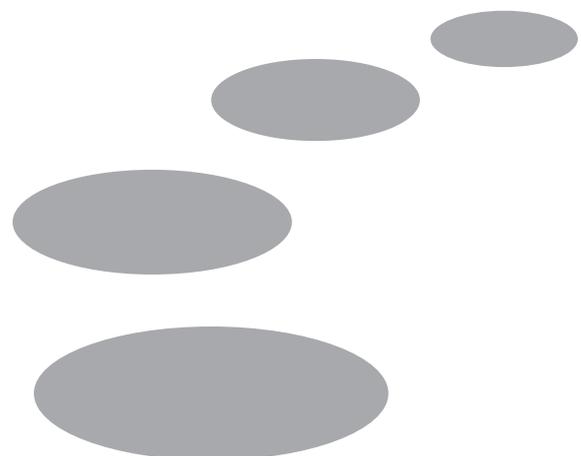




# **Review of Progress and Achievements in Equality and Diversity in 2012**

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Conservatoire for Dance and Drama

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# 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 The Conservatoire for Dance and Drama

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Established in 2001, the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama is a Higher Education Institution (HEI) with a unique structure; an affiliation of eight schools. All of these are small, specialist institutions with international reputations for high quality delivery in their respective fields. Each of the Conservatoire's schools has an established record of training its students to a professional standard with an excellent success rate in the number of its students gaining employment in dance, drama or circus arts. Within the Conservatoire there is a balance between the art forms of dance and drama, classical and contemporary styles, as well as the only provision for circus arts within higher education.

Each of the Conservatoire schools is a distinct institution that employs its own teaching staff and remains legally autonomous. At the same time, students are registered jointly with the Conservatoire and the individual school. In 2012, there were approximately 1,100 full time Conservatoire students.

The Conservatoire operates through a series of committees and working groups composed of members from each of the schools. In this way the schools themselves make policy through the Conservatoire which can then be carried out in the best way to suit the individual school.

Promoting equality and encouraging diversity in its staff and student bodies is at the heart of the shared values of the Conservatoire and its affiliate schools; the aim is to work beyond compliance towards best practice in the performing arts sector. The work of the Equality and Diversity Group (E&DG) and the Equality and Diversity Manager (E&DMgr) continues to provide a focal point for sharing good practice and resources across the organisation.

This review has been developed concurrently with the Conservatoire's Strategic Plan for 2012 - 2017. As both of these plans make clear, maintaining the high profile of equality and diversity work is one of the key priorities for the sustainability of the organisation.

## 1.2 The Conservatoire's Equality Action Plan 2012-15

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In September 2011, under the specific duties of The Equality Act, 2010, all HEIs were required to publish one or more specific and measurable objectives and to review these objectives at least every four years. The Conservatoire used this opportunity to go beyond legal compliance and we developed a detailed and specific set of priority actions to take us until the end of 2015. We also made a commitment to report honestly on our achievements, including areas where we might not have made the progress we would have liked.

In most areas, we have made good progress in achieving the objectives set for the first year of this Action Plan.

### 1.3 Our legislative responsibilities: The Equality Act 2010

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The Equality Act 2010 (The Act) replaced previous anti-discrimination law, consolidating it into a single Act. For example, all protections offered to disabled people under the earlier acts (including the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, Part 4, 2001, SENDA, 2004 and the Disability Equality Duty, 2006) are now incorporated into the new Act.

Under the **General Duty** of the Act, universities are required to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups and;
- foster good relations between people from different groups.

The aim of the Equality Act is to ‘harmonise discrimination law, and to strengthen the law to support progress on equality’. It replaces and extends the existing equality legislation on race, disability and gender and covers a total of nine ‘**protected characteristics**’. These are:

- **age**
- **disability**
- **gender reassignment**
- **marriage and civil partnership**
- **pregnancy and maternity**
- **race**
- **religion or belief (including lack of belief)**
- **sex**
- **sexual orientation.**

**Specific Duties:** In September 2011, the Government published the Specific Duties of the Equality Act. These apply to public authorities such as HEIs and the focus is on *transparency* in how a university chooses to respond to the general duty. HEIs must publish:

- **Information** to demonstrate its compliance with the equality duty no later than **31 January 2012**, and subsequently at intervals no greater than one year from the last publication.
- One or more ‘specific and measurable’ equality objectives that it plans to achieve and to publish these no later than the 6 April 2012 and subsequently at intervals of no later than 4 years.

In order to balance our legislative responsibilities with the Conservatoire’s reporting structure, what the Act describes as ‘Equalities Information’ i.e. quantitative and qualitative data will be available on request in January each year, and following discussion by the Equality and Diversity Group (usually in February) and the approval of the Principals’ Management Group and the Board of Governors at their March meeting, will be published on our website on or before the due date of 6 April each year.

## 1.4 The Conservatoire's Equality and Diversity Manager and the Equality and Diversity Group

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The Equality and Diversity Group has a broad remit, covering all aspects of the work of the Conservatoire schools. The Group reports to the Principals' Management Group and the Academic Board.

The group is currently chaired by Joanna Read, Principal at LAMDA. Members of the E&DG meet three times a year for full business and membership consists of at least one senior member of staff from each affiliate plus an additional member where appropriate. This is often a member of the school's Senior Management Team (SMT) plus an additional member of staff with responsibility for supporting disabled students. There are up to three co-opted members and we are hoping to find a student rep for the coming year. In addition to the full meetings of the E&DG, there are a number of working groups with responsibility for developing and advising on new and existing projects. In 2012, this included the Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) Group which meets annually, the Data Collection Group and an advisory group on developing the Guidelines on Disordered Eating.

The Equality and Diversity Manager works 0.6 days a week. She has responsibility for supporting the work of the E&DG and its sub groups and works to ensure that appropriate equality and diversity policies and action plans are in place for the Conservatoire and affiliate schools. Where appropriate, she also assists schools in developing and implementing their own policy and practice in equality issues; provides advice to the PMG on their legal obligations and best practice; organises and/or delivers staff training; produces guidelines for staff and; instigates qualitative research projects, for example the work this year on disabled students' experience of having a Learning Agreement or Learning Support Plan.

The E&D Manager also works as a freelance consultant in equality and diversity in the education sector and in 2012 The University of Kent invited her to Chair their QA Audit Team and act as the external member, in its review of the University's arrangements for disabled students. This work included writing the final report which was presented to the university's Audit Committee and Senate.

## 1.5 Information included in this report

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This report includes the following:

- **Section 2** is a summary of our progress in achieving the objectives we set for ourselves in the Conservatoire's Equality Action Plan 2012-15. The updated Action Plan is included in [Appendix 1](#).
- **Section 3** is a summary of what we can learn from the quantitative and qualitative data we have collected over the past year, particularly on our new work in collecting data at different stages of the application process (i.e. application, offer and take up of place). A full analysis of this data is included in [Appendix 2](#).

- **Section 4** includes examples of research and interviews with staff and students to promote equality in 2012 and includes our work on:
  - Developing guidelines on ways to respond to students with disordered eating;
  - The first stage of our interviews with disabled students (particularly students with specific learning difficulties) who have Learning Agreements;
  - Research on gender equality for students studying for careers in Stage Management and Technical Theatre.
- **Section 5** is a summary of the Conservatoire's approach to Widening Participation with some examples of recent WP activities in affiliate schools.
- **Section 6** includes some examples of forthcoming work and research for 2013.

## 2. PROGRESS MADE IN OUR 2012-15 ACTION PLAN

### 2.1 The Action Plan Update

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In September 2011, the Conservatoire published a new, comprehensive three year Equality Action Plan (2012-2015). This was a detailed and specific set of actions covering all areas of work and we made the commitment to report on our progress each year. This goes well beyond legal compliance which requires us only to develop 'one or more actions' and report on these 'at least every four years.' We also made a commitment to report honestly on our progress, including those actions where progress has been delayed or postponed.

In most areas we have made good progress in developing the actions we set out to achieve. Where there have been delays, this is rarely due to lack of enthusiasm or commitment and is most likely to be a result of the difficulty of performing arts staff and students (who work long hours every day) finding the time to fully engage in this work. Our success has been achieved through excellent collaboration between members of the Equality and Diversity Group, the Equality and Diversity Manager and many other affiliate staff who have given their time and energy to work which encourages equality and promotes diversity.

Below is a summary of our progress in 2012. A full copy of the updated plan is included in [Appendix 1](#) of this report.

### 2.2 Strategic and Organisational Objectives

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#### Diversity and decision making

**Board of Governors:** The Nominations Committee of the Board of Governors has recently adopted a new statement on equality and diversity which emphasises the need to take proactive steps to promote equality and encourage diversity in all aspects of its work as well as the work of committees. The statement acknowledges that diversity of background, experience and view will enable the Board to be more effective in its work and agrees to take steps to ensure that Governors are drawn from a diverse pool of people from different backgrounds and with a broad range of life experience.

To achieve these aims, the composition of the Board will be discussed and noted at each meeting of the Nominations Committee and a report on progress will be included in the Conservatoire's 2013 Equalities Report. All board members are currently invited to complete the Conservatoire's Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form and these are routinely returned. From next year, this information (with due respect for confidentiality of information), will also be included in the report.

## **Maintaining the high quality of equality and diversity work in the**

**Conservatoire and affiliate schools:** Equality and diversity work continues to have a high profile within the organisation and as this report shows, a number of interesting and creative equality projects have been completed over the past year. Equality issues are profiled on the Conservatoire's website with a particular focus on the support we offer disabled and dyslexic students. Each year we receive calls or emails from prospective disabled applicants who tell us that when they searched the internet for information about support for disabled people on dance or acting courses, the Conservatoire was an important source of information.

## **2.2 Student Experience**

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### **Data Capture and Use**

**Application data:** For the first time, we have been able to produce robust and interesting application data for all affiliate schools. Unlike HEIs who are members of UCAS or CUKAS, the Conservatoire is not obliged to collect equality data on applications. However, the Principals agreed that capturing equality data on disability, gender and ethnicity at the different stages of the application process would give us valuable information on the decisions we make (and sometimes the decisions applicants make) on the selection, offer, take up of place and enrolment of students with different protected characteristics.

2012 was intended as a pilot year for this work but affiliate schools, including some of our smaller affiliates who have not previously collected and collated application data, have made great progress and we are confident that the application data presented in this report is accurate and robust. As anticipated, the equality applications data and data on registered students has provided us with some interesting figures which are reported on in full in [Section 3](#) and [Appendix 2](#) of this report.

### **Data on students in receipt of the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA):**

Although our support for disabled and dyslexic students continues to be highly effective and is considered by the organisation, the QAA and the sector to be an area of excellence, we are still experiencing some difficulties in capturing and updating accurate data on the number of disabled students and students who are in receipt of the DSA. This means that the data we are returning to HESA is not always correct and we have decided not to include it in this report. We will address this at the annual meeting of the SpLD Group in June 2013 with the aim of having in place more robust methods of collecting and reporting this information in the following year.

### **Student Interviews and Setting New Actions**

Responding to equality issues raised by staff and students is an important part of our work and the Conservatoire has in place a number of strategies which allow us to respond promptly to new interests and concerns. The Equality and Diversity Group continues to be an effective forum for discussing these matters and senior and other affiliate staff often contact the E&D Manager with ideas for research projects and/or staff training.

Ideas for new actions frequently arise both as a result of the work we have completed over the year, and as new projects and topics for investigation or staff development are raised by staff and students. These new targets will be discussed and approved by the E&DG in 2013 and added to our action plan.

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing: Supporting Students with Mental Health Difficulties**

Our target here was to continue to use the Conservatoire's mental health guidelines to assist schools to develop and/or review their policy and practice, and we have continued to make good progress. In 2012, the E&D Manager delivered whole staff training at LAMDA and training is organised for RADA staff in March 2013. This will mean that all affiliates will have received staff training on student mental health in the past two years.

One result of these discussions was that staff began to identify the need for more specific advice and training on responding to students with eating disorders. We were delighted that specialist expert and writer Professor Julia Buckroyd accepted our invitation to lead cross affiliate staff training in the summer. There was a lot of interest in this training and it was offered on two days, both of which were fully subscribed. A report was circulated and the E&D Manager then set up an advisory group who read through drafts of the *Guidelines on Responding to Students with Disordered Eating* and provided invaluable advice and 'real life' case studies.

### **Learning Agreements (or Learning Plans)**

Our target was to review the effectiveness of Learning Agreements in providing support to disabled students. Most of the students in this category have specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) such as dyslexia. The first stage of this research included interviews with staff and students at two of our dance schools; Rambert School and Northern School of Contemporary Dance and a review of affiliates' current procedure in regard to developing and reviewing Learning Agreements. All of the students interviewed felt that having a Learning Agreement was helpful and supportive. This work is discussed in more detail in **Section 4 (4.2)** of this report. The second stage will take place in 2013-14.

### **Inclusive or Alternative Assessment**

Between 15% and 18% of our students have a diagnosed specific learning difficulty (SpLD), most often dyslexia or dyspraxia. Our target was to produce guidance on alternative forms of assessment so that students with SpLDs are not unfairly disadvantaged in assessment. This work will be a priority in the summer term of 2013 with a seminar for staff who have responsibility and/or a special interest in alternative forms of assessment. The aim is to share current best practice in order to produce guidelines and suggestions on alternative assessments. It will be important to ensure that these are approved by the awarding university and external examiners.

## Students and Ethnicity

Our 2012 targets in relation to student ethnicity were a) to develop further objectives based on our research and interviews with students from BME backgrounds over the past few years and b) to promote our understanding of training and employment issues for BME students through a sector conference led by RADA. This second target has been delayed as it became clear that a truly accessible conference about access would require significant funding and RADA is still exploring how this might be achieved.

With regard to the more general target of developing actions to improve the numbers of BME students where they are under-represented in particular schools or courses, a number of interesting widening participation and other equalities projects are currently taking place in affiliate schools. For example, NSCD recognises that in the past the school has had a higher intake of BME students from the local community and have set themselves the target of improving their recruitment process in order to improve ethnic diversity at NSCD. The school has instigated discussions with current students, particularly BME students who are interested in helping them with this work. Through these discussions they hope to learn more about the channels that brought these students to dance and to NSCD and identify the potential barriers along the way.

BOVTS identified under-representation and has taken steps to significantly improve the number of BME students on their acting courses. In 2011-12 only 4% of acting students at BOVTS were of BME origin compared to 14% BME students on acting courses across the Conservatoire. In 2012-13, the figure for students on acting courses at BOVTS increased from 4% to 12%. This significant increase may be due to BOVTS' Senior Management Team's commitment to the importance of a diverse student body, and their recent work with theatre groups and colleges who are involved in working with young people who might not be aware of the process of applying for a place at drama school or what the training involves. The Principal and the Artistic Director have recently visited theatre groups and colleges in Stoke, Coventry and Birmingham with the aim of reaching young people who would not necessarily be familiar or confident with the process.

## Students and Gender

Our target was to conduct research to establish whether there are gender equality issues for students on technical training and stage management courses (TTSM) at affiliate drama schools and if so, how we might address any inequalities. The first stage of this work involved a student questionnaire, a discussion with students, graduates and staff at RADA in 2012, and some sector benchmarking data.

An initial report on the response to the student questionnaire and the points raised in the discussion was discussed by the E&D group in November 2012 and we decided to extend the project to include students at other affiliate drama schools. A summary of the work is included in [Section 4 \(4.3\)](#) of this report. We

also wanted to seek the views of more staff for their perspective on whether there is a difference in the opportunities open to male and female students on TTSM courses (and in the industry) and for themselves as employees. Further research on staff perspectives will be conducted in 2013 and decisions about the best way to use this research will be made by PMG and the Heads of Technical Training.

### **Building good relationships between groups of students with different sexual preferences**

This target was a response to a concern raised at an E&DG meeting. The concern came particularly from members who work with younger students and we agreed to develop information and practical materials that could be used with students to promote good relations between students with different sexual preferences and in particular to prevent the 'casual' use of homophobic language. A small working group was set up and although there have been some delays with this project, the first draft has been completed and will be discussed and approved by the E&DG in summer 2013.

### **Widening Participation Activities**

**Section 5** of this report contains some examples of our innovative work to improve equality of access and ensure a diverse student body. In 2012, we benefitted from free consultation from Cardiff University's WP Fair Access Scheme and this confirmed our belief that whilst each school must remain autonomous to meet their own organisational aims, there is a need to develop a centralised approach to WP so that the work can be planned, reviewed and evaluated as a whole.

We now provide free audition places for 100 low income applicants, and affiliates have developed a number of exciting projects designed to promote inclusion for disabled students and to improve the numbers of home/EU students from black and minority ethnic backgrounds where these groups are under-represented.

### **Staff Development**

Staff development designed to promote equality and diversity for our students continues to be a priority. Required annual training to develop 'disability confidence' and general issues of equality and diversity for all new staff (and those who would like the opportunity to revisit these issues) was discussed and approved by PMG. The E&D Manager continues to be responsive to training requests from affiliate colleagues and to be proactive in deciding new areas of training.

