast changing world, to make efforts to address underrepresentation in all areas of our performance programme, and to engage in the debates that define our age and that are relevant to the issues that affect people's lives.

In line with Guildhall School and City of London Corporation's equality, diversity and inclusion plans, we will continue to prioritise inclusivity and representation across all of our work.

Freedom of speech

It is a long standing tradition that the arts both reflect and challenge the political, religious and social mores of the day. As a recipient of public funding, and as a higher education institution, we believe in creating a space that can foster discussion and debate, and that supports the freedom of speech. We are committed to the

principles of academic freedom of enquiry and an environment where free and open-minded discussion can take place.

However, such freedoms do not give immunity from the law, nor from personal liability, and we are committed to ensuring that any action, publication or speech on our campus is lawful, and to protect our staff, students and visitors from victimisation, harassment or discrimination. Further information is available in our [Good Campus Relations](#) policy.

Programming controversial work as part of the Guildhall School's public programme of events

We do not set out to offend or provoke controversy, however we do recognise sometimes individuals and/or communities may find some of the work we present provocative.

We will always endeavour to advise audiences in advance of specific content when a work is deemed to be potentially controversial, triggering or challenging.

When making a decision whether to programme a potentially controversial work, we encourage staff to use the following criteria:

- Is there a significant educational benefit to our students taking part in this work?
- Is the decision we're making consistent with our vision, mission, guiding principles and ethical policy?
- Have we undertaken a risk assessment and sufficiently weighed up the risks and benefits?
- Has sufficient support been put in place to ensure the wellbeing of students and/or staff involved in the creation and/or presentation of the work?
- Has the course of action been discussed internally to an appropriate extent?
- Have we done enough research and taken advice from relevant experts and communities outside the organisation if necessary?
- Is the decision publicly defensible and do we have a clear articulation for the reasons for the decision being made and the process used for reaching this conclusion?

Programming decisions will be based on the criteria set out above, with the final decision made as per the below:

- For work where risk is rated as Minor the decision whether to programme will be made by the Director of the relevant faculty.
- For work where risk is rated as Serious the decision whether to programme will be made by the Events Committee in consultation with the Head of the relevant faculty.
- For work where risk is rated as Major the decision whether to programme will be made by the Principal in consultation with the Head of the relevant faculty and the Events Committee.

Student-led performances

As part of our commitment to freedom of speech, we do not censor the content of student-led performances, which are initiated and created by the student body, unless content is considered unlawful or a form of harassment or discrimination. However, students creating performances for an internal or external audience at the School are required to obtain permission from their relevant programme leader before presenting a student-led performance, and work containing controversial or challenging content would be subject to the same criteria and programming decision process outlined above. Students also have a duty to inform the relevant programme leader if their event includes challenging content so that relevant precautions and safeguarding measures can be put in place if the programme leader considers it necessary. This is set out in the [Student-Led Performance Guidelines](#).

Training in safer spaces

We train our students to develop resilience in tackling challenging subject matter, but we are committed to providing all the appropriate support they need to do so. We are careful to ensure the students we offer places to study at the School have the necessary maturity to deal with challenging material as part of their programme.

Some of the artforms we teach, particularly drama, due to its nature, deal with powerful and emotive issues, often exploring content that requires students to go outside their comfort zones and work with courage, openness and sensitivity. The work can and should be challenging, exploratory and bold. For this to occur, it is essential to create and maintain a creative space that is safe, so that individuals and the group can work with freedom, honesty, mutual respect and without judgement. Any inappropriate conduct that adversely affects an individual's dignity is unacceptable, and our [Safe Space statement](#) sets out our commitment to creating and maintaining safe creative spaces for all students and staff. We also work with intimacy directors and provide intimacy training for students and staff working on staged productions.

As an educational institution which works with a range of students and communities we are firmly committed to a robust safeguarding environment, and our policies on [Safeguarding](#) and on [Staff/Student Relationships](#) are regularly reviewed.

Our code of conduct for staff

All staff have an obligation to adhere to and represent the Guildhall School's vision and principles as set out in this document. Our continued success relies on the trust and confidence of our students and the public and therefore all School staff are expected to uphold the highest standards of personal conduct and integrity. While contractors are not subject to our staff policies, we would expect them to hold themselves to the same standards.

