



Policy: Equal Opportunities and Diversity		
Date Adopted:	Date of last review:	To be reviewed next before/on:
31/12/1998	1/4/2022	1/4/2024
Purpose and Statement:		
<p>Montage Theatre Arts (MTA) is committed to combat all forms of direct and indirect discrimination.</p> <p>Montage Theatre Arts aims to ensure that no staff member, volunteer or organisation/individual to whom we provide services will be discriminated against by us on the grounds of age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, medical condition, economic status or educational background.</p>		
Distribution:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be distributed to Board at AGM and Induction sessions for Board Members • To all volunteers and staff • This policy will be made available to members of the public on request • Confirmation of receipt of information - Signed statement from recipient to be held on file 		
Review and monitoring of policy:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed annually or in instances of legislative change • Monitoring is part of Management and Supervision 		

<p>The following policy is based on the below principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members of the MTA community have a right to expect that they learn and learn in a safe place. • MTA expects every member of its community to behave in a considerate way towards others. • Montage Theatre Arts (MTA) is committed to combat all forms of direct and indirect discrimination. • This policy, in partnership with the Staff Conduct policy, ensures there will be a zero tolerance of violence, threatening behaviour and disorderly conduct, including abuse in all forms, against MTA staff or other members of the MTA community. • Where such behaviour does occur, action will be taken to deal with the person or persons concerned.

What do we mean by Abusive or Threatening Behaviour?

The Public Order Act 1986 defines “disorderly conduct” as: verbal abuse, threatening abusive or insulting words or behaviour or any disorderly behaviour whereby a person is caused alarm, harassment or distress.

“Threatening behaviour” is when a person fears that violence or threat of violence is likely to be provoked. In a MTA context, this could mean someone shouting at a member of staff, either in person or on the phone; acting aggressively, including using intimidating body language, as well as actual violence. It also covers comments posted on social networking sites or situations where members of staff are approached off premises.

Diversifying Membership and Participation:

Montage Theatre Arts practises all activities in areas home to diverse communities and performs its activities without discrimination against any group. Social inclusion is actively sought for all its non-profit making community projects through accepting membership from any individual in the community.

Montage Theatre Arts actively seeks participation from all sectors in society in all aspects of its work including membership, employment practice, teaching approaches and production of performances.

To provide access to the company's activities to a wide and diverse a range of people, Montage Theatre Arts addresses social and economic disadvantage in as many ways possible. Performances are open to all in the community, without exception.

Encouraging Engagement from diverse Social Groups:

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Specific groups in society, where there is less or no provision made for, are positively encouraged in the following ways:

- All courses and projects take place at times where most can attend.
- There is a strong element supporting young people with weekly classes held after school and on Saturday mornings and residencies held in schools. We also support older people to tackle social isolation and improve well-being.
- All courses and projects are aimed at including individuals of any economic status or background, with all costing fees remaining low and reduced according to employment status. Discounts in the children's courses are wherever possible, with considerable reductions for more courses taken and the more children in the family involved.
- For those who are disabled or have difficulty in movement, the company always aims to hold classes in accessible venues.
- Projects encourage those whose first language is not English, with multi-lingual performance actively devised.

Equality of Information:

Montage Theatre Arts is entirely committed to access to all through equality of information. The company's extensive publicity of all its events and projects positively targets the general public and specific groups and individuals to encourage new participants and audiences.

Through publicity locally, in the wider borough of Lewisham and south London, the following venues and organisations are leafleted:

- Local educational institutes
- Local arts Institutes and groups
- Local press and radio
- Specific groups: e.g., youth and elderly groups
- Health centres and surgeries
- Shopping centres and local shops
- Church newsletters
- Local schools
- Local libraries

Those members who do take part in any activities are encouraged to bring friends and family along.

Equal Opportunities in the Workplace:

The policy and practice of MTA requires that all staff and volunteers are afforded equal opportunities within engagement and that entry into engagement with the company (and progression within) will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each position. In all cases, ability to perform the role will be the primary consideration.