In 2012, staff training organised by the Conservatoire's E&D Manager included cross affiliate training on responding to students with disordered eating; helping schools to develop their policy and practice for students with mental health difficulties; and developing disability confidence.

## 2.3 Staff Experience

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Affiliate schools employ their own staff and have responsibility for: ensuring equality of opportunity, taking steps to recruit a diverse staff force and supporting staff with protected characteristics. The Conservatoire itself consists of a small team of 13, mostly part time staff. This arrangement does not mean that the Conservatoire ignores its responsibilities in regard to staff from different protected characteristics. At Conservatoire level, these are developed and led by the E&D and HR Managers and the HR Group. There have been some inevitable delays in the actions we set ourselves for 2012 but these will be a priority in 2013.

### Staff with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs)

For quite a while we have recognised that our support for staff with SpLDs does not match the support we give to dyslexic and dyspraxic students and although we don't have statistics to verify this, it seems likely that the numbers of students with diagnosed specific learning difficulties (12.8% of our total student population) is likely to be reproduced in our staff body.

There have been a number of improvements in the support available to staff with SpLDs in affiliate schools, including support offered to staff who have always felt that they are dyslexic but have never received a diagnosis. In many schools, line managers and HR Managers have developed expertise in supporting staff with SpLDs and helping them to apply for funding through the Access to Work Scheme. In 2013 we plan to use this expertise to develop a questionnaire seeking the views and experiences of staff with specific learning difficulties. This will be circulated to staff at the Conservatoire and all affiliate schools.

Following this, respondents to the questionnaire will be invited to attend a 'focus group' discussion on support/reasonable adjustments that they feel would assist dyslexic staff to reach their full potential at work. This project is a key action for 2013-14: the aim is to achieve all targets, including written guidelines with case studies and examples of best practice, by the end of 2014.

### The experience of staff with other protected characteristics

Our target for 2012-13 was to conduct a staff survey in affiliate schools to establish whether there were possible areas of discrimination for staff with protected characteristics. However our 2011 survey with BME staff did not reveal any outstanding issues of inequality with regard to race and ethnicity. With this in mind, and following discussion with the HR and E&D Managers and the HR Group, we have decided that little is likely to be gained from carrying out actions 15.2 and 15.3 at this point. We have a commitment to staff equality issues and we will continue to be approachable and responsive to staff equality issues as they arise.

## 3. QUANTITATIVE DATA ON CONSERVATOIRE STUDENTS

The annual publication of equalities information is a requirement under the specific duties of The Equality Act 2010 and we have continued to improve our collection and reporting of student equality data. This data is collected by affiliates at the point of registration and the Conservatoire has a centrally managed Student Record Management System to collate the information. The registration data, together with other equality information collected by schools is the basis of our information report. As in previous years, we have employed the services of freelance consultant Dr Caroline Davies to help us prepare our report. Other parts of the data analysis were done by Conservatoire staff. The Conservatoire now employs a part time member of staff whose job is to interrogate data and in future years, we hope to be able produce our equality data information report internally.

The collection and analysis of this data helps us to develop our action plans and equality targets and to further promote equality across the Conservatoire schools.

### 3.1 Application Data

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The Conservatoire's student numbers on undergraduate courses are small (1,310 in 2012-13) in comparison to the number of applications that we receive (over 10,000 in 2011-12). Decisions are made at the application stage which have a crucial impact on the makeup and diversity of our student body. Although data on application and admission was previously collected by schools for their Programme Monitoring Reports and, in the case of drama schools, was reported to the National Council for Drama Training (NCDT), we could not be confident that it had been collected in the same way by all affiliates. This made analysis and interpretation of application data extremely difficult.

In [Appendix 4](#) of our Equalities Review for 2009-11 we described how we planned to develop the collection of application data to provide equalities information on all stages of the process: applicants, offers and acceptances. A common methodology for collection and reporting was agreed and implemented by all affiliate schools and, in Sections C and D of [Appendix 2](#), we report for the first time on equalities data for the 2011-12 round of applications (for courses starting in September 2012).

We said that the 2011-12 application cycle would enable us to trial and evaluate our data collection procedures. We expected to encounter some difficulties and teething problems because of the scale of the task: all affiliates were asked to adopt the same methodology and to collect and record a very large amount of data. Previously this data had been collected and stored in a range of different ways using a mixture of databases and spreadsheets, with some being inputted by hand and others being automatically populated by online applications. Discussions led to the development of a template spreadsheet which affiliates

could populate from their own systems. Data from all these spreadsheets were then uploaded to a single, dedicated database, enabling us to collate, analyse and present equalities information in a range of ways. While there were some issues encountered with the details of this method, we feel confident that the applications data that we have collected has been robust and the methodology has worked well: it has given us some important insights.

The experiences of this first year have highlighted some ways in which the template spreadsheet can be modified for future years in order to improve the process of data collection by the schools. Lessons learned will be reviewed by affiliates and the application data group and will inform future data collection. This data can be used to inform decisions made at executive level on future activities around application and admission and will allow us to monitor and evaluate new initiatives as we collect, analyse and compare the same data in subsequent years.

## 4. RESEARCH AND INTERVIEWS WITH STUDENTS IN 2012

One of the most interesting aspects of the Conservatoire's work in the area of equality and diversity is our 'qualitative work', that is, work which directly involves staff and students through interviews, questionnaires and discussions. Below are three recent examples of work in this area.

### 4.1 Guidelines on Responding to Students with Disordered Eating

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In 2012 the Conservatoire published its *Guidelines on Responding to Students with Disordered Eating*. These guidelines were designed as an appendix to our earlier guidelines on supporting students with mental health difficulties, but they can be read and used independently. The way in which these guidelines were produced provides a good example of the way staff from the Conservatoire and affiliate schools are able to work together to respond promptly and effectively to areas of concern, particularly matters that relate to the health and wellbeing of our students.

In 2011, the Conservatoire published a set of guidelines on supporting students with mental health difficulties with a public launch held at RADA. This was followed by a programme of staff training led in most cases by the E&D Manager. Listening to staff in these seminars and at other discussions with Principals and Senior Managers, it became clear that a particular area of concern was the number of students who showed signs of disordered eating, particularly anorexia and its associated weight loss.

As a response to this, the E&D Manager organised cross affiliate staff training led by Professor Julia Buckroyd, a leading expert in students with disordered eating in performing arts training, particularly dance students. The training was offered on two separate days in July 2012 and a full report was circulated to Principals, participants and the E&DG. This training was well attended by staff at different levels of responsibility from all eight of our affiliate schools.

An advisory group was then established. The group included staff with considerable experience in working closely with students with disordered eating. Members of the group advised the E&D Manager on current best practice, offered examples of 'real life' case studies and read and commented on various drafts of the report.

The final version of the guidelines will be circulated to schools and disseminated through discussions in the E&DG and with affiliate colleagues. There will be a programme of staff seminars on developing policy and practice in relation to this issue as requested.

## 4.2. Using Learning Agreements: research and interviews with dance students at Rambert School and Northern School of Contemporary Dance

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### Background Information

Our target for 2012 was to review the effectiveness of Learning Agreements (LAs) in providing support to disabled and dyslexic students. This action was set following an Equality and Diversity Group meeting where some members of staff, particularly some of our newer members, were unsure how to develop and use LAs and felt that they would benefit from some further discussion and training. For example, they wanted more information on what an LA should include, confidentiality issues and how to ensure visiting and part time staff were informed. Members also raised the issue of whether students should be encouraged to have an LA even if they were concerned that they might be 'singled out'.

### Current Practice

A Learning Agreement Plan is one part of the support schools give to their disabled and dyslexic students. It is a way of ensuring that disabled students are not put at any unfair disadvantage as a result of their condition and are able to achieve their full potential. The plan is usually drawn up by a specialist member of support staff and/or a member of the teaching staff and includes information on the identified learning difficulty or other condition or impairment and gives guidance to both the student and their teachers about adjustments they need to make to learning and teaching. Students who come to the school with a diagnosed condition other than dyslexia; for example a hearing loss, autism or mental health difficulty, will usually be seen as near to the start of the year as possible and for others, the Learning Agreement will be drawn up as soon as possible after diagnosis. The plan usually lists members of staff who will have access to this information (with guidance on the importance of confidentiality) and the student and staff member writing the plan will both sign it.

In 2012, we conducted a review of affiliate current practice. All affiliates currently have procedures in place for meeting disabled students and working out a programme of support but some are more proactive than others in using LAs as a way of sharing information.

In 2012, the E&D Manager conducted in depth interviews with 8 students who have a Learning Agreement in place. This is a very small sample, but it gives some interesting insight into these students' views of the support they were offered and the effectiveness of having a Learning Agreement

These interviews were arranged by Amanda Britton, Head of Undergraduate Studies at Rambert School and Ros Lehany, Learner Support Tutor at NSCD, who also gave their views on the effectiveness of their current systems. Other schools suggested names of students but for a number of reasons, it was not possible to interview them before they graduated. It is hoped that we will capture more views in the second stage of this work.

Both Rambert and NSCD use Learning Agreements on a regular basis and have well developed procedures in place. Both schools use the term 'Learning Agreement' which suggests that the student also has responsibility in the process, for example by being proactive about the help they need and not leaving it too late. Both schools have an experienced member of staff with overall responsibility for this work and this means that students are clear about where they can go to seek help.

The staff responsible for developing and reviewing LAs in these two schools feel that the system has the following advantages:

- They operate as a safety net for both staff and students and make it clear that either party can see an experienced member of staff if they are struggling.
- The student has ownership – they know they can ask for it to be changed.
- It's a way of giving staff the information they need and making them aware of their responsibilities in ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made.
- It's hugely useful for a new year co-ordinator trying to understand and get to know their year. The most positive use is the discussions that happen around developing and using LAs.
- It is a useful place to start a conversation at each review: what they're struggling with, what is going well.

### Student Interviews

Of the eight students interviewed, seven had been diagnosed as dyslexic. Of these, three students had an additional diagnosis, one with dyspraxia, one with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and one had a mental health condition. The eighth student had recently received a diagnosis of autism/Asperger Syndrome.

LAs are just a part of the process of making sure that a disabled or dyslexic student's needs are met. Schools also support disabled students in many other ways for example, by one to one tutorials, organising and paying for a diagnostic assessment, helping students in applying for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) and arranging specialist support. So it is not surprising that when asked about how useful it was to have an LA, students also wanted to speak about the range of support they'd been given and how important this had been in developing their confidence. Some wanted to go a bit further back and talk about why no one had picked up on their learning difficulties in their earlier education.

Looking back on it now, it is apparent but at the time I was just a 'naughty child' always being told off for talking, distracting others. I can't stay still or concentrate for long. I didn't mention it when I came here but it was picked up pretty quickly. The Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) side of things was picked up at the dyslexia assessment. I'm happy to use the term 'learning difficulties' and the support at NSCD has been great. The only support I've asked for has been for essays and writing stuff. I get agitated, anxious, bored. Without having the one to one support with writing and the extensions, I wouldn't have been able to do it.

## Drawing up the Learning Agreement and sharing information

All students interviewed felt that having an LA was positive and helped to develop their confidence so that they felt able to talk to their teachers where they hadn't understood something and ask for help. However, they didn't always know who had been informed of what had been agreed on the learning plan.

I'm assuming that teachers have been notified but they don't treat me any differently so you're not sure. No teacher has approached me to say 'I know you need some extra help so come to talk to me.' Sometimes the kind of things teachers say to me in one to one reviews are things that are relevant and relate back to learning difficulties, e.g. 'you need to work on this' but they say it without any reference to learning difficulties or particular ways to help me. It could be that they know and don't believe in it. No adjustments have ever been made in technique/performance, it's purely based on the academic side of things.

For a student with autism/Aspergers, how the information was shared was less important than being confident that her teachers were aware of her particular needs and ready to make allowances. This in turn, gave her the confidence to tell them if she was having difficulties.

I'm not sure how the information on my LA gets shared. I know that teachers discuss this once a term at the student review board so I suppose it gets shared there. All my teachers know – they don't give me anything extra or change how they teach. It's more about making allowances and not jumping to conclusions. Giving me time and space. At the beginning I had a weekly meeting with B and my personal tutor. We'd talk about things that needed to be done e.g. to explain to teachers that even if I'm not making eye contact or appearing to be receptive, I am listening 100%. They encouraged me to tell teachers if I'm not okay.

Another student also talked about this.

In the rehearsal period my anxiety got very bad. In the first week I spoke to the rehearsal director about things I found difficult. I'm pretty sure I wouldn't have done that if I hadn't already had a Learning Agreement.

Where the person with responsibility for developing and monitoring the plan is not a dance specialist, involving technique teachers in the process of developing an LA can be very important.

The assessment to diagnose dyslexia was very helpful – it helped me to develop the confidence to ask for help and say – ‘I don’t understand that’. After a full assessment there was a meeting with the learning support tutor to help write the learning agreement and my personal tutor and technique teacher was also there. Having my dance teacher at the meeting was very important because she knew how dyslexia affected me as a *dancer* and could add specific things to my LA.

### How dyslexia affects learning

Traditionally, dyslexia has been seen as a learning condition affecting reading and writing skills only. However, for some time we have been aware that it can also affect the performance aspects of the course, in particular memory of movement and following sequences.

Below is an account from a student who has particular difficulties in learning movement. She describes in some detail her learning process and the difficulties this presents her in the studio.

I’m very slow to pick up movement. Once I’ve learnt it, it stays with me. Initial pick up is seeing rather than doing, that’s so hard. It’s one of the weakest parts of my ability. I didn’t really know that this could be part of dyslexia because I always thought it was just reading and writing so I didn’t think it applied to me. It would be good to highlight this at the beginning of the course or in a handbook.

I managed to get through the first two years here feeling it was a fluke – that I was lucky to get in and that I’d got here because I’d done well at school academically. I didn’t think dance should be difficult and I put myself under a lot of pressure. It stopped me thinking ‘what is this problem, what am I doing wrong?’ I just thought others were better, quicker. Even if I wanted to spend another hour, I couldn’t remember enough to practice it. The way the course is set up, there’s not time to go over stuff. I didn’t want to bother other people and take up their time.

For other students, the performance side of the course doesn’t present difficulties for them and is in fact the area of training where they are more likely to feel successful and secure. Even where this is the case, all students appreciate a tactful and sensitive response from their teachers.

The performance side of the course isn’t an issue because I started my training in this. Teachers don’t make it an issue, the culture is to identify issues and tactfully address. They do that for everyone. I think I get the same corrections as other students.

## Difficult days

All disabled students want to present themselves as successful and able to meet the demands of the course but the pressures of studying with a learning difficulty can be exhausting and this can lead to anxiety and depression. Dyslexic students sometimes have what they call 'bad dyslexia days' and in these interviews a number of students said things like '*dyslexia probably had more of an impact on my frustration than I realised – I was seeing a counsellor for a long time*'. They appreciated it when teachers who were aware of their difficulties responded with tact. '*It helps when teachers know. I was having a very bad day in technique class and the teacher approached me very sympathetically and didn't push me.*'

Sometimes this can spill over into more serious mental health difficulties although it might be that the mental health difficulty arises from a different cause. Finding an appropriate way to share this information with teachers is very important.

People don't want to talk about things that are wrong with them. People don't understand how hard it is to go on with life with depression. You have to be more open about this and not feel that people look down on you. My tutor knows about my depression and she told the pilates teacher/osteopath. I was taking medication when I came here but have stopped now. I did put it on the application form because we were asked to list any medications. I was very anxious it would hold me back.

Other students gain confidence from aspects of the course where they feel more secure that they can do well. For this student, the rigours and discipline of a ballet class help him to re-focus and carry on.

I have dyslexia 'bad days' when I can't remember things and I'm scared of falling behind and don't want to. If I'm in a lecture, I try to make as many notes as I can but when I try to read them back, my notes don't make sense. I use classical ballet lessons to help me get back on track. If I'm having a bad day, the focus and discipline will help me to sort myself out. I'm at the barre, it's just me, prepared for the centre. By the end of the class I'm reassured and can carry on to the end through bits of the course that are more difficult for me.

All students interviewed appreciated the systems in place to help identify their learning difficulties and in particular, the benefits that came from the DSA.

There's a fantastic system here. A. organises everything. I did my first essay and she suggested that I do Quicksan. I then went for a diagnostic assessment and then to Roehampton for a Needs Assessment for what I needed from the DSA. I got Dragon Dictate software and mind mapping software where I use colours to make big mind maps to plan what I need to write. It's completely changed my baby essays into proper ones.

For another dyslexic student who has difficulties in remembering dance sequences, the greatest help to her learning came from the benefits of the DSA, combined with the tactful help from the learning support tutor.

I got a Macbook with Final Cut Pro. It has a specific dance and film module. I could use it at home to edit film and it was really useful. I didn't realise how useful it would be. The biggest use of all was the camera. The camcorder (not a high spec one) can film straight to disk so I can watch it straight away. I film myself for choreography but unfortunately we're not allowed to film in class or in rehearsal period.