As a department of the City of London Corporation, Guildhall School employees must adhere to the [City of London's employee Code of Conduct](#). This incorporates requirements to abide by City of London financial procedures, restrictions on receiving hospitality/gifts and anti-corruption/anti-bribery measures. The Code also

includes a requirement for all staff to uphold the Nolan Principles on standards in public life which are:

1. Selflessness – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. Integrity – Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
3. Objectivity – Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4. Accountability – Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. Openness – Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. Honesty – Holders of public office should be truthful.
7. Leadership – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Our code of conduct for higher education students

Our students in higher education are training for the profession and we ask that they conduct themselves according to professional standards. Where students are involved in financial matters concerning the School (as part of their programme of study or as a member of the Students' Union) they are expected to adopt high standards of financial probity. All students are bound by the Student Code of Conduct.

Our political position

As a department of the City of London Corporation the Guildhall School is apolitical. All external artists/organisations who appear in the Guildhall School programme are there as a result of their exceptional artistic work and our relationship with them does not extend to political issues, or imply sympathy with their personal views or those of anyone associated with them.

The School's Student Union, as a distinct organisation led by a democratically-elected president, may hold and promote its own political views which do not necessarily reflect those of the School.

Commercial and artistic hire

The Guildhall School's artistic venues are sometimes available for hire by third party promoters. In hiring out our spaces we aim to work with promoters and organisations that share our values and artistic ambitions. While we are selective about the projects we can accommodate, including where appropriate assessing using our criteria for programming potentially controversial work, we cannot be held fully accountable for the artistic content of these events. However, any third party events held in our venues are subject to the Guildhall School Prevent policy.

Research ethics

All staff and students must comply with the School's Governance Framework for Good Practice in Research when conducting research projects within the School. The Framework, and all related research ethics documentation and procedures, sets out the standard of performance and conduct expected from staff engaged in research, in order to ensure that research carried out at the School is conducted in an ethical and accountable manner. The Framework and all related research ethics documentation and procedures meet the requirements of the RCUK Policy and Guidelines on the Governance of Good Research Conduct, Universities UK's Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2012), our legal requirements, and professional guidance issued from funders and other relevant bodies. All staff and students carrying out research must ensure they are familiar with the Research Ethics Guide, which outlines procedures for undertaking ethical risk assessment and applying for ethical approval for projects.

Staff and doctoral students wishing to carry out research involving other people must apply to the Guildhall School's Research Ethics Committee (REC) before the research is carried out. This includes but is not limited to:

- practice-based work (including composition research) where other people are performers, workshop participants, collaborators or audience members
- the use of observation, interviews, questionnaires, experiments, diaries, recording and other methods
- the use of existing personal data, such as student records or audience databases

Ethics procedures for students in taught programmes are handled by course leaders, who are responsible for ensuring students' research is carried out in accordance with the Governance Framework for Good Practice in Research and the Research Ethics Guide. Course leaders are responsible for referring student applications to the Guildhall School's REC where necessary.

External researchers wishing to undertake research at Guildhall School must also abide by the School's policies, and must either apply to the School's Research Ethics Committee, or the Conservatoires UK Ethics Committee.

Our approach to fundraising

Much of the work of the Guildhall School would not be possible without philanthropy, and we place the relationships of our generous friends and supporters at the heart of all our fundraising. In soliciting donations to support and benefit our students, the School is fully committed to the principles of the Fundraising Regulator's Code of Practice. In addition, the School's published Donor Promise, part of our Gift Acceptance policy, outlines specific promises we make to all of our supporters in soliciting, acknowledging, stewarding and processing donations and gifts.

Gift acceptance

We review potential donations to the School to ensure they do not conflict with our values, cause risk to our reputation or breach our legal obligations. Ethical screenings can be, and over a certain gift level are automatically, referred to our Gift Acceptance Committee to be assessed against agreed criteria. The School may choose to refuse a gift as a result. Further information is available in our Gift Acceptance policy.

Admissions

As an international conservatoire we value the diversity of cultures in the School, and welcome applications to our higher education programmes from all over the world. We are committed to equality of opportunity in our recruitment and admissions processes, and encourage applications from a wide range of background, ethnicity, nationality, and from those with and without disabilities. Students are selected based on their talent as part of a rigorous selection process, and we seek to conduct our admissions processes in a fair and transparent way to a high level of professionalism, mindful of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education ~ Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education. We also require applicants to conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner towards staff, students and other applicants. Further information is available in our Admissions policy and Section 2 of the Academic Regulatory Framework.

This policy references a number of other Guildhall School policies which are available to view **on our website**:

- Safeguarding
- Prevent
- Good Campus Relations
- Staff/Student Relationships
- Governance Framework for Good Practice in Research
- Staff Code of Conduct (City of London)
- Academic Regulatory Framework Section 2: Admission, enrolment & registration and Section 5A: Student Code of Conduct
- Safe Space Statement
- Gift Acceptance
- Admissions
- Student Led Performance Guidelines
- External Events and Speakers