

TOBIAS

SCHOOL OF ART & THERAPY

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND ANTI DISCRIMINATORY POLICIES

Fully revised 29th November 2016, *latest update – September 2021*

Tobias is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all members of the school community in accessing and participating in the learning and teaching within the institution. During the development of the training, the need to provide the widest access was given priority. The part-time mode of attendance was specifically adopted to allow mature students in full or part-time employment to attend the course. Moreover, the admissions regulations acknowledges the value of learning gained through professional experience by providing for entry by students with suitable experience but lacking a degree or equivalent professional qualification.

Experience over the last few years has demonstrated that the majority of non-graduates admitted to the course each year do, in general, attain a satisfactory standard in the formal assessments. The tutors therefore, feel this policy has proved successful and the course should continue to value experience-based learning.

Whilst every effort is made to avoid prejudice and harassment, we recognize that members of the school may experience this both within and outside the school. It is the personal responsibility of all members of the school community, whether students or staff to ensure that no—one has to suffer any form of harassment, which is considered to be a disciplinary offence.

Harassment can broadly be defined as any unwanted behaviour which could be abusive, offensive, intimidating, or hostile and which affects an individual's dignity or integrity. Some general examples of harassment might include unwanted physical contact, unwelcome or derogatory remarks about an individual, racist remarks, persistent teasing, offensive name calling, offensive mail, comments about personal characteristics, unfounded criticism or bullying.

Differences of attitude, background or culture and the misinterpretation of social signals can mean that what is perceived as harassment by one person may not seem so to another. *The defining feature however, is that the behaviour is unwelcome or intimidating to the recipient and would be regarded as harassment by any reasonable person.*

Tobias encourages students to approach their tutor or course leader or student support service with a complaint detailed in the grievance procedure.

Any individual who suffers harassment will have the full support of Tobias in putting a stop to it. Tobias reserves the right to ask any member of the school community, student or staff, to leave the school on the basis of inappropriate behaviour as described above.

Therefore we fully commit ourselves to a policy of challenging all prejudice and discrimination, for example:-

Age, class, gender, language, marital status, physical appearance, racial or ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation and employment status.

Such a policy requires commitment from each member of the community and the acceptance of a code of conduct that:

- a. encourages respect for the individual
- b. encourages collective action to challenge prejudice and structures which perpetuate it
- c. challenges stereotyped images
- d. declares as unacceptable any language, action or expressed belief that is prejudiced or which encourages prejudice in others
- e. challenges institutional structures which have prejudicial or discriminatory effects.

It is the duty of all members of the school community to uphold this policy even where it may be in conflict with their own beliefs.

If anyone wishes to discuss this policy, independently of the teaching staff, please raise with either Helena O'Sullivan or Tony Cox of the Tobias Office Staff.