### Specialist support

Students found specialist help with essay writing and other academic work very helpful. At NSCD this is done 'in house' by the learning support tutor who is a dyslexia specialist and at Rambert, a specialist tutor is employed on a freelance basis. In some cases, the tutor draws up an additional learning agreement with the student, encouraging them to work on identified areas of weakness.

She's very reassuring and understands how each individual works. She makes sure I'm going the right way. We have goals that I have to sign – how to keep a record of my bibliography for my dissertation, short term agreements for next week and long term agreements for the whole term. We look at the main body of the essay and mind mapping. She's not patronising – it's very easy to be patronising as a dyslexia tutor and not understand. 3rd years get priority for lunchtime slots so we don't miss classes, I see it as my one to one time.

### Some recommendations from students

With such a small number of interviewees, it would be unwise to make generalisations, but it seems fair to say that all students interviewed felt that having an LA in place was an important part of understanding and meeting their learning needs. They also made a number of recommendations on how things could be improved.

- More time at the start of the course to get to know each other.
- Encourage a more collaborative approach to learning. Less competitive streaming will encourage dyslexic students to ask for more help from teachers and fellow students.
- Teachers should be timetabled to have time to help. Although the help I did receive was great, in my needs assessment they recommended more help than the school is able to give me. On my DSA I was supposed to have a certain number of hours of learning support. This wasn't really discussed. If I'd known more about what it would entail and how it might help me, I might have sought it.

- The LA needs to include things that are about dance-technique and performance, not just about written work.
- I would like to know who has information about my condition. I don't mind if teachers know, it should be a good thing, but I'd like to know who does.
- (From an overseas student) I don't get the DSA and it would be really helpful if the school had some equipment to loan out for students, a camcorder for example.
- There can be an association that if you have dyslexia you may not be academically bright. So any support you get or 'writing framework' should not be something watered down. It should be about structure and organisation of ideas, including complex, intellectual ideas.

### **Schools' current plans to improve the development and use of Learning Agreements**

Both of these schools continue to review the way LAs are developed and used. Staff described some of their current plans for improvement as:

- Changing some of the existing wording which sounds punitive.
- Reviewing the way the information is disseminated, particularly sharing the information with visiting professionals and part time staff.
- Reviewing whether disabled and dyslexic students should be allowed to record lectures and/or studio work where this would clearly help their learning.

### **Next stages**

In 2013, we hope to conduct further student interviews and use the information we collect to provide some written information on best practice in developing and using LAs and staff training, particularly for new staff, where requested.

## 4.3. Gender Equality and Technical Theatre and Stage Management Training in Affiliate Schools

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### Introduction

In the past, 'working backstage' has been a traditionally male dominated area of work and there have been assumptions about what work is most suitable for men and what most suitable for women. A recent article in *The Stage* argued that most stage managers are now female but most technicians are still male and that in West End theatres, pay structures are biased against women. As part of our work in promoting equality across the 'protected characteristics', we thought it would be interesting to find out what stage management and technical theatre students at Conservatoire affiliate schools think about gender equality in their training and their hopes and fears for their future careers, and to learn more about what staff think about the opportunities available to themselves and to their students.

In 2011, Neil Fraser, RADA's Director of Technical Training and Lois Keith, the Conservatoire's Equality and Diversity Manager, developed a questionnaire designed to seek the views of the Conservatoire's Technical Theatre and Stage Management (TTSM) students. The aim was to learn more about whether students studying on these courses feel that there are any issues of gender inequality in their training and if so, to help us to establish realistic and creative priorities for change.

In the 2011-2012, print copies of the questionnaire were distributed to RADA students in a TTSM tutorial/teaching session led by Neil Fraser. Students on the two year Foundation Degree and the one year specialist courses were given the chance to discuss gender equality issues in their training and ask questions about the project. The questionnaire was then sent to BOVTS and LAMDA technical theatre students, who were asked to respond electronically or to return a print copy. This was largely unsuccessful and only two replies were received. Rob Young, Stage Management and Technical Theatre Course Director at LAMDA then decided to lead a tutorial similar to one at RADA where the project was explained. This proved much more successful and 37 completed questionnaires were returned.

A total of 81 completed questionnaires were returned to the Conservatoire: 44 from RADA (27 women and 17 men) and 33 from LAMDA (22 women and 14 men). These responses are analysed together.

The initial stage of this project included two other activities designed to further our knowledge of gender equality in technical training:

- A discussion with staff, students and recent graduates at RADA in July 2012; a summary of the discussion is included in this report.
- An exercise to collect benchmark sector data on male and female applicants and enrolled students on TTSM courses in three other comparable drama schools: Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. This data is included in [Appendix 3](#) of this report.

At a meeting of the Equality and Diversity Group in November 2012, we decided to carry out further research on the gender balance and roles of TTSM staff in Conservatoire schools and learn more about staff views on gender equality in their own career paths and employment, and on student experience in training. This work is still in its initial stages and we will report on this in our 2013 Equality Review.

Below is a summary of the main points of our research so far. A longer version is available from the Equality and Diversity Manager.

### **Student Experience of Gender Equality: Responses to the Questionnaire**

**Question 1** asked respondents how they describe their gender. A total of 81 students completed questionnaires: 49 women and 32 men.

**Question 2** asked respondents how they describe themselves with regard to sexual preference. Responses were as follows: 5 did not complete this question and of those who did, 70 described themselves as straight or heterosexual, 5 as gay or homosexual and 3 as bisexual. A further respondent chose to describe themselves as 'asexual'.

**Question 3** asked respondents to give their age in the following categories: 18-21, 22-25 or 26+. The responses were as follows: 50 were in the 18-21 age group, 23 were 22-25 and 8 were over 26.

**Question 4** asked respondents whether they had experience of professional work of six months or more in the industry. 55 students had had no previous experience of professional work and 26 students had some experience. Most of these were older students.

Their experience of previous employment covered a wide range of areas and included: casual work in theatres, work as an ASM or general technician both in this country and overseas, freelance work in events/conferencing and at festivals. Two respondents had had several years of previous work. One had worked for 6 years prior to training in professional venues and one had 5 years of work at a Dinner Theatre in a variety of crew and construction roles.

**Question 5** asked whether there had been any particular issues or challenges they had faced during their training which they felt might have been related to their gender or sexual preference. For example, did they feel that either male or female students are given preferential treatment in any aspect of their training or work experience placements? They were also encouraged to give examples of positive experiences or support they had received from fellow students, teachers, directors or designers.

The majority of respondents either gave no comment or responded by saying that they had no negative experiences or challenges in regard to gender or sexuality. Those who gave information generally felt that their training was fair and equal and that students were treated without any kind of gender stereotyping. This was the case with respondents from both LAMDA and RADA.

Some typical comments were:

- Everyone appears to be treated equally and all are given equal chances at everything. (M)
- I have good relationships with all of my colleagues and banter and humour aid these relationships. (M)
- I find it to be a very fair place. I have not come across discrimination of any kind. Long may it continue. (Both RADA and LAMDA students commented in this vein.)
- I haven't experienced any kind of negative gender stereotyping. I like that everyone can do everything be it construction or costume regardless of their gender. (F)

Where respondents felt that they had had negative experiences, the issue most frequently raised was of physical strength, particularly in construction. Some were critical of what they felt were unfair and out-of-date assumptions about what women can or cannot do, whilst a handful of female respondents expressed concern about their own ability to succeed in this area.

- I feel that when working in construction it is assumed that as a woman I cannot use the equipment/do heavy lifting which is not the case... the perception of how I would be treated in that environment puts me off going to work in that department.
- The commonplace assumption of male dominance in physical work such as construction or stage crew pervades RADA as much as it does society in general. Whether this is damaging is another thing. Each student should be considered individually on their merits.
- While studying I have been treated equally and fairly and been given the same opportunity as all other students. Unfortunately, I occasionally feel I let myself down because I can't lift something heavy as I'm a girl with very little upper body strength. (F)
- The assumption that a stage manager would not be interested/competent in an area such as construction was infuriating. (F)
- The only time I ever feel slightly passed over is during get outs and everyone is trying to work quickly so some jobs get passed over my head as I'm not as strong as the men on my course. (F)

**Question 6** asked whether they had witnessed any actions or behaviour during their training which they considered prejudiced or discriminatory to others. If so, they were asked to say what this was and how it occurred. The vast majority said no. Of the 10 students who said that they had witnessed discriminatory behaviour towards others (but not necessarily in their training at LAMDA or RADA), responses included the following:

- I personally have not experienced any discrimination but I have witnessed two incidents of male directors being rude to female crew (but not to me). They felt they could bully the women to get what they wanted. (M)
- Sexist jokes both ways – but they are jokes. (F)
- No major issues or therefore support needed. Some students have made comments of disbelief about my sexuality. This was met with disapproval by some fellow students. (M)

**Question 7** asked respondents about whether they had ever discussed these issues with staff or asked for support. The overwhelming majority had never asked for support in this issue. Of the 6 who had asked for support, 2 thought it was satisfactory and 4 thought it excellent.

**Question 8** asked whether if something happened to themselves or to another student during the course which they felt was discriminatory or prejudiced in any way, they would know who to approach to discuss this. The overwhelming majority did know who to turn to and were able to name the appropriate member of staff at the school. A few thought that they would prefer to talk to a fellow student.

**Question 9** asked whether they thought there was gender stereotyping in the career for which they were training and if they thought there was, to give some examples. Many respondents gave examples and again, the issue of physical strength was often mentioned. They included the following:

- Maybe, there are definitely more men in crew work, lighting and construction half of the industry but stage management seems to be predominately female. (There were several versions of this comment by both female and male students)
- There can be, however society is changing and more women are being welcomed into the technical field. (F)
- Yes, generally there are still gender specified roles in theatre e.g. women in costume and male technicians. (F)
- I think there was but it's getting more equal/female dominated. (M)

- To a degree there is a stereotype that men are techies and women take on the roles that involve less physical strength.
- Yes because sometimes women aren't believed to be as strong as men and are given crappy jobs. (F)
- There may be some gender stereotyping. For example working as a roadie can be seen as a man's job due to lifting etc. (F)
- Yes, but it is not necessarily prohibitive. (F)
- Occasionally I need to ask for help to lift something heavy or if I'm too short to reach something. I do not feel like this is an issue and would face such challenges in most jobs and there is little I can do about it. When I ask for help I have never been patronised or belittled. (F)
- Yes. Men are strong. Girls are organized. (M)

**Question 10** asked whether gender stereotyping had affected the training choices they had made and if so, in what way. Unsurprisingly, more females than males felt that there was some negative stereotyping but responses indicated that overall they found their training to be fair. They included the following:

- No, I want to experience all aspects of theatre, regardless of the connotations associated with this.
- I wouldn't say that it has as I hope these stereotypes are being shrugged off as time goes on.
- Yes, a bit because it makes me hesitant to go into male heavy areas such as construction.
- No, I feel I am as competent in each area not to feel intimidated or patronised which is a potential problem. (F)
- Initially 'yes' due to the 'assumed' gender division in roles but due to the greater numbers of girl/boy ratio here, 'male' dominated fields and 'female' dominated roles are made available to all. (F)

**Question 11** asked what their hopes and fears were for the future. All respondents answered this question. The responses included: getting a decent job with a decent wage; financial security for their futures and earning enough money to have a family; graduating from LAMDA or RADA with a good grade; getting good work within the industry in their chosen field and for women students, the hope that they will be accepted as equals. Many answers were simply: 'hope for success, fear of failure'.

**Question 12** asked respondents to list three things that they felt would most improve the quality of their student lives. As might be predicted, the four most frequently mentioned topics were: more money, better accommodation, more spare time and more opportunities for part time work. There were also comments that indicated a sense of isolation from other students in their academies and one specifically asked for 'a social space available to both acting and tech students to encourage meetings.' Many respondents mentioned that they would like more interaction with other Conservatoire students (perhaps because this was a 'Conservatoire' questionnaire) and generally more social activities.

### **Follow up meeting to discuss gender issues in technical theatre training**

Towards the end of the academic year 2011-12 a flier was distributed to all the respondents from RADA who had expressed an interest in being involved in the next stage of the project, asking them if they would like to attend a discussion with staff and graduates now working in the industry. Although there was interest in this work, only a few students were able to attend the meeting due to work and other commitments. However Neil Fraser assembled a small but interesting group of TTSM staff, students and theatre professionals. We met in July 2012 at the Conservatoire office.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the points raised in the responses to the questionnaire, seek the views of staff and graduates currently working in the industry; establish areas of prejudice or particular importance and see where we should go from here. This meeting came before questionnaires were received from LAMDA but we plan to involve LAMDA and BOVTS in future stages of this work.

The following were present at the meeting:

- Neil Fraser, Director of Technical Training, RADA
- Lauren Patman, Stage Management professional and RADA graduate
- Lois Keith, Equality and Diversity Manager, CDD
- Peter Small, 1st Year TTSM student
- Rowan Coupe, 2nd year TTSM student
- Anthony Arblaster, Postgraduate Lighting student
- Paul Aspinall, Wardrobe Staff, RADA
- Dave Agnew, RADA Production Manager
- Su Dean, Theatre Designer and BOVTS graduate

The discussion can be summarised as follows:

#### **Applications:**

There was some feeling that there were cases where drama schools offered places to less talented males because of the gender imbalance in applications. Staff members present agreed that in the second round of offers, where candidates were equally qualified, there may be some bias towards male applicants in order to obtain a more equal balance of male/female students.

### **Different routes into training:**

Drama school or straight into the industry? Is there a gender difference in this choice? The group speculated whether more females than males apply to RADA and other drama schools because they feel the need to study on a course and might lack confidence in taking a direct route into work. Women might not know how to get started in the industry without the support training gives you. Su Dean argued that 30 years ago there were lots of opportunities to get crewing work in rep theatre and old hands didn't want to take on drama schools graduates. Now there is more a culture of 'nothing worth doing without a degree'. She also made the point that females often apply to drama schools because they want a career change having had experience of different kinds of work.

### **Gender issues in RADA training:**

The male students present found RADA an inclusive place to study and very open to all kinds of difference, including difference in sexual preference. In terms of gender bias, Paul (RADA staff member, costume department) felt that being the only male in this area of the workplace could often work to his advantage: it was a way of being remembered.

### **Course titles:**

The group discussed who was attracted to study technical theatre at drama school and the implications of putting an emphasis on the artistic or technical aspects of the course. Neil found that the name given to the course affected the kind of applications received. When the course at RADA was called simply 'Technical Theatre Arts', people who wanted to be stage managers seemed to stop applying. When they re-included the words 'Stage Management' in the title, applications went back to two thirds female and one third male with the majority of female applicants showing a particular interest in the stage management side of the training.

### **Specialist areas within training:**

Neil tries not to demarcate too early and believes that giving students the opportunity to try a range of specialities is at the heart of the culture of stage management education. The first year of the TTSM course is predicated on this idea and the course therefore attracts candidates who are undecided as to their eventual specific career path. Students' ambitions can change as a result of training, an example being the number of female students in recent years who have decided to pursue the construction area – not a typically female preserve. Also whilst the lighting postgraduate course goes through phases of seeing only male candidates in some years, in one year, 85% of specialist lighting students were female. Many female students are initially interested in stage management but interest can widen into other areas of specialisation as their training progresses.

Applicants often stereotype themselves based on what they have seen other people doing but the group felt that all roles should be open in training.

### **Importance of a good staff balance:**

Students often come in to the training believing it is 'too difficult' to get into certain jobs in the industry and that there is gender bias in the world of work. Neil felt that it was easier to deal with the anxiety and possible prejudice about whether women could handle all areas of the training (and work) when there were more female TTSM staff in the Academy. It's important for students to see women staff (including visiting staff) doing this as well. We will be able to report more on staff data, their career paths and views on gender equality in training and the industry in 2013.

### **Physical strength and female students:**

There were two different views on the issue of physical strength for female students who want to work in the industry. Su believed that nurturing physical wellbeing and strength could help in this area and built this into her teaching. She ran circuit training/physical strength courses that were particularly designed for female students although all students were able to attend. In her own career, she made sure she was physically strong, not just in lifting but having the strength to endure long physical days. She would ask her female students whether they were prepared to handle a tough emotional and physical environment and told them that unless they were able to demonstrate a level of strength in lifting heavy weights, they were likely to be unsuitable for certain areas of the industry.

Dave suggested a different approach, arguing that heavy lifting through brute strength was no longer encouraged and that the industry is now changing. There is equipment for lifting and the need to acknowledge health and safety issues and carry out risk assessments.

### **Gender issues in the industry: is there a macho culture where physical strength is valued above other qualities?**

Rowan noted that whilst at RADA anyone can do any aspect of the training, there were certain areas in the industry which were still 'no go' areas. He hadn't heard of any female riggers and even freelance rigging was very 'straight male' dominated. The general feeling was that there are still lots of chauvinist assumptions and that women have to prove themselves in a way that men don't.

