

Guidelines for students on Discrimination

The Courtauld Institute of Art confirms its commitment to the elimination of all forms of discrimination, in particular with regard to a protected characteristic of the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, sexual orientation.

Defining Discrimination

For the avoidance of doubt, the following definitions apply within this guidance:

Direct discrimination: where a person is treated less favourably than another person due to a protected characteristic.

Perception discrimination: similar to direct discrimination, where a person is treated less favourably than another person because it is thought that they possess a protected characteristic: e.g., a study support officer refuses to work with a student because they believe the student to be gay, irrespective of whether the student is gay or not.

Discrimination by association: where a person is treated less favourably than another person because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic: e.g., a student, whose child has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, is refused access to the graduation ceremony because of fears about the child's behaviour.

Indirect discrimination: where a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a condition, rule, policy or even a practice that applies to everyone and appears to be neutral but its impact particularly disadvantages a certain group of people who share a protected characteristic: e.g., a requirement for regular late evening events may indirectly discriminate against women who are more likely to be primary carers of children. This can be justified if the Institute can show that it acted reasonably and it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment and Bullying: unacceptable behaviour which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Victimisation: when a person is treated less favourably than another person because they have made or supported a complaint or have asserted their rights: e.g., bringing a complaint, acting as a witness in an investigation of complaint.

Taking action

1. If you think that you are being subjected to any form of discrimination by a fellow student or a member of staff, you should not hesitate to take action. It is helpful and useful for you to keep a note of details and dates of any relevant incident(s) which distress you, and the impact it had on you.
2. One informal option, if you feel able to, is to make it clear to the person causing you offence that their behaviour or conduct is unacceptable to you. This may in some instances be sufficient to stop the offence as the person may be unaware of the effect of their behaviour or conduct.

If you do not feel comfortable in taking this option, you should raise the matter with one of the appropriate people at The Courtauld: your Personal Tutor, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Academic Support Tutor, a Student and Staff Services Officer, or any of the Student Union representatives.

3. Any discussion with Institute representatives will be confidential, and further action involving you will not normally be taken without your express permission. In particular, the person about whom you are complaining will not be given your name as a complainant without your express permission, unless there are overriding reasons for disclosure which will be explained to you, including the possibility that it may not be possible to deal with the matter adequately if permission is withheld will not