All staff and volunteers have a duty to co-operate with this policy to ensure equal opportunities and to prevent discrimination.

Employees must not harass or intimidate other employees on the grounds of race, religion or belief, colour, sex, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation and must not victimise or retaliate against employees who make such allegations. Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who breaches this policy and serious breaches will be treated as gross misconduct.

Equal Opportunities (Recruitment):

The company welcomes diversity amongst its employees and seeks to ensure that all candidates for employment are treated fairly, and that selection is based solely on the individual's abilities and qualifications. The recruitment process must result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job having regard to experience and qualifications where necessary.

As an employer committed to the principle of equality of opportunity, the company will adhere to the following procedure for recruiting and selecting individuals for all positions:

1. Selection Criteria

The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels. Selection

criteria for all positions will be clearly defined and reflected in the further details sent to applicants which will also include details of the company's commitment to equality of opportunity. Job qualifications or requirements which would have the effect of inhibiting applications from members of particular groups, such as those of one sex, persons of a particular religion, marital status or sexual orientation, persons of a particular racial group, persons within a certain age bracket or those with a disability, will not be demanded or imposed except where they are justifiable in terms of the job to be done.

2. Advertising

Job advertisements will be widely publicised to encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced people. To attract applications from all sections of the community, the company will endeavour to ensure that advertisements are not restricted to areas or publications which would exclude or disproportionately reduce applications from a particular gender, religion, age group or racial group and should avoid prescribing requirements as to marital status or age. All job advertisements placed on behalf of the company will state the company's commitment to equality of opportunity.

3. Selection Methods

The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels. All those handling applications and conducting interviews must be aware of the legislative principles which cover equal employment opportunities and anti-discrimination. The selection of new employees will be based on job requirements and the individual's suitability and ability to do the job and information sought from candidates will relate only to the qualifications for or requirements of the job.

4. Interviews

The staff responsible for shortlisting, interviewing and making or recommending an appointment will be clearly informed of the selection criteria and the need for consistency. At least two people will interview applicants and all questions will relate to the selection criteria. No questions will be based on age, assumptions about roles in the home and the family or the assumed suitability of different ethnic groups for the post in question.

Where it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect the performance of the job (for example, if the job involves irregular hours or extensive travel) this will be discussed objectively and will be asked equally of all candidates. In the case of disabled applicants who identify themselves at the application stage, appropriate interview arrangements (such as accessible interview rooms or the assistance of a sign interpreter) should be offered to enable candidates to compete on an equal basis.

Advancement in the workplace:

When considering candidates for promotion general ability will be the main requirement and no employee will be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion or belief, colour, sex, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation.

Training:

To help meet the objectives of this policy the company will provide training that:

- increases awareness of the prevalence of and harmfulness of discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of race, religion or belief, colour, sex, age, national origin, disability or

sexual orientation, and the needs and abilities of people with disabilities or other disadvantages;

- examines the nature of discrimination, both direct and indirect, and the ways in which it can occur and can be prevented;
- assists managers and employees to behave in ways that are non-discriminatory; and
- explains the operation of and access to grievance and disciplinary procedures.

Grievances and Disciplinary Measures:

Grievances:

All allegations of discrimination on the grounds of race, religion or belief, colour, sex, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation will be dealt with seriously and confidentially. Any employee may use the grievance procedure to complain about discriminatory conduct. The company wishes to ensure that employees feel able to raise such grievances and no individual will be penalised for raising such a grievance, unless it is untrue and made in bad faith.

Disciplinary Measures:

Any employee who harasses any other employee on the grounds of race, religion or belief, colour, sex, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation will be subject to the company's disciplinary procedure. In serious cases, such behaviour will be deemed to constitute gross misconduct, and, as such, will result in summary dismissal in the absence of mitigating circumstances.