Dave drew our attention to the fact that technical training staff at RADA are predominantly male. Theatre work is very cliquey, an 'I'm a chippy and proud of achieving this' attitude where everyone goes round in a team. There is demarcation by department. This is partly because of the nature of theatre where everyone has a job and is proud of their part.

There are still very few female casuals in the industry and areas of work continue to be largely divided along gender lines: scenic artists are predominantly female, metal workers/construction predominantly male. At the Royal Opera House, for example, the metal workshop is entirely male, the paint shop entirely female. Casual crew especially in electrics is still predominantly male. When you get female workers, the atmosphere and output change for the better. Less 'lads in the playground', more a positive, hardworking atmosphere.

Wardrobe/costume is an interesting example of how a department can still be run on traditional gender lines: most costume design houses for theatre are run by men but employ mostly women on a freelance basis.

As a woman Lauren often wants to say 'Shouldn't we do this like this?' but there is a dominant macho culture where physical strength is valued. No one wants to say 'I need help with this' when you're starting out. You don't want to be the one to say 'I can't do this, can you help me?'

Rowan also thought that it is a really tough industry and he felt that he needed to ask himself, 'Is it something I really want to do or am I trying to prove something?'

### **Is technical theatre work 'family friendly'? What kind of people have successful long term careers in the industry?**

There was some discussion on the difficulties for women (and sometimes for men) with young families and whether a long term career in the industry is sustainable. It was felt that technical theatre work is not a supportive environment for women who have children. Crew work can require a lot of travelling, as much as 80 hours a week. This is usually freelance or casual work and very difficult if not impossible for someone with family responsibilities.

There was a general feeling that the industry is not a family friendly one. Long term careers for people with families are more likely to be in teaching or in bigger companies. A lifetime of freelance or touring work can be difficult to sustain. The group agreed that women have to plan their careers and think ahead more often than men and that big companies tend to be more supportive of women with children than smaller ones. At the Royal Court for example, all the current stage managers except 1 have children.

Paul raised the point about salaries in wardrobe. Wages in the wardrobe department are very poor relative to other areas of backstage work. Is this because it's a predominantly female profession? The group agreed that this was very likely to be the case.

### **Issues around training arising from this discussion:**

The group felt that further investigation and discussion would be welcomed in the following areas:

- Gender expectations in the workplace, particularly in relation to specific technical areas in theatre work.
- Looking at what is happening in the industry to make theatre work and careers more family friendly, especially for female employees.
- Whether the time is right for equipment to take the place of physical strength and therefore alleviate any gender bias in this area of technical work and how this should affect training.

- Whether we need to think of ways to educate employers/employees in the manner in which people discuss and deal with different sexual preferences within the work place.

The future direction of this work and how to use the forthcoming research with TTSM staff will be discussed with Principals and Heads of Technical Training departments. We hope that it will be possible to organise a workshop/seminar with staff and students from all affiliate drama schools and members of the industry to include those who have broken through gender stereotypes.

## 5. WIDENING PARTICIPATION

The Conservatoire's Widening Participation strategy sits alongside the Equality and Diversity Action Plan, both aiming to ensure equality of access and a diverse student body. While some 'target groups' are shared between WP and E&D work, for example under-represented groups such as disabled students and home/EU students from BME backgrounds, the WP strategy also aims to ensure that socio-economic factors (for example, financial constraints, applicants who have been in care or living in hostel accommodation or whose families have no previous experience of Higher Education), do not act as a barrier to talented students being able to access Conservatoire training. This centralised work is not intended to replace the already excellent WP provision taking place across the affiliate schools.

The Conservatoire's Widening Participation Group is made up of representatives from each affiliate school and has been meeting since 2010- 2011 to help create an overall picture of WP activity across the Conservatoire and share good practice. The work is led and coordinated by WP Advisor Eira Gibson (CS) and Academic Support and Access Officer Jessica Benson-Egglenton (CDD) A networking lunch took place in the summer and is planned as a new annual event.

In 2012 we benefitted from Cardiff University's Widening Participation Fair Access consultation scheme which was funded by the Monument Trust and led by Alan Evans. We were pleased that the report produced by the Cardiff team confirmed our belief that whilst each school must remain autonomous to meet their own organisational aims, there is a need to develop a centralised approach to WP so that the work can be planned, reviewed and evaluated as a whole.

Key findings from the consultation scheme were to:

- provide some free places at audition and/ or on prevocational training programmes such as summer schools;
- explore ways to centrally track participants who benefit from our WP activities;
- support affiliate schools in developing more robust evaluation methods for their work (ideally using the same model across the affiliates).

Based on these recommendations, we have introduced the following measures to overcome some of the barriers faced by applicants from under- represented groups and:

- established an audition/interview fee waiver scheme, offering 100 free places for entry in 2012-13;
- created a WP Project Fund to support free places at summer schools, workshops and similar activities;
- developed centralised monitoring of these specific projects enabling better tracking of participants;
- planned training to help affiliate school staff to develop robust evaluation methods (May 2013).

## Some examples of widening participation activities in affiliate schools

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- **RADA** was successful in obtaining funding from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. In summer 2012, this enabled them to offer a series of free, inclusive workshops designed to give disabled people and their peers (aged 18-26) the opportunity to enhance their acting skills and gain confidence through performance. Places were also offered to young people involved in some of their other youth groups and widening participation activities. It was aimed at young people who were either thinking of applying to drama school or who had an interest in theatre and wanted to explore the craft. The funding enabled RADA to offer appropriate adjustments and/or additional support for disabled students, where this was needed.
- **Circus Space** have recently led two discrete projects designed to promote inclusion for disabled performers. The first of these was a training project with Graeae Theatre Company and involved working with young disabled actors. The second was the exciting Paralympic Training Project where CS trained 45 Deaf and disabled people to be featured artists in the opening ceremony of the Paralympic Games in London 2012. As part of the Olympic legacy, CS wanted to ensure that all their activities were inclusive to disabled people. Ten disabled consultants who had been part of the Paralympic project were invited to observe all aspects of CS's work including the HE course.

Recommendations so far include suggestions on improving physical access, signage, posters and colour contrast: all of these are relatively low cost. The team have talked extensively about making auditions more accessible whilst ensuring that the core elements of the audition procedure are retained and acknowledging that one size doesn't fit everyone. Working with CS's Participation and Outreach Team, the consultancy team will continue to develop and implement these recommendations.

- The Principal and the Artistic Director at **BOVTS** have recently visited theatre groups and colleges in Stoke, Coventry and Birmingham to talk about applying for a place at drama school and what applicants can expect from the training. They specifically identified organisations that targeted young people who are in some way disenfranchised and would not otherwise be likely to have access to higher education. The aim is to encourage a much broader range of applicants and increase the range of diversity in the School. This work formed the basis of BOVTS' application to the widening participation project fund.

## 6. FUTURE WORK AND RESEARCH

Many of the interesting activities planned for 2013 are described in the various sections of this report and in the action plan update. In addition to the equalities work which is led centrally by the Conservatoire, there is, of course, much innovative work conducted at affiliate level. Not all of this work has found its way into this report but it is important to acknowledge that schools continue to improve their practice and develop their own equality projects and initiatives.

There are also occasions where affiliate colleagues approach the E&D Manager for advice and support in beginning a new project or piece of research. For example, in 2012 BOVTS' Head of Voice made an interesting proposal for some active research on how dyslexic students approach text: the vocabulary they use, the 'angle' they take on it and how their teachers and directors might work more effectively with them. There is very little if any published research in this area and an investigation will be of interest both to affiliate colleagues and the sector. A small steering group has been established which includes affiliate and Conservatoire staff and a dyslexia expert from an external drama school. Following the initial 'scoping' exercise in spring 2013, we hope that the work will begin in the academic year 2013-14.

# APPENDIX 1: UPDATE ON ACTION PLAN

## CONSERVATOIRE FOR DANCE AND DRAMA - EQUALITY ACTION PLAN FOR 2012 -2015

### UPDATE ON PROGRESS, 2012

(Sections that appear 'in grey' in this update are actions planned for 2013-2015)

#### A. STRATEGIC and ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Action	Staff responsible	Timing/ completion	Update
<b>1. Diversity and decision-making – The objectives listed here are closely linked to the equality objectives in the Conservatoire’s Strategic Plan</b>			
1.1. Establish relevant equality objectives for Boards of Governors, e.g. with reference to their composition, roles and decision-making and equalities information in the Governance Handbook	Chair of CDD Governors, members of BoG,	2012-13	The Nominations Committee have agreed a statement which clarifies its commitment to promoting equality and encouraging diversity in all aspects of its work. Further objectives to achieve these aims will be developed and monitored in 2013-14
1.2. To maintain the high profile of equality and diversity work in the Conservatoire and affiliate schools	BoG, Principals, CDD Exec Dir, E&D Mgr	Related to individual data targets	Affiliate schools continue to give a high priority to equality and diversity work. Examples of continued good practice in this area can be found in the main body of this report
1.3. Continue to establish ways of fostering social diversity and inclusion amongst staff and students through widening participation and other activities	Principals, WP Manager, WP co-ordinator, E&D Mgr	Ongoing throughout the Plan	There have been a number of interesting and creative widening participation projects in 2012. For examples of good practice, see Section 5 of the Report
1.4. Continue to improve statistical collection, monitoring and reporting in relation to equality and diversity	Academic Registrar/E&D Manager	To be reported at end of Jan. each year	The Conservatoire has continued to improve the collection, collation and reporting of equality data. See section 2 of this action plan and Appendix 2 and 3 of the report
1.5. Provide publically available 'Information' on an annual basis and new Action Plan with Review of Progress in E&D every three years; to be published on the Conservatoire’s website and the websites of affiliate schools (or with easy-to-find links from school to CDD website)	E&D Manager, Communication and Projects Co-ordinator, affiliate comms. managers	Annually by 31st January and in April every three years	Successfully completed. From 2012, the Equality Information and Progress Report will be available in January and published in March each year in order to fit in with the Conservatoire’s reporting schedule

## 2. Data Capture and Use: Students

<p><b>Strategic responsibility</b></p> <p>2.1 Set targets and develop strategies for the use of student data by committees, management groups and Boards to guide planning decisions to promote equality and diversity.</p>	<p>PMG, CDD Registrar, Affiliate school SMTs, E&amp;D Mgr</p>	<p>By end of academic year 2013/14</p>	
<p><b>Data on students in receipt of the Disabled Students' Allowance</b></p> <p>2.2 Affiliates to update Registrar annually on numbers of students in receipt of the Disabled Students' Allowance.</p>	<p>SpLD Group, Academic Registrar, E&amp;D Mgr</p>	<p>June each year</p>	<p>Action completed. For more information and discussion on how to continue to improve the collection and updating of this information, see <a href="#">Appendix 2</a> of the report.</p>
<p><b>Application Data</b></p> <p>2.3. Conduct statistical and qualitative research on numbers of applications from disabled students against the number of audition/interview, offer and take up of place in order to set future equality objectives on application, audition/interview of students with different protected characteristics, in the categories below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Disability (by HESA impairment categories)</li> <li>- Ethnicity (and make decisions about the best way to group HESA ethnicity categories)</li> <li>- Gender</li> </ul>	<p>Admissions staff in affiliates schools, E&amp;D Mgr</p>	<p>Through academic year 2012/13</p>	<p>An ambitious project to collect equality data on the different stages of the application process (application/ audition/offer of place/registration) began in 2012. Significant progress has been made in this target and equality Information has been captured on all applications received in CDD affiliate schools for 2011-12. See <a href="#">Appendix 2</a> of the report.</p>
<p>2.4. Review methods of collecting and collating data in 2012-2013 in order to make long term improvements</p>	<p>Admissions staff in affiliates schools, SMTs, E&amp;D Mgr. E&amp;DG Staff</p>	<p>Academic year 2013/14</p>	<p>The CDD Application Data Group will meet in summer 2013. This work will also be discussed by PMG and the E&amp;DG.</p>
<p>2.5. Applications data to be analysed together with other student data included in affiliate school's Annual Programme Monitoring Review.</p>	<p>Academic Registrar E&amp;D MGR, L&amp;TC, E&amp;DG</p>	<p>2013/15</p>	<p>See <a href="#">Appendix 2</a> of the Report</p>

2.6. Equality priorities developed from this data to be included in schools' own action plans	Affiliate SMTs	2013/15	To be discussed in affiliates SMT meetings and at the E&DG meeting
2.7. Where appropriate, to develop qualitative research projects to gain further understanding of the application process, for example interviews with applicants with protected characteristics	E&D Mgr, E&DG	2014/15	
<b>Students with Other Protected Characteristics</b>			
2.8. Conduct qualitative research in order to establish whether it is realistic and proportionate to collect data on students with other protected characteristics (see introduction)	E&D Mgr, E&DG, projects developed in individual affiliates	2015	
<b>3. Data Capture and Use: Staff</b>			
3.1. Continue to support affiliate schools in developing a consistent and common approach to recording equalities information for staff during the application process and for employment (i.e. recruitment, promotion, development, resignation, retirement etc.)	CDD HR Manager, HR Group, Affiliate Principals	2013/14	
3.2. Support affiliates in their development of staff data: capture and use	As above	As above	
3.3. Through questionnaire and discussions with staff in all affiliate schools, establish reasonable and proportionate targets in relation to all protected characteristics	HR Manager, E&DG Manager	2013-14	

3.4. Provide guidance to affiliate schools on updating Staff Handbooks to include guidance and information on such areas as: custom, practice and policy in supporting staff from protected groups and equality legislation	HR Manager, E&D Manager and relevant groups	2014-15	
<b>4. Involvement Activities and Setting New Actions</b>			
4.1 To continue to be responsive to issues raised by staff and students in affiliate schools and through involvement activities such as questionnaire, interview and discussion, to seek the views of staff, students and other stakeholders in order to understand where there might be unintentional prejudice or disadvantage.	Principals, E&D Manager, E&D Group	Ongoing	Despite time constraints, the Equality and Diversity Group continues to be an effective forum for raising these concerns. Two examples of this are the gender equality project with stage management students and the interviews with students with Learning Agreements/Personal Learning Plans. See Section 4 of the report.
4.2 Set new actions designed to improve the experience of people with protected characteristics.	As above	Ongoing	
4.3 Develop policy guidelines, checklists and templates for affiliate schools.	As above	Ongoing	Following staff training and extensive consultation, the E&D Manager has produced a set of staff guidelines on responding to students with disordered eating.

