



Disability Statement

Collective Acting Studio is a force for change, endeavouring to break down barriers, level the playing field, challenge preconceptions, and champion diversity. After years of drama schools being places of exclusivity, discrimination, and ableism: we intend to boldly place disabled artists centre stage.

Collective recognise that high-quality, rigorous actor-training has, up until this point, not always been a welcoming place for all disabled actors; we plan to change this. We want to bend and stretch our training to meet the individuals under our care, not force our students into a pre-existing one-size-fits-all approach. We want to celebrate difference.

We commit to being flexible, nuanced, and open in our practice to make sure each student feels seen, heard, and able to be their true selves. We recognise each disability is unique, and that blanket rules don't apply; therefore we will create bespoke, comprehensive support plans tailored to each student. We understand these needs may shift and change depending on the day, project, or class therefore, we will adapt; taking the time to learn about each student to join us, learning to be sensitive in reading personal signs and cues, always advocating for the best interest of our students, rather than the desire to get through a lesson plan. Our learning spaces are co-constructive, we acknowledge our students are artists in their own right, not empty vessels waiting to be filled. In the same light, we appreciate that our disabled students are experts in their own disability, and we will always take the lead from them. Our aim is neither to promote dependence, or independence, rather to

recognise the grey area in between and continue to encourage, empower, and assist holistically and sincerely whenever and however is needed. Our practice is based on the social-model of disability, rather than the medical one; we recognise the world disables people and that by making a few simple adjustments to our physical environment, our language, and our behaviour; we can create educational environments of equity, where each person is free to learn with freedom, creativity, and joy.

Students are encouraged to consider their own needs and wellbeing throughout the course, with continual opportunities to reflect on how training meets them – as a staff team we will practically take on this feedback, and continue to grapple with, experiment, and evolve a best practice to suit them.

Our staff undergo regular training, and an additional creative support worker will be a permanent presence to collaborate with the disabled students, supporting them in being able to do their best work. We will champion accessibility in our art making, exploring new and innovative ways of including the ‘aesthetics of access’ (captioning, sign language, audio descriptions etc) in our productions, leading the way in trailblazing inclusive, accessible performances in drama schools. Not only does Collective produce outstanding actors, but also the school creates opportunities for aspiring and established disabled directors and writers to come and work for us. Our website, the student portals, and the building itself will all be accessible, supporting the disabled experience from every angle. Based in East London, it is no surprise that Collective is in the heart of a diverse, creative hub - home to people from all walks of life.

With the option to pursue a three-year degree programme, our Part-Time Drama School, our Short Courses, or our Youth Academy: Collective will nurture the next generation of exceptional disabled

talent, providing actor training in an environment in which everyone can thrive.