



Statement on Academic Freedom

Collective Acting Studio strongly believes in upholding the principal of academic freedom. In this statement, we commit to actively promoting both free speech and academic freedom on our campuses, rather than simply passively allowing them to occur.

In line with the Regulatory Framework for Higher Education in England, provided by the Office for Students, Collective recognises Academic Freedom as being defined in the following way:

Academic Freedom

Academic staff at an English higher education provider have freedom within the law:

- to question and test received wisdom
- to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at the provider.

We concur with the following from the [statement](#) made by Universities UK on this issue:

'Students and staff should not feel the need to self-censor and universities work hard to create a culture of intellectual enquiry. This means that students and staff will sometimes be exposed to views they find disagreeable, or even offensive, but it is crucial that a broad range of different voices can be heard, challenged, and debated, including the right to peaceful protest.'

'Universities must also invest in good relations between different groups on campus, creating a climate in which all students and staff can discuss a range of topics – including the complex and controversial – in the knowledge that they will be listened to and treated with mutual dignity, tolerance, and civility. Everyone, including those from marginalised groups, should be able to speak up without fear of harassment or discrimination – which should never be tolerated or excused.'

Active Promotion of Free Speech

Collective actively commits to actively promoting both free speech and academic freedom in the following ways:

1. To create a culture that actively supports free speech and academic freedom within the Studio, in a way that means that students, staff and the public are aware of our commitment to those freedoms.
2. Include in-person training on upholding academic freedom and free speech for all new staff.
3. Ensuring these principles are clearly outlined in our staff induction literature.
4. Guarantee that all students, staff and employees will not be subjected to a detriment, such as losing their position or having rights or privileges removed, because they have exercised their right to free speech within the law.
5. Reminding all students at least once a year, usually during induction/re-enrolment of these key principles and responsibilities around academic freedom and free speech.
6. Ensure students, staff, and external speakers are not 'non-platformed' for expression of views that might be controversial – provided those comments fall within the law.

You can find further information on Collective's approach to promoting free speech and academic freedom in our Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech policy, which is published on the [Policies and Procedures](#) page of our website.

Paul Harvard, CEO – April 2023