**B. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES for EXISTING AND NEW PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS: STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

Action	Staff responsible	Timing/ Completion	Update
<b>5. General aims: Student Experience</b>			
<p><b>Non-discriminatory equality statement and information</b></p> <p>5.1 To review websites and other marketing materials to ensure that applicants and current students are reassured that affiliate schools are committed to a culture of equality, advocacy and support.</p>	<p>Principals, E&amp;D Mgr, CDD Comms co-ordinator, affiliate marketing managers</p>	<p>Initial review 2012-13 and ongoing</p>	<p>This is regularly reviewed by the CDD Marketing Group and the E&amp;D Manager but we acknowledge that there is a need to ensure that all marketing staff, including new staff are aware of the need to monitor this. This was discussed at the Spring 2013 meeting of the Marketing Group and future targets have been set.</p>
<p><b>Student Handbooks</b></p> <p>5.2 To review and revise student handbooks to ensure that there is relevant, up to date and helpful guidance on equality issues and how and where students can seek appropriate support.</p>	<p>Affiliate staff, E&amp;D Mgr, E&amp;DG</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>To be reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Group May 2013.</p>
<b>6. Disability: Student Experience</b>			
<p><b>Mental Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <p>6.1 Continue to support schools in developing policy and practice in relation to mental health and wellbeing, for example through staff development in affiliate schools, assisting in organising student workshops and drop in sessions, information in student handbooks.</p>	<p>E&amp;D Manager</p>	<p>2012 -13</p>	<p>Staff training on supporting students with mental health difficulties continued in 2012; the E&amp;D Manager delivered whole staff training at LAMDA and at RADA in March 2013. A further programme of staff development on responding to students with disordered eating is planned for 2013-14.</p>
<p>6.2 Organise staff development with a specialist in eating disorders and performing arts training and develop guidelines for best practice based on this work and other research.</p>	<p>E&amp;D Manager Prof. Julia Buckroyd, free-lance trainer</p>	<p>July 2012</p>	<p>Successful training was delivered by Professor Julia Buckroyd in July 2012. This training was offered to all affiliate colleagues on two separate days with a very good take up. A report was circulated. Following this, guidelines on responding to students with disordered eating have been produced and circulated.</p>

<p>6.3 Research the use of DSA to support students with mental health difficulties.</p>	<p>E&amp;D Manager</p>	<p>July 2012</p>	<p>Two students with mental health difficulties applied for and received the DSA this year. This practice will be shared with other colleagues when we can be sure that we can protect student confidentiality</p>
<p><b>Learning Agreements (or learning plans)</b></p> <p>6.4 To review the effectiveness of learning agreements in providing support to disabled and dyslexic students, through: encouraging disclosure, protecting confidentiality, making reasonable adjustments etc. by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reviewing learning agreements/plans currently in use in affiliate schools</li> <li>- Interviews with staff and students on the effectiveness of these Plans</li> <li>- Develop a programme of staff development and written guidelines based on the findings.</li> </ul>	<p>E&amp;D Manager, E&amp;DG members, Principals, affiliate staff with responsibility for student support</p>	<p>To begin May 2012</p>	<p>The first phase of this work has been completed. The work included a review of current affiliate practices on the use of Learning Agreements (or Personal Learning Plans) and interviews with students in two dance schools to establish the effectiveness of these Plans. See <a href="#">Section 4</a> of the report.</p> <p>The second stage of the work will continue in 2013-14.</p>
<p><b>Inclusive or Alternative Assessment</b></p> <p>6.5 To develop and produce guidance on inclusive and alternative forms of assessment for students with SpLDs to ensure that the core elements of the course can be assessed, (to include BA and MA essays, dissertations and other written projects)</p> <p>6.6 Develop and run staff training on this guidance.</p>	<p>E&amp;D Manager, Louise Ainley, Ros Lehany, Antigone Exton White</p>	<p>2012-13</p>	<p>A cross affiliate staff seminar is planned for summer 2013: The aim is to share best practice and produce a set of guidelines and suggestions on alternative/inclusive assessment and to ensure that these are approved by the awarding university and external examiners.</p>

<p><b>Application Data</b></p> <p>6.7 Conduct statistical and qualitative research on numbers of applications from disabled students (with impairments/ conditions other than SpLDs) against the number of offers and take up of places in order to set future equality objectives on application, audition/interview of disabled students.</p>	<p>E&amp;D Mgr. Project in individual affiliate school (to be decided)</p>	<p>2014-15</p>	
<p><b>7. Ethnicity: Student Experience</b></p>			
<p>7.1 Further develop objectives to take forward actions identified in the BME student involvement activities conducted in 2008-10</p>	<p>E&amp;D, discussions with affiliate Principals</p>	<p>2012-14</p>	<p>A number of interesting projects are taking place in affiliate schools. For examples, see <a href="#">Sections 4 and 5</a> of the report.</p>
<p>7.2 Develop objectives identified in data analysis (See Information and Review of Equality and Diversity Achievements 2009-11) e.g. in regard to the current differential percentage of BME students studying at dance and drama schools. (currently 20% of student body in dance schools, 12% at drama/circus)</p>	<p>E&amp;D Manager, Executive Director, Academic Registrar</p>	<p>Objectives developed in 2012-13.  Actions to begin in following year.</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>7.3 To promote our understanding of training and employment issues for students from BME backgrounds through a sector conference that will include acting teachers, directors, agents and affiliate graduates. Project to be led by RADA's Principal</p>	<p>Led by Edward Kemp, RADA Principal</p>	<p>2012-13</p>	<p>This work has been postponed. It became clear that a truly accessible conference about access would require significant funding. RADA is still exploring how this might be achieved.</p>

<b>8. Gender: Student Experience</b>			
<p>8.1 Continue gender project with Head of Technical Training at RADA to establish student and staff perspective on gender issues in stage management training, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student questionnaire and report on findings,</li> <li>- Benchmark data from other stage management courses in comparable drama schools,</li> <li>- Discussion with students who have expressed an interest in this work,</li> <li>- Using these methods at LAMDA and BOVTS,</li> <li>- Organising a workshop/seminar with staff and students from all affiliate drama schools and members of the industry who have broken through gender stereotypes,</li> <li>- Develop guidelines based on the findings of this research</li> </ul>	<p>E&amp;D Mgr, Registrar, Hd. Tech. Training &amp; students at RADA, Heads of SMT at LAMDA and BOVTS</p>	<p>2012-2015</p>	<p>The first stage of this work with RADA students and staff was completed in 2012 and presented to the E&amp;D group for discussion in autumn 2012. Further data and information from LAMDA students was incorporated into the report in early 2013. The research, including sector benchmarking data and consultation with staff and recent graduates is included in <a href="#">Section 4</a> and <a href="#">Appendix 4</a>.</p> <p>The next stage will include staff views of gender equality re: students and their own employment.</p> <p>Decisions about the best way to use this research will be made by PMG and the Heads of Technical Training in 2013-14.</p>
<b>9. Other Protected Characteristics: student experience (see Introduction)</b>			
<p><b>Religion and Belief</b></p> <p>9.1 To investigate issues of religion and belief to include students who require time off for religious holidays or observance and develop guidelines based on this research.</p>	<p>E&amp;D Mgr. E&amp;DG, student reps.</p>	<p>2014-15</p>	
<p><b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b></p> <p>9.2 To consider how to manage and support pregnant student's successful progression through their training.</p>	<p>E&amp;D manager, E&amp;D group</p>	<p>2013-14</p>	

<p><b>Sexual Preference and Homophobia</b></p> <p>9.3 To develop actions to promote good relationships between groups of students with different sexual preferences and prevent homophobia, particularly with younger students by producing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- appropriate training materials for staff to use with students,</li> <li>- written guidelines.</li> </ul>	<p>E&amp;D Manager, Rose Betteridge, Amy Richardson</p>	<p>Summer 2012</p>	<p>This work has been slightly delayed. A report with practical suggestions for work with students will be discussed by the E&amp;D Group in 2013 and ideas developed for further use and training.</p>
<p><b>Other protected characteristics</b></p> <p>9.4 Develop equality objectives on other protected characteristics using data, qualitative research and information and concerns expressed by affiliate staff.</p>		<p>Throughout 2013-15</p>	
<b>10. Widening Participation: Student Experience</b>			
<p>10.1 These targets are developed in more detail in the Conservatoire's Widening Participation Plan and include the following. To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- foster partnerships with schools, FE colleges and relevant community groups and organisations to better reach young people from WP target groups,</li> <li>- offer support and advice to CDD schools looking to develop these partnerships,</li> <li>- develop the Conservatoire's WP working group,</li> <li>- target specific, identified under-represented groups e.g. students from BME backgrounds on stage management courses, females from BME backgrounds in acting courses, care leavers.</li> </ul>	<p>WP Manager, WP administrator, WP representatives in affiliate schools</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Since setting these actions, the focus of Conservatoire WP strategy has moved toward supporting, monitoring and evaluating WP work already taking place in affiliate schools. Centralised WP work has been developed in four key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establishing an audition/ interview fee waiver scheme for 100 applicants;</li> <li>- creating a WP Project fund to support funded places at summer schools, workshops etc.</li> <li>- monitoring and evaluating the beneficiaries of these projects and;</li> <li>- staff training on monitoring and evaluating this work</li> </ul> <p>The WP group continues to meet twice per year, and provides a valuable forum for sharing best practice and developing Conservatoire-wide policy.</p>

## 11. Staff Development : Student Experience

<p>11.1 To continue to provide regular opportunities for staff development (including at least one cross-affiliate staff training session per year). Topics for staff development will be responsive to issues raised during the three years of the Plan and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual training on supporting students with specific learning difficulties,</li> <li>- Developing policy and practice to support students with disordered eating,</li> <li>- The development, use and review of Learning Agreements (including reasonable adjustments),</li> <li>- Training for new and established staff on general issues of equality and diversity including new protected characteristics.</li> </ul>	<p>Staff development sessions to be organised by the E&amp;D Manager and to be delivered by the E&amp;D Manager and/or specialist trainers with expertise in this area and</p>	<p>June each year</p> <p>July 2012</p> <p>April 2013</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>Staff development is an important aspect of our work and the E&amp;D Manager continues to be proactive in deciding new areas of training and responsive to training requests from affiliate colleagues. In 2012, staff training was delivered on: supporting students with disordered eating; developing mental health policy and practice and developing disability confidence in performance training.</p> <p>Required annual staff training on general issues of equality and diversity for new staff has been approved by PMG.</p>
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**C. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES for EXISTING AND NEW PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS: STAFF EXPERIENCE**

Action	Staff responsible	Timing / Completion	Update
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**Staff Data: for targets on the capture and use, see Section 2 of this Action Plan**

**Staff Training: Staff Experience**

<p>12.1. To continue to provide regular opportunities for staff development (including at least one cross-affiliate staff training session per year). Topics for training which looks at staff experience will be responsive to issues raised during the three years of the Plan and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- training for HR Managers on developing policy and practice in relation to staff with protected characteristics,</li> <li>- surviving and succeeding at work for staff with SpLDs,</li> <li>- training for line managers on supporting staff with SpLDs,</li> <li>- staff training for line managers on supporting disabled staff,</li> <li>- staff training for HR staff and line managers on supporting staff who are experiencing mental health difficulties.</li> </ul>	<p>E&amp;D Mgr</p>	<p>Throughout the 3 years of this Plan</p>	<p>This work will continue to be a priority in 2013-14 as the relevant actions are developed.</p>
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**13. Disability: Staff Experience**

<p><b>Conservatoire Guidance on Recruiting and Supporting Disabled Members of Staff</b></p> <p>13.1. To review and develop affiliate's use of this guidance to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- providing the opportunity for newly- disabled or new- to- disclose staff to update or disclose any disability issues, conditions or impairments, for example through information sent out with payslips,</li> <li>- staff training for line managers on supporting disabled staff,</li> <li>- recording and using data on disabled staff in order to understand where to make improvements in how data on disabled staff is collected in order to provide targeted support in recruitment and in role.</li> </ul>	<p>E&amp;D Mgr. HR Mgr. HR Group, line managers in affiliates schools</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Conservatoire Guidelines on Recruiting and Supporting Disabled Staff will be recirculated at the HR Group.</p> <p>Cross affiliate staff training for line managers who have not received this training will be offered in 2013.</p>
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<p><b>Staff with Specific Learning Difficulties</b></p> <p>13.2. To investigate improving support for dyslexic staff (SpLDs), for example by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- learning more about dyslexic and dyspraxic staff through a questionnaire, information in newsletters and payslips etc.,</li> <li>- conducting involvement activities with staff who identify themselves as having SpLDS e.g. through discussion forums and/or other staff development activities,</li> <li>- Investigating the following: paying for diagnostic testing for staff; providing guidance for line managers (e.g. on reasonable adjustments; purchasing licenses for assistive software; supporting staff with applications for the Access to Work scheme,</li> <li>- disseminate the results of this research,</li> <li>- organise appropriate staff training,</li> <li>- provide written Guidance on improving support for staff with SpLDs.</li> </ul>	<p>E&amp;D Manager, Ros Lehany (NCDS), Antigone Exton- White (LCDS) HR Manager</p>	<p>2012-2014</p>	<p>The start of this project has been slightly delayed but is a key action for 2013-14.</p> <p>Many affiliates now offer support to staff with SpLDs and a support group has begun at NSCD under the guidance of Ros Lehany. We plan to use this expertise to develop a questionnaire seeking the views and experiences of staff; to be circulated to staff in all affiliate schools.</p> <p>Following this, respondents will be invited to attend a 'focus group' discussion to discuss the kind of support/reasonable adjustments needed to assist dyslexic staff to reach their full potential at work.</p> <p>The aim is to achieve all targets (including written guidelines with case studies and examples of best practice) by the end of 2014.</p>
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<b>14. Gender: Staff Experience</b>			
14.1 Further work on job evaluation and equal pay audits	HR Manager	Dec 2012	Job evaluation has been conducted in a number of affiliate schools and anomalies are being addressed in affiliate schools as appropriate and where funding allows.
<b>15. Other protected characteristics: Staff Experience</b>			
<b>New legislation on the retirement age:</b>  15.1 To develop actions on how to manage issues of capability, fitness to practice etc whilst promoting and preserving equality for all staff.	HR Manager	Dec 2012	Completed. The HR Manager has circulated written guidelines on managing the removal of the default retirement age.
<b>New Protected Characteristics:</b>  15.2 To conduct a survey for staff in all affiliate schools to seek information on protected characteristics not yet included in this Action Plan in order to establish where:  - there may be discrimination,  - we can improve our custom and practice,  - we need to set new equality targets.  15.3. To investigate issues relating to religion and belief, in particular to establish:  - the views of staff who require time off for religious holidays or observance and;  - any actions we take that might be unwittingly prejudiced.	HR Mgr	Dec 2012	Our survey with staff from BME backgrounds did not reveal any outstanding issues of inequality with regard to race and ethnicity. With this in mind, and following discussion with the HR and E&D Managers and the HR Group, we have decided that little is likely to be gained from carrying out actions 15.2 and 15.3 at this point.  We have a commitment to staff equality issues and the HR Manager and the HR Group will continue to be responsive to staff equality issues as they arise.

# APPENDIX 2: EQUALITY DATA ON REGISTERED STUDENTS AND EQUALITY DATA ON APPLICATIONS

## Equalities data at Conservatoire schools, 2011-12 and 2012-13

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The annual publication of equalities information is a requirement under the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010. In fulfilment of this duty, the Conservatoire collects a range of quantitative data, some of which is also reported to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). At present, the Conservatoire collects HESA equalities data on enrolled students relating to disability, ethnicity, gender and age. In the remaining period of our Action Plan 2013-15, we will consider whether it is appropriate to extend our data and seek information about students with other protected characteristics.

In [Appendix 4](#) of our Equalities Report for 2009-11 we described how we planned to extend the data that we collected to include all stages of the applications process. Although this data has previously been collected by the drama schools and reported to the National Council for Drama Training (NCDT), similar information was not routinely collected by dance and circus schools. A common methodology for collection and reporting has now been agreed and implemented by all affiliate schools and, in [Sections C and D](#) of this Appendix, we report for the first time on equalities data on application, offer and acceptance of place.

Collection of quantitative information has already helped the Conservatoire to make decisions about future research and qualitative projects. Analysis of this data helps us to develop our action plans and equality targets and to further promote equality across Conservatoire schools.

At present we are only reporting on equalities data for applicants and enrolled students on undergraduate courses.

**NB:** The data on enrolled students refers to the total number of students returned to HESA. This includes, for example, students who are intermitting and students who are awaiting awards but who are not studying in the schools during the relevant year.

### Recommendation

- Consider whether we wish to extend equalities data collection and reporting to applicants and enrolled students on postgraduate courses.

## A. Equalities data for Conservatoire enrolled students

**Table 1: Equalities data for all Conservatoire Schools, 2011-12 and 2012-13**

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
<b>Total students</b>	<b>1196</b>	<b>1229</b>	<b>1368</b>	<b>1310</b>
Male	425 (35%)	466 (38%)	551 (40%)	552 (42%)
Female	771 (65%)	763 (62%)	817 (60%)	758 (58%)
Disabled	228 (19%)	195 (16%)	253 (18%)	210 (16%)
BME	181 (15%)	196 (16%)	199 (15%)	195 (15%)

Table 1 presents the total numbers of enrolled students at Conservatoire schools in three of the Equality Act's protected characteristic categories over a period of four years:

- gender
- disabled students
- black and minority ethnic (BME) students

The percentages given in Table 1 represent the number of students in that category as a percentage of the total number of students in that year.

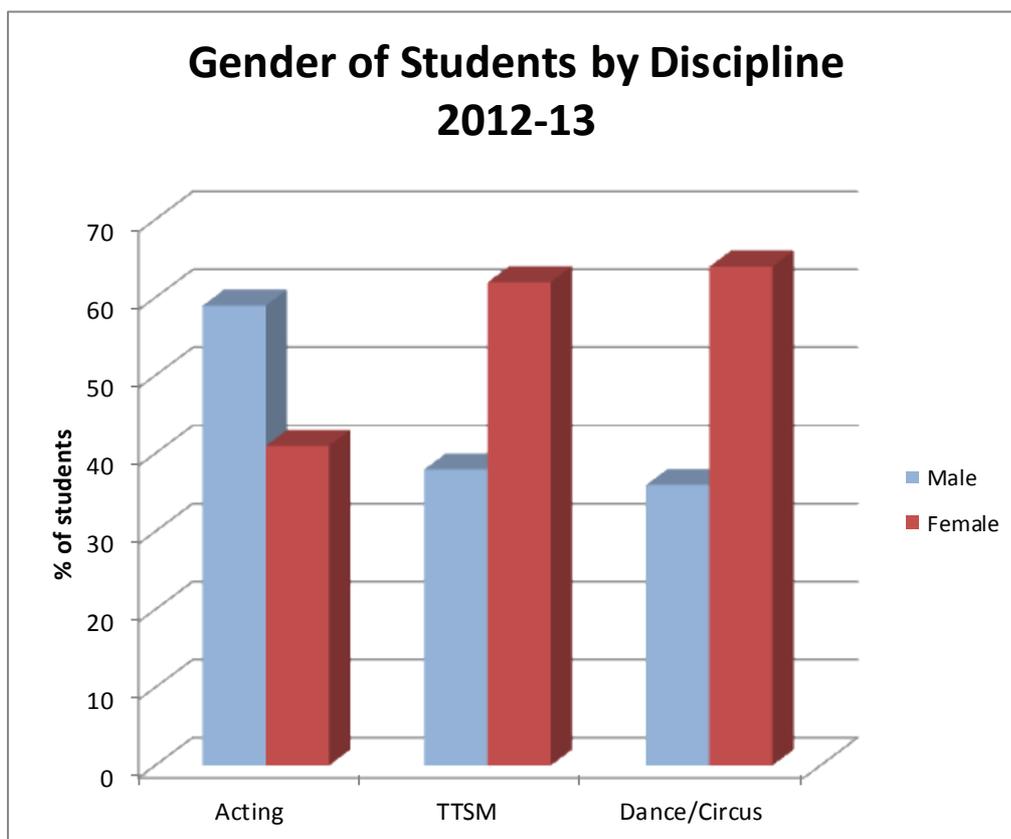
National equalities data collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) provides comprehensive equalities information on enrolled students in the higher education sector in the UK. HESA data for 2010-11 has been analysed and published by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU)<sup>1</sup>; it includes equalities data on all undergraduates and also those on creative arts courses which includes the courses offered by Conservatoire schools. The 2010-11 HESA data published by ECU is the most up-to-date available and is used here to provide benchmark comparisons.

