

Policy Statement

The National Centre for Circus Arts is committed to supporting the circus sector by opening its premises to professional circus artists. As the UK's largest and most versatile training facility for circus, we aim to provide a safe, supportive and creative environment in which circus artists can maintain and develop their craft.

To access our facilities, we require prospective users to apply for Open Training Membership. Our procedure for processing applications for membership is based on the following key principles:

Competency

Members must be capable of training safely and effectively without supervision by National Centre staff. We must be satisfied – to a high degree of confidence – that members will:

- Regulate their own training, partaking only in activities/skills which they can consistently execute safely.
- Risk assess their activities on a dynamic and ongoing basis, considering both their own safety and the safety of other users, and implement control measures or refrain from activity where appropriate.

Professional Status

Open Training Membership is primarily intended for professional circus artists. For the purposes of this policy, a professional circus artist is defined as somebody who has recent paid work experience as a performer of circus skills and/or associated physical disciplines (including, but not limited to, tumbling, dance or gymnastics). Professional artists must still meet the Competency criteria detailed above.

We might consider applications from those with little professional experience but who are training at or very near to the level of professional artists, and who fulfil the Competency criteria.

We aim to strike a balance between nurturing new and emerging talent seeking to enter the circus sector, while protecting space and resources for established professionals whose livelihoods are dependent on their ability to train and create effectively.

Equality & Diversity

We are committed to considering all applications for membership on a fair and equal basis, regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability, age*, sexual orientation or religion.

We are committed to supporting artists with disabilities. Disabled artists are encouraged to disclose their support requirements so that we can endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to the application process and/or to the open training environment. Prospective members are also welcome to request a visit in order to familiarise themselves with our premises prior to submitting an application, or to discuss reasonable adjustments.

***Age**

The minimum age for membership is 18 years old. Open Training is not supervised by any staff member and members are not required to undergo criminal record checks. In accordance with the National Centre for Circus Arts' Safeguarding Policy, we therefore cannot permit minors as Open Training Members.

There is no upper age limit.

Re-Applications & Appeals

Applications are processed by the Artist Development Manager. All applicants will receive a response.

An applicant may appeal the outcome of their application. At this point, they are invited to articulate the basis for their appeal and/or to submit additional material not included in their original application (e.g. training or show footage, references or examples of past work). If the Artist Development Manager does not reverse their decision at this point, the applicant may then request that their application be reviewed by a member of the National Centre's senior management team. A final decision will then be made by the Director of Professional Development.

There is no limit to the number of times somebody can apply for membership.

Lapsed, Suspended or Cancelled Membership

If a member does not attend open training for a period of two years or more, their membership will lapse and they will be required to re-apply for membership by the same process as first-time applicants. If successful, they will be re-inducted as a member and they will not be required to pay a joining fee.

In the event that a member repeatedly or severely violates the training code of conduct (see Open Training Code of Conduct and Health & Safety Policy), we reserve the right to suspend or cancel their membership. We also reserve the right to require that a member attend a re-induction session.

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