



Cambridge Operatic Society

Diversity, Equality & Inclusion
Policy

October 2024

Version history

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
01/10/2019	XX	Policy approved by the Trustees (v1.0)
01/10/2020	SF	Updated Designated Persons (v1.1)
28/05/2023	SF	Updated typography & branding (v1.2)
24/10/2023	AS	Updated Diversity & Inclusion Policy (v2) approved by the Trustees
30/10/2024	SF	Updated policy to additionally include Inclusive Employment Statement & Policy when requesting DBS checks. v3 Approved by the Trustees

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1. Diversity, Equality & Inclusion

Statement

Cambridge Operatic Society (CaOS) is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion amongst our membership, volunteers, providers of productions services and any other persons engaged by Cambridge Operatic Society (CaOS) and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Diversity and inclusion are a core part of who we are and what we do. We recognise and value differences in our members, production teams, audiences and the community, so that each person is treated and valued as a unique individual. We continually strive to ensure we create and sustain an inclusive environment for all.

The aim is for our membership, volunteers, providers of productions services and any other persons engaged by CaOS to be truly representative of all sections of society and our audiences, and for each member, volunteer, service provider and any other person engaged by CaOS feel respected and able to give their best and be their authentic self.

Definitions

We use the below as definitions when discussing equality, diversity and inclusion:

Equality:

At its core, equality means fairness: we must ensure that individuals, or groups of individuals, are not treated less favourably because of their protected characteristics. Equality also means equality of opportunity: we must also ensure that those who may be disadvantaged can get the tools they need to access the same, fair opportunities as their peers.

Diversity:

Diversity is recognising, respecting and celebrating each other's differences. A diverse environment is one with a wide range of backgrounds and mindsets, which allows for an empowered culture of creativity and innovation.

Inclusion:

Inclusion means creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued. An inclusive environment can only be created once we are more aware of our unconscious biases, and have learned how to manage them.

Purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our membership, volunteers, providers of productions services, any other persons engaged by Cambridge Operatic Society and audience
2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation

We also recognise gender identity and are equally committed to protect this characteristic. From hereafter, when referring to gender this may encompass gender reassignment and/or gender identity

3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes:
 - how we conduct our audition process
 - how we make casting decisions
 - how the rehearsal space is run
 - during the production and performances
 - the enrolment of crew and backstage personnel
 - the hire of the musicians and other creative team
 - having an ongoing commitment to seek out development opportunities

Any member of the Society or production team should report any incident of discrimination, bullying or harassment in confidence to the Committee/Trustees.

Our Commitment

Our commitment is for our membership, volunteers, providers of production services and any other persons engaged by CaOS to:

- be truly representative of all sections of society;
- feel respected;
- be able to give their best;
- be their authentic self.

The Trustees of the Society aim to achieve this by:

1. Encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion in the Society as a force for good, ensuring we are representative of our local community
2. Maximising the potential of all individuals who work with us and participate in our activities;
3. Creating an environment that promotes dignity and respect for all, where individual differences and contributions are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training trustees about rights and responsibilities within equality, diversity and inclusion. The trustees are then responsible to ensure that these commitments are upheld by all of those involved in CaOS productions and the general running for the society.

4. Ensuring our facilities and services are accessible to everyone. We will work to make all reasonable adjustments required for full participation in our activities;
5. Having a zero-tolerance approach to any form of abuse, bullying or harassment in CaOS. Everyone has a right to work, rehearse, perform and engage in society activities in an inclusive environment, free from discrimination and bullying;
6. Make decisions based on merit (apart from any necessary and limited exemptions allowed under the Equality Act);
7. Reviewing practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

8. Gathering feedback on our diversity and inclusion initiatives from members on an annual basis and identify areas for improvement.
9. Monitoring the demographic of the membership, volunteers, providers of production services and any other persons engaged by Cambridge Operatic Society to ensure that we meet the aims and commitments set out in this policy, collecting information such as:
 - age
 - sex
 - gender
 - ethnic background
 - sexual orientation
 - religion or belief
 - disability.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

2. Inclusive Employment (creative & production roles only)

Statement

Cambridge Operatic Society actively promotes equality of opportunity for all and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, creativity and experience.

Scope of Policy

Any roles that may come into contact with Children as a result of that employment with Cambridge Operatic Society (CaOS) will require a DBS check. Specifically:

- Directors
- Choreographers
- Musical Directors
- Chaperones
- Head of Wardrobe/Wardrobe Assistants
- Any other roles where a child may be alone with an adult, and where a risk assessment has determined that a DBS check may be required

Our Commitment

As an organisation, assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), CaOS complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.

We undertake:

- not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that Cambridge Operatic Society are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

(Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended) and where appropriate Police Act Regulations (as amended),

- only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
- to provide our policy on the recruitment of inclusive employment, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process.
- to actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.
- to select all candidates based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

Cambridge Operatic Society is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Cambridge Operatic Society ensures that all those in Cambridge Operatic Society who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences.

Cambridge Operatic Society also ensures that Trustees have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, Cambridge Operatic Society ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Cambridge Operatic Society makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the [Code of Practice](#) and makes a copy available on request.

Cambridge Operatic Society undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Further information regarding conviction information

On the 29th May 2013, legislation came into force that allows certain old and minor cautions and convictions to no longer be subject to disclosure.

In addition, employers will no longer be able to take an individual's old and minor cautions and convictions into account when making decisions.

All cautions and convictions for specified serious violent and sexual offences, and other specified offences of relevance for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, will remain subject to disclosure. In addition, all convictions resulting in a custodial sentence, whether or not suspended, will remain subject to disclosure, as will all convictions where an individual has more than one conviction recorded.