### a) Gender

The proportion of male students at Conservatoire schools has steadily increased year-on-year for the past four years from 35% in 2009-10 to 42% in 2012-13. This composite figure is difficult to interpret: it is broken down by discipline area in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 to give a clearer picture. Gender balance across the Conservatoire is related to the traditionally different recruiting patterns in the subject disciplines (see Tables 6-8). Anecdotally, schools report a higher number of male applicants to dance courses in recent years and feel that this is likely to be due to a number of factors including more male dancers as role models and an increased prominence of dance in popular culture.

<sup>1</sup> Equality Challenge Unit (ECU, 2012), "Quality in higher education: statistical report 2012 Part two: students" <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/equality-in-he-stats-2012>

National HESA data for 2010-11 shows that 43.6% of all HEI students were male: this figure has been slightly increasing year on year. In creative arts subjects the corresponding figure for male students is 38.7%. These figures do not provide a particularly relevant benchmark because, in most HE courses, gender is not an issue at admission or in training, whereas at some Conservatoire schools, there are gender specific issues in regard to roles and casting in dance and acting training.



## b) Disabled students

It was noted in last year's Equalities Review (CDD, 2012) that there has been a steady increase in the percentage of disabled students at Conservatoire schools (from 11% to 19%) in the four years preceding and including 2009-10, but that the percentage for 2010-11 had fallen to 16% as shown in Table 1. The percentage for 2011-12 is similar to that for 2009-10. It should be noted that the percentage given for disabled students in 2012-13 (16%) is almost certainly an under-estimate because the data was collected at enrolment in September 2012 and so will exclude students who disclose in the first year of their training. This will include those who receive, for the first time, a diagnosis for a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia.

Although the number of disabled students is relatively small and must be analysed with caution, it seems likely that the percentage of disabled students is now reaching a plateau.

HESA data shows that in 2010-11, 9.2% of undergraduate students disclosed a disability; for creative arts subjects this figure rose to 15.4%. When the disabled students' origin was analysed an interesting national picture emerged: 10.1% of UK students were disabled but only 4.3% of EU students and 2.4% of overseas students (non-EU). This discrepancy could be for a variety of reasons, e.g. reluctance to disclose, lack of diagnosis of specific learning difficulties in some countries, fewer overseas disabled people applying for courses.

It would be interesting to find out whether there is a similar disparity in the proportion of disabled students of UK origin at Conservatoire schools compared to those from EU countries and non-EU overseas students. If the picture at the Conservatoire mirrors the national figures it may mean that non-UK students are not disclosing or not coming forward for diagnostic assessment for SpLDs, possibly for cultural reasons. This may result in students not accessing the support they need. It might be useful to have information on disability vs country of origin but this is likely to be difficult to collect.

### **c) Black and minority ethnic (BME) students**

Table 1 shows that the percentage of black and minority ethnic (BME) students at Conservatoire schools has remained fairly static over four years at between 15 to 16%. National HESA data only provides data on UK domiciled BME students: for 2010-11, students of BME origin formed 19.7% of the total undergraduate population but in the creative arts this figure fell to 12.9%. In contrast to national HESA data, Conservatoire figures for BME students presented above also include those from the EU and overseas, a higher proportion of whom may classify themselves as of BME origin even though they would not be considered to be from 'minority ethnic groups' in their own country i.e. an overseas Japanese student may be recorded in the data as BME/Asian.

The subsequent tables in this report give more in depth equalities data. These are useful in helping us to identify gaps in information and recommendations for future equality actions.

**Table 2: 2010-2011 and 2011-12 Conservatoire data on disabled students according to HESA disability category and those in receipt of the Disabled Students Allowance**

HESA disability category	CDD Data			CDD Data		
	2010 – 2011			2011 – 2012		
	Number of students in the category	As a percentage of total disabled students	Number of students in the category in receipt of DSA	Number of students in the category	As a percentage of total disabled students	Number of students in the category in receipt of DSA
A specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia	133	71.1%	81	175	69.7%	104
Blind/partially sighted	6	3.2%	1	7	2.8%	1
Deaf/hearing impairment	5	2.7%	2	7	2.8%	2
Wheelchair user/ mobility difficulties	0	0	0	1	<1%	1
A long standing illness or health condition e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, cancer, HIV, asthma	24	12.8%	2	43	17.1%	4
Multiple disabilities	3	2.7%	2	1	<1%	1
A mental health condition e.g. depression , schizophrenia	8	4.3%	1	6	2.4%	0
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	1	<1%	0	3	1.2%	0
A disability not listed above	7	3.7%	2	8	3.2%	2
<b>Total disabled students/ students in receipt of DSA</b>	<b>187</b>		<b>91</b>	<b>251</b>		<b>115</b>

(Source: CDD)

Although our support for disabled and dyslexic students continues to be highly effective and we continue to out-perform the benchmark set by HESA in regard to DSA figures, we are still experiencing some difficulties in capturing and updating *accurate* data on the number of disabled students in receipt of the DSA. We are aware of under reporting in this area. This was identified in last year's Equality Report and we have developed actions to improve this.

Although it is available, our HESA data for disabled students in the academic year 2012-13 is incomplete and has not been included here. Instead, the HESA disability data for 2010-2011 has been provided for comparison.

Table 2 shows that, in 2011-12, students with **specific learning difficulties** (SpLD) accounted for the majority of disabled students at Conservatoire schools (69.7% of all disabled students) and they represented a sizeable minority (12.8%) of the total student body. This is similar to the picture in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

Nationally, according to HESA data for 2010-11 (reported by ECU, 2012), 47.7% of those who disclosed disability have a specific learning difficulty. There is no separate national HESA figure for students with SpLDs on creative arts courses but anecdotally it is known to be higher and this is certainly the case at the Conservatoire.

The number of students with SpLDs at Conservatoire schools has generally been increasing year-on-year. As reported last year, affiliate schools now have access to Quicksan software which assists in the early assessment and diagnosis of students with SpLDs who have not received a diagnosis at an earlier stage of their education.

Table 2 shows that the next largest category in 2011-12 was students with a **long-standing illness or health condition**. This category represented 17.1% of all disabled students and 3.1% of the total student body. Corresponding national HESA data for 2010-11 showed that this category of disabled students represented 11.9% of disabled students and 1.0% of total students.

2.4% of disabled students at Conservatoire schools in 2011-12 had a **mental health condition** compared to 8.3% nationally. The number of students disclosing a mental health condition at Conservatoire schools has remained fairly static over the past three years. This differs from the national picture where, according to ECU (2012):

*“In the last four years, the proportion of disabled students declaring a mental health condition increased from 5.9% in 2007/08 to 8.3% in 2010/11, an increase from 0.4% to 0.7% of the entire student population.”*

The Conservatoire now has Guidelines on Supporting Students with Mental Health Difficulties and by spring 2013, all affiliates will have received staff training on developing policy and practice. It will be interesting to see whether this work has an impact on the data in respect to students with mental health difficulties.

In 2011-12, Conservatoire data showed that 45.8% of disabled students at Conservatoire schools were in receipt of the **Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA)**. National HESA data reported by ECU indicated that 40.9% of disabled

students received DSA. The HESA figures for DSA uptake for students with SpLDs were somewhat higher: 59% at Conservatoire schools and 51% nationally. It should be noted that the percentage of disabled students in receipt of DSA will never approach 100% because EU and overseas students are ineligible.

Conservatoire data for 2011-12 indicated that 76 disabled students have impairments/ conditions other than SpLDs and 8 of these students received DSA. Therefore, according to the Conservatoire's HESA data, the uptake of DSA amongst non-SpLD disabled students is only 10.5%. There could be many reasons why these students are not in receipt of DSA, for example:

- some are non-UK students and are therefore ineligible
- some may not be able to provide the necessary medical evidence for application for DSA
- some may feel that they receive adequate support in their training and are unsure how the DSA would benefit them
- they may be aware of the DSA but choose not to apply
- they do not know about the DSA.

The uptake of Disabled Students Allowance is an important indicator of academic success because national HESA data (as analysed by ECU, 2012) has shown that those in receipt of the DSA are more likely to graduate with a higher class of degree.

*“Disabled students who received disabled students' allowance (DSA) were more likely to obtain a first class or upper second class honours degree (62.2%) than those who did not receive DSA (60.7%).”*

This suggests that affiliates might wish to review the encouragement they give to disabled students to apply for the DSA.

**Table 2.1: 2011-12 CDD and Affiliate data on disabled students and those in receipt of DSA**

	CDD data		Affiliate Data
	2011-12		2011-12
Affiliate	Number of students in each affiliate	Number of disabled students in each affiliate (with % of total students at the affiliate)	Students in receipt of DSA
<b>LAMDA</b>	198	30 (15%)	13
<b>CSB</b>	123	13 (11%)	19
<b>RADA</b>	259	55 (21%)	27
<b>BOVTS</b>	169	38 (22%)	24
<b>NSCD</b>	190	39 (21%)	35
<b>LCDS</b>	250	30 (12%)	41
<b>RSBCD</b>	114	22 (19%)	14
<b>CS</b>	65	24 (37%)	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	1368*	251**	183

\*Includes 47 students who withdrew during the year.

\*\*Includes 7 students who withdrew during the year.

The analysis of the data presented in Table 2.1 is difficult for the following two reasons:

- Unlike data on gender or ethnicity, information on the number of disabled students and the numbers of students in receipt of the DSA changes throughout the year as students either disclose, receive a diagnosis or make a successful application for the DSA. For this reason, it is important that affiliates regularly update the CDD on these changes. Unfortunately, there is still under reporting to the CDD which results in under reporting to HESA. Thus it appears that there are more students in receipt of DSA at two of the schools (CSB and LCDS) than there are disabled students, which cannot be true.
- It is not clear whether the data on disabled students collected by affiliate schools relates to all disabled students or just those with SpLDs and so this data must be interpreted with some caution.

Given the difficulties with the accuracy of the data on disabled students at the affiliate schools, there appears to be just two broad observations that can be made. In 2011-12, there was considerable variation between the affiliate schools in:

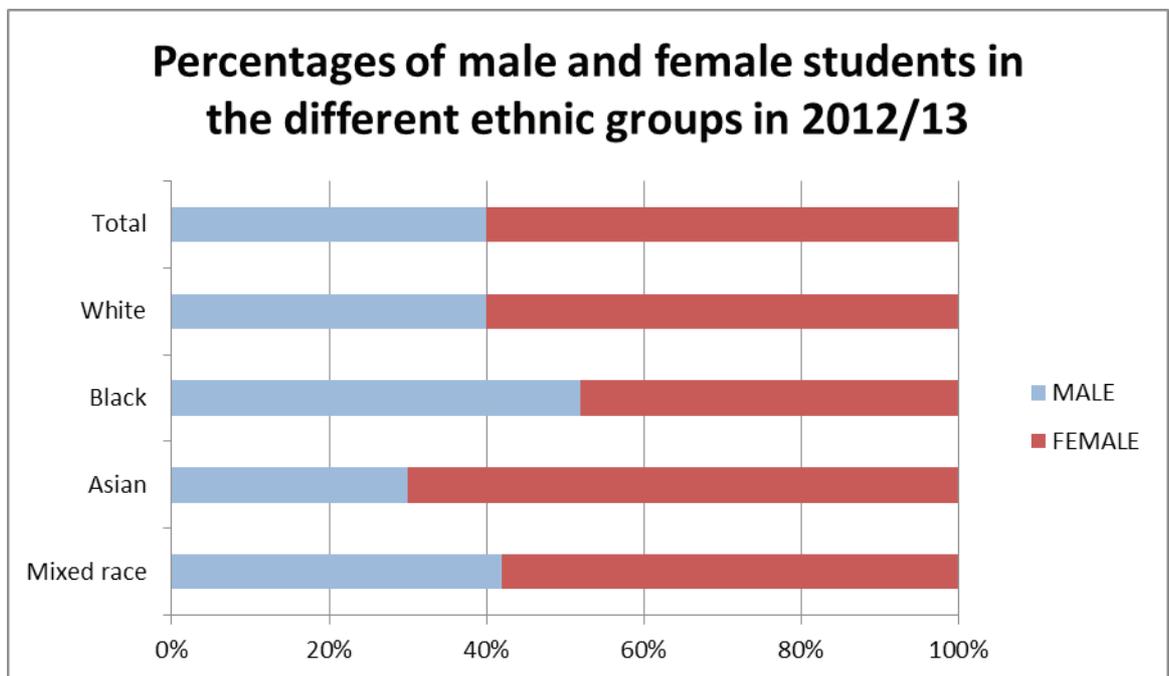
- Their percentage of disabled students (ranging from 12% to 37%)
- The uptake of DSA by disabled students.

### Recommendations

- Develop a common methodology for affiliate schools to capture data throughout the academic year on:
  - Students who disclose disability or are diagnosed (e.g. with SpLDs)
  - Disabled students in receipt of DSA.
- Ensure that this data is then collated and reported to HESA in the final return: to be monitored by the E&DG Manager.

**Table 3: 2011-12 and 2012-13 data on ethnicity and gender for Conservatoire students**

HESA ethnicity category	2011-2012			2012-2013		
	Total (as a % of total students)	Male (as a % of students in the ethnic category)	Female (as a % of students in the ethnic category)	Total (as a % of total students)	Male (as a % of students in the ethnic category)	Female (as a % of students in the ethnic category)
White (codes 10 +19)	1152 (84%)	463 (40%)	689 (60%)	1117 (85%)	464 (42%)	653 (58%)
Black (codes 21, 22 + 29)	50 (4%)	26 (52%)	24 (48%)	48 (4%)	25 (52%)	23 (48%)
Asian (codes 31 – 34, 39)	66 (5%)	20 (30%)	46 (70%)	54 (4%)	16 (30%)	38 (70%)
Mixed race (codes 41 – 43 + 49)	71 (5%)	30 (42%)	41 (58%)	72 (5%)	37 (51%)	35 (49%)
Other ethnic background (code 80)	12 (<1%)	5	7	10 (<1%)	4	6
Not known/ information refused (codes 90, 98)	17 (1%)	7	10	9 (<1%)	6	3
Total	1368	551 (40%)	817 (60%)	1310	552 (42%)	758 (58%)



In Table 3, percentages have been calculated to show the proportion of male and female students in each ethnic grouping. This is represented graphically in the bar chart which shows the percentages of male and female students in the four main ethnic groups for 2012-13. The bar chart for the preceding year looks similar.

The data for 2012-13 showed that, although the numbers of BME students in the Black, Asian and mixed race groupings are relatively small, there are differences in the proportion of male and female students across the different ethnic groups at Conservatoire schools:

- For **White** students the proportion of male to female students was the same as total students (i.e. 42% men and 58% women)
- For **Black** students the number of male and female students was roughly equal, indicating a higher proportion of Black male students compared to total male students
- Amongst **Asian** students 70% were women and 30% were men, indicating a higher proportion of Asian female students compared to total female students.

A similar picture on ethnicity and gender was observed in the data presented in our two previous equalities reviews that cover the period 2006-2011. In our last equalities review (CDD, 2012) we said the corresponding figures on ethnicity and gender for application and offer would be extracted and analysed in order to investigate the underlying cause and potential significance of these figures. This is reported in [Section C](#) of this Appendix (see Table 5.2).

## B. Equalities data on enrolled students at affiliate schools

**Table 4.1: Equalities data on enrolled students by discipline at individual affiliate schools for 2011-12**

All students 2011-2012		Male		Female		Disabled		BME	
School	Total	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Acting programmes									
BOVTS	82	43	52%	39	48%	13	16%	3	4%
LAMDA	155	94	61%	61	39%	23	15%	24	15%
RADA	118	59	50%	59	50%	30	25%	24	20%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>14%</b>
TTSM Programmes									
BOVTS	87	39	45%	48	55%	25	29%	1	1%
LAMDA	43	16	37%	27	63%	7	16%	3	7%
RADA	141	42	30%	99	70%	25	18%	16	11%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7%</b>
Dance and Circus Programmes									
CSB	123	49	40%	74	60%	13	11%	24	20%
Circus Space	65	33	51%	32	49%	24	37%	6	9%
LCDS	250	83	33%	167	67%	30	12%	54	22%
NSCD	190	43	23%	147	77%	39	21%	22	12%
Rambert	114	50	44%	64	56%	22	19%	22	19%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>CDD total</b>	<b>1368</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>15%</b>

**Table 4.2: Equalities data on enrolled students by discipline at individual affiliate schools for 2012-13**

All students 2012-2013		Male		Female		Disabled *		BME	
School	Total	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Acting programmes									
BOVTS	81	43	53%	38	47%	11	14%	10	12%
LAMDA	151	102	68%	49	32%	26	17%	22	15%
RADA	88	45	51%	43	49%	12	14%	15	17%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>15%</b>
TTSM programmes									
BOVTS	81	36	44%	45	56%	16	20%	2	2%
LAMDA	49	19	39%	30	61%	9	18%	5	10%
RADA	133	46	35%	87	65%	12	9%	20	15%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10%</b>
Dance and Circus programmes									
CSB	117	44	38%	73	62%	15	13%	15	13%
Circus Space	62	28	45%	34	55%	23	37%	5	8%
LCDS	246	84	34%	162	66%	22	9%	62	25%
NSCD	197	61	31%	136	69%	38	19%	23	12%
Rambert	105	44	42%	61	58%	16	15%	16	15%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>CDD total</b>	<b>1310</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>15%</b>

\* The data for disabled students in 2012-13 is incomplete as previously explained

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 provide data on the numbers and percentages of enrolled students in each of the equality categories (male/ female, disabled, BME) for the three subject disciplines for 2011-12 and 2012-13:

- Acting
- Technical Theatre and Stage Management (TTSM)
- Dance and Circus

The data is also broken down by affiliate school.

It should be noted that the actual numbers of students in each of the categories are relatively small and only a small fluctuation would make a considerable difference to the percentages: this data should therefore be interpreted with some caution.

### **Students from BME backgrounds**

- The percentage of students from BME backgrounds was lower on TTSM courses than on Acting or Dance/ Circus courses. Although the percentage of BME students on TTSM courses has risen at all three schools over the two years, the numbers at BOVTS were still small in comparison to LAMDA and RADA.
- It is noteworthy that the percentage of BME students enrolled on Acting courses at BOVTS has increased from 4% in 2011-2 to 12% in 2012-13. This significant increase may be due to BOVTS' recent work with theatre groups and colleges who are involved in working with young people who might not be aware of the process of applying for a place at drama school or what the training involves.

### **Disabled students**

- In 2011-12, the percentage of disabled students on TTSM courses was slightly higher than on Acting or Dance/Circus courses: 21% compared to 19% and 17% respectively.

### **Gender**

- In our three drama schools, male students formed the majority on Acting courses: this increased from 55% in 2011-12 to 59% in 2012-13. In contrast, the other disciplines had just over a third male students.
- There was a considerable amount of variation in the gender balance of enrolled students between the affiliate schools: in Acting for example, the number of male students ranges from 51% to 68%. On TTSM courses the percentage ranges from 35% to 44%; and in Dance/ Circus, from 31% to 45% (2012-13 figures).

## APPLICATIONS

### C. Equalities data on applications received in 2011-12 across all affiliate schools for enrolment in 2012-13

The data presented in this section is a summary of equalities data for all undergraduate applications to Conservatoire affiliate schools in the application round of 2011-12 for enrolment in the 2012-13 academic year.

Corresponding data on undergraduate applications from UCAS for the 2011-12 application period<sup>2</sup> is provided in order to set Conservatoire data within national benchmarks on application and offer to higher education courses. However, it should be noted that the Conservatoire's applications data includes all applicants - UK, EU and non-EU overseas - whereas the UCAS data does not include non-EU overseas applicants.

#### Notes on the calculation of percentages in the tables in Sections C and D (unless otherwise specified)

\* The percentage figure given for Applications represents the number of applicants in each equalities group expressed as a percentage of the total number of applicants

# The percentage figure given for Offers and Acceptances represents the number of applicants in each equalities group expressed as a percentage of the number of applicants in that equalities group

**Table 5: 2011-12 equalities data on applicants to Conservatoire schools**

CDD	Applications		Offers		Acceptances	
	No.	% *	No.	% #	No.	% #
<b>Total</b>	<b>10002</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
Male	3508	35.1%	259	7.4%	187	5.3%
Female	6481	64.9%	357	5.5%	235	3.6%
Disabled	1126	11.3%	73	6.5%	58	5.2%
BME	1159	11.6%	93	8.0%	62	5.3%
Over 25	943	9.4%	25	2.7%	19	2.0%

<sup>2</sup> UCAS data tables [http://www.ucas.ac.uk/about\\_us/stat\\_services/stats\\_online/data\\_tables/](http://www.ucas.ac.uk/about_us/stat_services/stats_online/data_tables/)

**Note:** 13 applicants did not indicate their gender on the application form. The percentage of male and female applicants was calculated against a total figure of 9989.

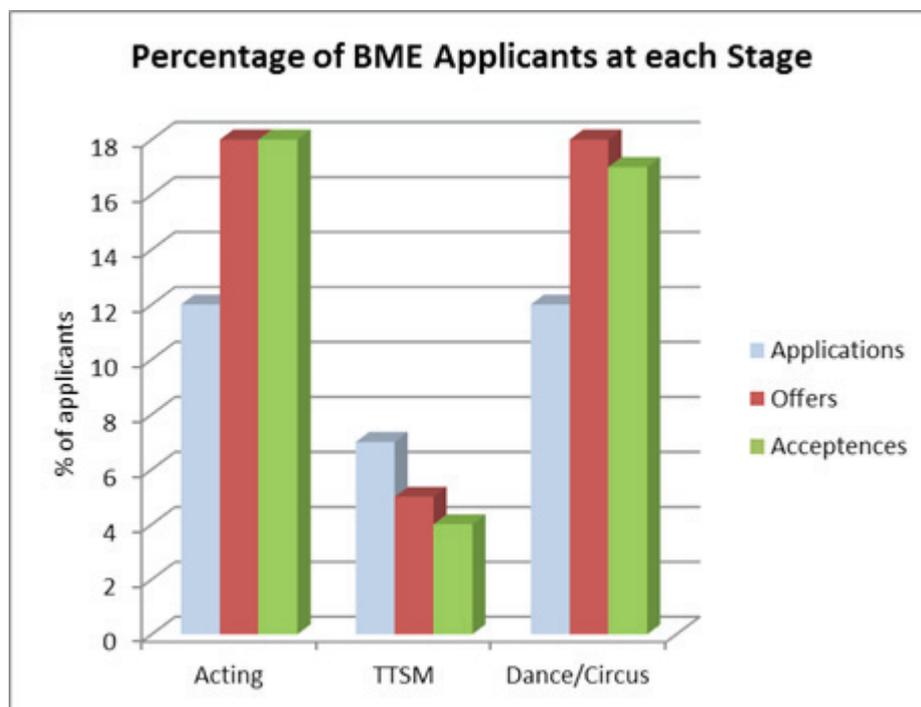
**a) Gender**

The data presented in Table 5 shows that there were nearly twice as many female applicants to Conservatoire schools in 2011-12 compared to male applicants. However, male applicants are more likely to be made an offer of a place and to take up that offer (7.4% and 5.3%) compared to female applicants (5.5% and 3.6%). Corresponding UCAS figures show that, nationally, there were slightly more female applicants (56%) compared to male applicants (44%) and that offers were made in the same proportion.

**b) Ethnicity**

The data presented in Table 5 shows that people from BME groups made up 11.6% of total applicants to Conservatoire schools in 2011-12. However, applicants from BME groups were more likely to receive an offer of place: 8.0% of BME applicants received an offer compared to 6.2% of total applicants.

**Table 5**



Corresponding UCAS figures showed that, nationally, 24% of applicants for undergraduate courses were from BME groups and a similar proportion received an offer of a place; significantly more than at Conservatoire schools.

Table 5.1 allows us to look at equalities data on the ethnicity of applicants in more detail: it presents data on applicants in the various HESA ethnicity categories.

**Table 5.1: 2011-12 data on ethnicity of applicants to Conservatoire schools**

HESA ethnicity category	Applicants		Offers		Acceptances	
	No.	% *	No.	% #	No.	% #
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,002</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
White (codes 10 +14)	8,581	85.8%	513	6.0%	355	4.1%
Black (codes 21, 22 + 29)	275	2.75%	18	6.5%	14	5.1%
Asian (codes 31 – 34 + 39)	210	2.1%	24	11.4%	12	5.7%
Mixed race (codes 41 – 43 + 49)	595	6.0%	47	7.9%	33	5.5%
Other ethnic background (code 80)	79	0.8%	4	0.04%	3	0.03%
Not known/information refused (codes 90, 98)	262	2.6%	30	0.3%	19	0.2%

85.8% of applicants for Conservatoire courses were White but applicants from all four of the major BME groups were more likely to receive an offer of a place than White applicants. In particular, 11.4% of Asian applicants and 7.9% of mixed-race applicants were offered a place compared to 6.0% of White applicants. However, Asian applicants who were offered a place were least likely to take up their place: only half of those who received an offer accepted it.

It is important to note that many overseas applicants who identify themselves as belonging to one of the BME categories will not be from an ethnic minority in their own country (for example, applicants from Japan). Individual school data shows that in the majority of our dance schools, more applications are received from Asian applicants than Black applicants which is in contrast to acting, TTSM and Circus. This could be because of the higher number of overseas applicants to dance schools who identify as 'Asian' on the application form. This data is not analysed in this report, but it might be interesting to distinguish between UK/EU and overseas applicants in relation to ethnicity.

## Recommendation

- In order to provide a clearer picture on ethnicity and applications, we plan to distinguish between UK/EU and overseas applicants in relation to ethnicity.

### c) Ethnicity and Gender

Data presented in our previous Equalities Report (CDD, 2012) indicated that, for enrolled students at Conservatoire schools, there were differences in the proportion of male and female students across the different ethnic groups. This has also been reported on here (Table 3). In order to investigate the underlying cause and potential significance of these observations, it was decided to extract and analyse data on ethnicity and gender for application, offer and acceptance.

**Note on the calculation of percentages:** In Table 5.2 percentages have been calculated to show the proportion of male and female students in each ethnic grouping for that phase in the application cycle (i.e. Application/ Offer/ Acceptance). This has been done to facilitate comparisons in relation to gender across the ethnic groups. So, for example, 57% of female White applicants were made an offer compared to 44% of female Black applicants.

**Table 5.2: 2011-12 data on ethnicity and gender of applicants to Conservatoire schools**

		Applicants 2011-12		Offers 2011-12		Acceptances 2011-12	
HESA ethnicity category  (See Note on how percentages given have been calculated)	Gender	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total (9,989)*	Female	6481	65%	357	58%	235	56%
	Male	3508	35%	259	42%	187	44%
White  (codes 10 +14)	Female	5548	65%	280	57%	186	55%
	Male	3025	35%	213	43%	155	45%
Black  (codes 21, 22 + 29)	Female	143	52%	8	44%	6	43%
	Male	132	48%	10	56%	8	57%
Asian  (codes 31 – 34 + 39)	Female	148	70%	19	79%	10	83%
	Male	62	30%	5	21%	2	17%
Mixed race  (codes 41 – 43 + 49)	Female	404	68%	25	53%	16	48%
	Male	189	32%	22	47%	17	52%
Other ethnic background  (code 80)	Female	57	72%	4	100%	3	100%
	Male	22	28%	0	-	0	-
Ethnicity not known/ information refused (codes 90, 98)	Female	181	70%	21	70%	14	74%
	Male	78	30%	9	30%	5	26%

\*This number excludes 13 applicants who did not indicate their gender on the application form, and thus cannot be included here.

The actual numbers for those made an offer and those accepting that offer in the various BME categories were relatively small and the data should therefore be interpreted with caution. The percentages in each category are nevertheless interesting and a similar analysis in subsequent years could indicate whether the tentative conclusions made below are likely to represent a true interpretation.

- The percentages for male and female **White** applicants were almost identical to the gender balance for total applicants at application/offer/acceptance. The number of female White applicants was nearly twice as high as male, but male White applicants were more likely to be offered a place than female White applicants. Men made up 35% of White applicants and 43% of those offered a place. Women made up 65% of White applicants but only 57% of those offered a place.
- Unlike White applicants, the number of female **Black** applicants was only slightly higher than the number of male black applicants. But, whereas 1 in 13 of male Black applicants received an offer, only 1 in 18 of female Black applicants received an offer.
- 70% of the total number of **Asian** applicants were female and 79% of the offers made to Asian applicants were to women. This indicates that, contrary to the overall gender picture, female Asian applicants were more likely to be offered a place than male. (Please see earlier comments in relation to overseas Asian applicants for dance courses.)
- In the **Mixed race** category, twice as many women applied than men. However, of those offered a place, 53% were women and 47% were men. This indicates that male applicants in this group were considerably more likely to be offered a place than women.

#### d) Disability

Table 5 shows that, in 2011-12, 11.3% of all applicants to Conservatoire schools disclosed a disability. UCAS figures for 2011-12 applicants to all undergraduate higher education courses indicated that of 8.1% all applicants disclosed a disability.

Table 5 also shows that disabled applicants are not discriminated against in the application process, receiving a similar percentage of offers (6.5%) to the total cohort. Although the numbers are small, it appears that disabled applicants were more likely to accept their offer of a place compared to the total cohort of applicants: 1 in 24 of all applicants accepted the offer of a place, 1 in 19 disabled applicants accepted their offer of a place.

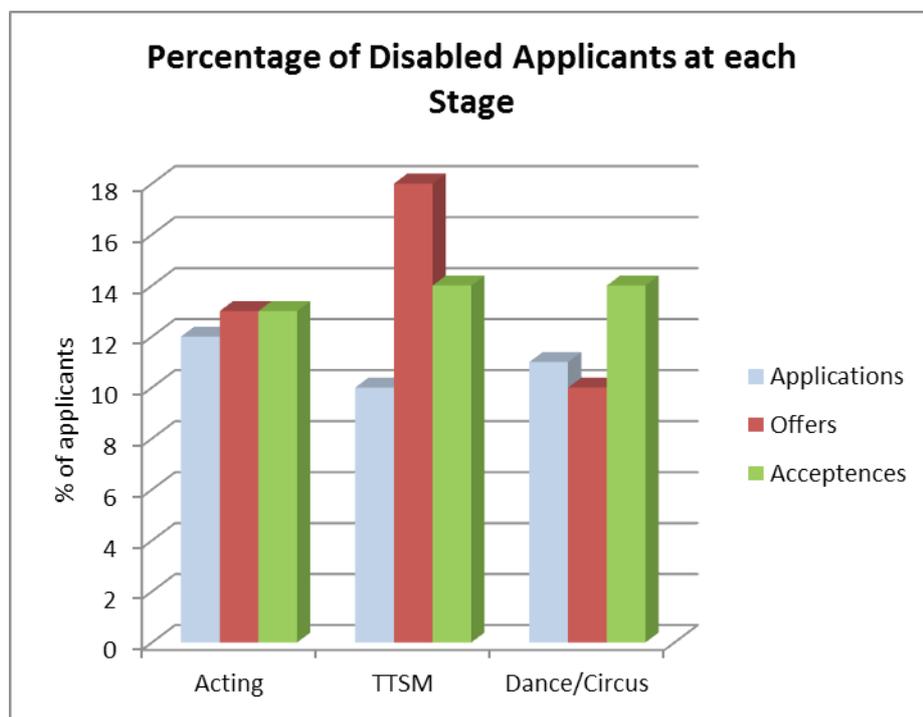


Table 5.3 looks at the data on disabled applicants in a little more detail using the HESA disability categories. It should be noted that the number of applicants in some categories is extremely small: percentages for offers and acceptances for those HESA categories where the number of applicants was less than 50 have not been given because just a small change in the number offered a place would have changed the percentage considerably.

**Table 5.3: 2011-12 data on applicants to Conservatoire schools who disclosed a disability in the various HESA disability categories**

HESA disability category	Applicants 2011-12		Offers 2011-12		Acceptances 2011-12	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total disabled	1126	100%	69	6.1%	55	4.9%
A specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia	688	61.1%	48	7.0%	38	5.5%
A longstanding illness or health condition e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma	224	19.9%	14	6.3%	11	4.9%
A mental health condition	71	6.3%	1	1.4%	0	-
Blind/partially sighted	14	1.2%	0	-	0	-
Deaf/hearing impairment	29	2.6%	2		2	
Wheelchair user/mobility difficulties	10	0.9%	0		0	-
Multiple disabilities	16	1.4%	2		2	
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	34	3.0%	2		2	
A disability not listed above	40	3.6%	0	-	0	-

The majority of disabled applicants were those with a **specific learning difficulty** (61.1% of total disabled applicants). The next largest groups were those with a **longstanding illness or health condition** (19.9%) and those with a **mental health condition** (6.3%). The corresponding figures for UCAS applicants were: specific learning difficulty (53%); long-standing illness or health condition (10.5%); mental health condition (10.3%). Nationally, UCAS data showed a higher proportion of applicants with sensory, mobility or communication impairments than amongst Conservatoire applicants.

Although the number of applicants with **mental health conditions** was relatively small, only 1.4% were offered a place which is much less than the percentage of total disabled applicants made an offer (6.1%). This may help to explain the observation made previously (see Table 2) that a relatively low proportion of disabled students at Conservatoire schools have a mental health difficulty (2.4%). The implications of this data must be interpreted with caution because the numbers are extremely small but it would be interesting to see whether the data is replicated in subsequent years.

## e) Age

Table 5.4: 2011-12 data on age of applicants to Conservatoire schools

Age categories	Applicants 2011-12		Offers 2011-12		Acceptances 2011-12	
	No	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	10002	100%	616	6.2%	422	4.2%
Under-18	794	7.94%	126	15.9%	71	8.9%
18 -20	5667	56.7%	326	5.8%	238	4.2%
21-25	2702	27.0%	134	5.0%	91	3.4%
Over 25	765	7.7%	25	3.3%	19	2.5%
Unknown	74		5		3	

Unusually for higher education, two of the Conservatoire schools (CSB and Rambert) take students from the age of 16. Amongst these applicants (i.e. the **Under-18 group**) there was a much higher offer rate (15.9%) compared to total offers made to applicants of all ages (6.2%). However, the Under-18's acceptance rate (at only 56% of the offers made) was lower when compared to the other age groups. The reason for this is likely to be complex, but these applicants often apply for places at a number of different prestigious ballet schools: see the discussion following Table 8.

The **18-20 age group** represented over half of all applicants and the offer and acceptance rates were similar to the total of all applicants. The **21-25 group** represented about a quarter of all applicants and their offer and acceptance rates were lower than the total of all applicants. The **over 25's** represented only 7.7% of all applicants and they were much less likely to be offered a place than applicants in the other age groups. The distribution of the age of applicants to Conservatoire schools was different to the national picture (UCAS data) where 73% of applicants were aged 18-20, 13.4% were aged 21-25, and 13.6% were aged 25 and older.

The data therefore shows that the 18-20 year-olds are by far the largest group of applicants. The older applicants get, the less likely they are to be offered a place.

## D. Equalities data on applications received in 2011-12 by discipline for enrolment in 2012-13

**Table 6: 2011-12 equalities data for applicants to Acting courses**

Acting	Applications		Offers		Acceptances	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Total</b>	7823*	100%	133	1.7%	110	1.4%
<b>Male</b>	3052	39%	80	2.6%	65	2.1%
<b>Female</b>	4764	60.9%	53	1.1%	45	0.9%
<b>Disabled</b>	954	12.2%	16	1.7%	14	1.5%
<b>BME</b>	911	11.6%	24	2.6%	18	2.0%
<b>Over 25</b>	688	8.8%	13	1.9%	10	1.5%

**Note:** \* Some applicants did not indicate their gender on their application form (male + female ≠ total)

Reflecting the extremely high competition for places at Conservatoire schools, only 1.7%, or 1 in 59, of those applying for Acting courses were made an offer. However, this very talented group of applicants are likely to be offered more than one place, often at another Conservatoire school. The acceptance rate for Acting courses was still relatively high at 82.4%.

As is well known, the number of **female** applicants for Acting courses was considerably greater than that for **male** applicants: in 2011-12, 61% of applicants were female and 39% male. However male applicants were more than twice as likely to be made an offer, compared to female applicants. Of those made an offer, 81% of males and 85% of females accepted: the acceptance rate for women applicants to Acting courses appeared to be slightly higher than for men but these figures should be interpreted with some caution because the numbers are relatively small.

The percentage of Acting applicants who were **disabled** was 12.2%. The percentage of disabled applicants being offered a place and taking up that offer was similar to the percentages for total applicants, indicating that disabled applicants were not disadvantaged in the application process.

Applicants from **BME** groups represented 11.6% of the total number of applicants for Acting courses. 2.6% of these applicants were made an offer compared to 1.7% of total applicants, indicating that applicants from BME groups were

more likely to be made an offer. As noted previously, we have not distinguished between Home/EU BME applicants and those from overseas.

8.8% of applications for Acting courses were from older people (**over 25**). The data suggests that these applicants were no more or less likely to be made an offer of a place when compared to total applicants.

**Table 7: 2011-12 equalities data for applicants to Technical Theatre and Stage Management (TTSM) courses**

TTSM	Applications		Offers		Acceptances	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Total</b>	277	100%	129	46.6%	77	27.8%
<b>Male</b>	97	35.0%	48	49.5%	33	34.0%
<b>Female</b>	180	65.0%	81	45.0%	44	24.4%
<b>Disabled</b>	47	17.0%	23	48.9%	11	23.4%
<b>BME</b>	20	7.2%	6	30.0%	3	15%
<b>Over 25</b>	27	9.7%	7	25.9%	5	18.5%

Nearly half of applicants to TTSM courses were made an offer but only slightly more than half of those offered a place accepted the offer. The reasons for this are not clear and it would be interesting to do some follow up research on whether, for example, applicants refuse a place because they receive an offer from another drama school or university course or whether they go straight into the industry.

As with Acting courses, the percentage of **female** applicants (65%) for TTSM courses was considerably more than that for **male** applicants (35%). However, unlike Acting courses, around half of both male and female applicants were offered a place, i.e. there was no bias towards making an offer to male applicants as in Acting disciplines. However, male applicants were more likely to accept the offer of a place. 69% of men offered a place on TTSM courses accepted the offer, compared to 54% of women. The higher number of women students enrolled on TTSM courses (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2) therefore appears to be directly related to the numbers applying.

17% of those applying for TTSM courses identified themselves as **disabled** which is higher than for Acting courses. Although the numbers were relatively small and it is therefore difficult to draw conclusions, the percentage of disabled applicants being offered a place and accepting that offer was similar to the percentages for total applicants.

7.2% of applicants were from **BME** groups; this is considerably less than the proportion applying to Acting courses (11.6%). It also appears that applicants from BME groups were less likely to be made an offer or to take up a place when compared to the whole cohort of applicants. This is an apparent reversal of the situation on Acting courses. This data must necessarily be interpreted with caution because the numbers are relatively small. However, one possible contributing factor is that these roles are less visible, being 'behind the scenes' in nature. While acting roles in television, film and theatre have visibly become much more ethnically diverse over the last few decades, offering role models to BME students, the same has not been seen in the less visible arena of 'backstage' roles.

Some schools offering TTSM courses are taking action to address this apparent imbalance; RADA, for example, has a progression agreement with Lewisham College, a large London FE college which has a diverse student body and offers a pre-HE level course in Technical Theatre and Stage Production. Centrally, the Conservatoire plans to do more Widening Participation work in attracting students from underrepresented BME groups to TTSM courses.

Older students (**over 25**) were also less likely to be offered a place on a TTSM course or to take up that offer. Again the actual numbers are very small.

The implications of these observations about applicants from BME groups and applicants who are over 25 to TTSM courses should be reviewed in subsequent years to see whether they represent a true picture.

**Table 8: 2011-12 equalities data for applicants to Dance and Circus courses**

	Applications		Offers		Acceptances	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Dance &amp; Circus</b>						
<b>Total</b>	1902	100%	354	18.6%	235	12.4%
<b>Male*</b>	359	18.9%	131	36.5%	89	24.8%
<b>Female*</b>	1537	81.1%	223	14.5%	146	9.5%
<b>Disabled</b>	213	11.2%	34	16.0%	33	15.5%
<b>BME</b>	228	12.0%	63	27.6%	41	18.0%
<b>Over 25</b>	50	2.6%	5	10.0%	4	8.0%

**Notes:** \* Some applicants did not indicate their gender on their application form

18.6% of those applying for Dance and Circus courses were offered a place but only two thirds of those accepted the offer. Lower acceptance rates for dance programmes relate to the markets in which Conservatoire dance schools operate, although all schools are considered amongst the best in the world. In classical ballet, for example, schools such as the English National Ballet School, Elmhurst and the Royal Ballet School are now able to offer more attractive finance packages through the Dance and Drama Awards, or Music and Dance Scheme where students, especially those from lower-income backgrounds, are required to make a relatively small or no contribution to the cost of their training. However, students at these schools do not graduate with degrees.

In addition, all our schools offering dance and circus training face tough competition from European conservatoires, which again are often able to offer better financial assistance to EU students and lower course fees. In contrast, in acting training, the Conservatoire has three of the most highly-regarded drama schools in the UK, which although they may be in competition with each other for the best students, face little or no competition from European schools offering better financial packages. The result is that acceptance rates for Acting courses were higher than for Dance and Circus courses at 82.4%

The ratio of **female** to **male** applicants to dance/ circus courses is around 4:1 but, whereas 14.5% of female applicants were offered a place, 36.5% of male applicants received an offer. This favouring of male applicants is likely to reflect the need for male students to fill gender specific roles, particularly in classical forms of dance both in training and in the industry.

11.2% of applicants were **disabled**. Although they did not appear to be disadvantaged in terms of offers it is interesting to note that most disabled applicants for Dance and Circus courses accepted their offers. It would be interesting to see whether this observation is replicated in future years and what the implications for this choice by disabled students might be. The choice made by disabled students (the majority of whom have specific learning difficulties) may be because Conservatoire Dance and Circus schools have a good reputation for providing support for dyslexic students.

12% of applicants to Dance and Circus courses were from **BME** groups; this proportion is similar to Acting courses. As with Acting courses, BME applicants were more likely to be offered and to accept a place on Dance and Circus courses compared to total applicants.

As might be expected for these disciplines, the proportion of applicants aged over 25 was very small (2.6%) and they were considerably less likely to be made an offer.

## Summary of Recommendations

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- Consider whether we wish to extend equalities data collection and reporting to applicants and enrolled students on postgraduate courses
- Develop a common methodology for affiliate schools to capture data throughout the academic year on:
  - students who disclose disability or are diagnosed (e.g. with SpLDs)
  - disabled students in receipt of DSA.
- Ensure that this data is then collated and reported to HESA in the final return: to be monitored by the E&DG Manager
- In order to provide a clearer picture on ethnicity and applications, we plan to distinguish between UK/EU and overseas applicants in relation to ethnicity.

## APPENDIX 3: SECTOR BENCHMARKING DATA, TTSM COURSES

NB: The abbreviation 'TTSM' refers to Technical Theatre and Stage Management courses. Some institutions use other titles for similar courses, for example, Stage Management and Theatre Production.

Data spanning a three-year period was collected from the three Conservatoire schools that offer TTSM programmes (BOVTS, LAMDA, RADA), in addition to three comparative HEIs that also offer these types of programmes at degree level.

We would like to thank the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and Mountview for sharing with us their gender data on TTSM courses. Mountview supplied us with data on enrolled students only and not on applicants and we have made the decision not to include this data in our comparison.

### Numbers of Female and Male Applicants and Numbers of Enrolled Students

Comparative HEIs in 2009-10	Applied TTSM	Male (%)	Female (%)	Enrolled TTSM	Male (%)	Female (%)
BOVTS	63	27 (43%)	36 (57%)	23	11 (48%)	12 (52%)
LAMDA	89	42 (47%)	47 (53%)	22	9 (41%)	13 (59%)
RADA	121	51 (42%)	70 (58%)	25	7 (28%)	18 (72%)
Royal Central School of Speech and Drama	291	143 (49%)	148 (51%)	23	12 (52%)	11 (48%)
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	99*	39 (39%)	57 (58%)	26	16 (62%)	10 (38%)
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama	149	75 (50%)	74 (50%)	16	7 (44%)	9 (56%)

## Programmes Over the Past Three Years, 2009-2012

\*Includes 3 applicants who did not indicate their gender on the application form

Comparative HEIs 2010-11	Applied TTSM	Male (%)	Female (%)	Enrolled TTSM	Male (%)	Female (%)
BOVTS	64	20 (31%)	44 (69%)	22	8 (38%)	14 (62%)
LAMDA	93	33 (35%)	60 (65%)	20	8 (40%)	12 (60%)
RADA	122	49 (40%)	73 (60%)	29	11 (38%)	18 (62%)
Royal Central School of Speech and Drama	239	117 (49%)	122 (51%)	32	15 (47%)	17 (53%)
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	110	40 (36%)	70 (64%)	34	14 (41%)	20 (59%)
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama	84	34 (40%)	50 (60%)	20	5 (25%)	15 (75%)

Comparative HEIs 2011-12	Applied TTSM	Male (%)	Female (%)	Enrolled TTSM	Male (%)	Female (%)
BOVTS	57	24 (42%)	33 (58%)	28	12 (43%)	16 (57%)
LAMDA	109	37 (34%)	72 (66%)	24	8 (33%)	16 (67%)
RADA	139	44 (32%)	95 (68%)	29	7 (24%)	22 (76%)
Royal Central School of Speech and Drama	256	129 (50%)	127 (50%)	21	8 (38%)	13 (62%)
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	122	39 (32%)	82 (67%)	31	12 (39%)	19 (61%)
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama	127	57 (45%)	70 (55%)	20	10 (50%)	10 (50%)

Sector average	Applied TTSM	Male (%)	Female (%)	Enrolled TTSM	Male (%)	Female (%)
2009-10	135	63 (47%)	72 (53%)	22	10 (45%)	12 (55%)
2010-11	119	49 (41%)	70 (59%)	26	10 (38%)	16 (62%)
2011-12	135	55 (41%)	80 (59%)	25	9 (36%)	16 (64%)

CDD average	Applied TTSM	Male (%)	Female (%)	Enrolled TTSM	Male (%)	Female (%)
2009-10	91	40 (44%)	51 (56%)	23	9 (39%)	14 (51%)
2010-11	93	34 (37%)	59 (64%)	24	9 (38%)	15 (62%)
2011-12	102	35 (34%)	67 (66%)	27	9 (33%)	18 (67%)

When considering the sector average data above, it is worth noting that the number of applications to the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (RCSSD) is much larger than the other HEIs surveyed, and as such disproportionately affects the average figure. It is possible that applications to RCSSD are higher due to the difference in the application process at this institution: RCSSD uses UCAS which allows applicants to apply to five university courses at the same time. Applicants for RCSSD courses may be applying both to their TTSM course and to other 'academic' university courses and this might account for the higher number of applications.

The averaged CDD data indicates a decrease in the proportion of **male applicants**, from 44% of all applications to TTSM courses received in 2009-10 to 34% of applications in 2011-12. The sector average shows a similar decrease in male applicants (47% in 2009-10 to 41% in 2011-12). The proportion of **male students** across this three year period has also fallen across Conservatoire schools (39% - 33%) and across the sector (45% - 36%). This suggests that both the Conservatoire schools and the sector make decisions about offer of place on merit/suitability for the course alone. We know that in other disciplines, such as acting and classical ballet, gender balance does decisions about offer due to the nature of roles in these disciplines (e.g casting issues and traditional male and female roles in classical dance) and the much greater number of female applicants to male (80% female to 20% male in applications to Conservatoire dance schools in 2011-12).

Between 2009-10 and 2010-11, applications to TTSM courses at Conservatoire schools rose by 2.1%. In contract, applications to TTSM courses across all six HEIs included in this survey fell by 8.6%. Between 2010-11 and 2011-12, applications in both instances rose, by 9.3% to TTSM at Conservatoire schools, and 13.7% to TTSM across the six HEIs surveyed. It is worth noting that while

there was a reported sector-wide 'rush' in applications to Higher Education courses commencing in 2011-12, ahead of the higher fees coming into effect in 2012-13 (£9,000 in many institutions, including the Conservatoire), the Conservatoire as a whole did not experience an unusual spike in applications in this year, suggesting that the rise in applications to these TTSM courses at Conservatoire schools may be part of an ongoing trend, rather than a one-off rise.

It is interesting to speculate why there are consistently more applications from women to places on TTSM courses across the sector (an average of 59.5% for the six schools over the past three years) and it would be interesting to conduct further qualitative research into this. Anecdotally, Conservatoire schools report that although there has been a traditional male/female divide in the choices students make during their training; Lighting and Construction for example, have previously been perceived as 'male dominated', it is increasingly clear that women do not agree with these stereotypes. At RADA for example, the figures have grown over the last 10 years so that women represent 53% of the graduating Construction students. Similar figures or higher are also true of graduates who have chosen Lighting as their speciality. For more discussion on gender equality and training, see [Section 4 \(4.3\)](#) of this report.