# TRINITY LABAN CONSERVATOIRE OF MUSIC AND DANCE

# **EQUALITY INFORMATION: JUNE 2025**

#### Introduction

### 1. Our Commitment to Equality & Diversity

Trinity Laban is committed to creating a culture in which diversity and equality of opportunity are promoted actively and in which inappropriate discrimination is not tolerated. We embrace the rich opportunities of having a diverse community of staff and students and to this end we are building and maintaining an environment which puts inclusivity at its heart.

Trinity Laban believes in principles of social justice, acknowledges that unfair discrimination affects people adversely, and is committed to challenging all forms of inequality. To meet this objective, we will aim to ensure that:

- Individuals are treated fairly, with dignity and respect regardless of their age, sex, marital status, disability, race, faith, belief, social or economic background, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other immaterial distinction;
- Everyone is given the opportunity to fulfil their potential;
- We promote an inclusive and supportive environment for staff, students and visitors;
- We recognise the contributions to the achievement of Trinity Laban's mission made by individuals form diverse backgrounds and with a wide range of experiences.

### 2. Responsibilities

#### Board

Our Board of Governors has formal responsibility for ensuring that Trinity Laban meets statutory and institutional requirements and objectives in respect of equality and diversity; and for achieving adherence to the equality and diversity policy across our community.

#### Equality and Diversity Board

Our Equality and Diversity Board ('the EDB') is responsible for promoting the development, implementation and evaluation of institutional equality and diversity policies and practices.

#### Leaders and managers

Senior members of the Institution are responsible for:

- Promoting commitment to the implementation of the Equality Objectives and the Equality and Diversity Policy across their departments;
- Ensuring that staff and students are encouraged, supported and enabled to reach their full potential;
- Identifying appropriate staff development for themselves and their staff to meet the needs of their respective areas.

#### Staff and students

Individual members of the Institution are responsible for:

- Supporting and implementing the aims of Equality Objectives and the Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Promoting equality of opportunity;
- Contributing to an environment free of fear and intimidation and which celebrates diversity;
- Ensuring that their behaviour and actions do not involve unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation in any way.

### Equality and Diversity Objectives 2021 – 2025

Following consultation at the newly formed Equality & Diversity Board and in smaller discrete groups, a set of Equality Objectives for 2021-2025 were approved by the Board of Governors in April 2021. These Equality Objectives are designed to focus on areas where the Institution has identified internal issues or which are significant to the wider social context in which it operates.

We have identified both qualitative and quantitative measures and targets for how we assess progress against the Equality Objectives. In addition, each Equality Objective falls within an action plan designed to ensure that the institution meets its targets. In setting these Equality Objectives we also comply with our legal responsibility to set and publicise at least one Equality Objective for the four-year period.

The Institution's Equality Objectives for the period 2021-2025 are:

- To promote an inclusive culture in which equality & diversity is supported, showcased, celebrated & championed throughout the institution;
- To increase the institution's understanding of the differences in challenges and barriers to Global Majority and Disabled student attainment and progression and work to eliminate those gaps;

- To increase the number of Global Majority students and staff;
- To develop the Institution's understanding of issues faced by trans and/or non-binary students and staff and work to address those issues.

### 3. Legal context

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics. The Act provides protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment (including third party harassment) and victimisation in, among other things services and public functions, premises, and education.

In addition, the Institution must meet the 'public sector equality duty' requirements set out in the Act, which requires the Institution to:

- put an end to unlawful behaviour that is banned by the Equality Act 2010, including discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equal opportunities between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This general duty is also underpinned by specific duties to:-

- Publish information to show compliance with the equality duty
- Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years.

The Institution is committed to going beyond statutory compliance and embracing Equality and Diversity in all of its forms.

### 4. Equality framework

Trinity Laban has put in place a framework to support the achievement of its equality goals which includes our:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Equality Objectives
- 2024-2027 Anti-Racism Strategy
- Black Lives Matter Action Plan
- 2020-2025 Access and Participation Plan
- Freedom of Speech Policy

# 5. Equality information

The Equality Act 2010 requires that, as a listed body, we publish information to demonstrate our compliance with the general equality duty. This must include information relating to people who share a relevant protected characteristic who are:

- employees
- people affected by our policies and practices; in Trinity Laban's case, this primarily means our students

This report constitutes our equality information under the Act, and is designed to give all interested parties (including our staff, students and the general public) accessible information on our equality performance, the issues and priorities highlighted by data, and activity we have undertaken in order to fulfil our general duty to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

The report presents performance against each of our equality objectives over the past year including data outcomes and equality and diversity initiatives and plans.

# Equality Objective 1: To promote an inclusive culture in which equality & diversity is supported, showcased, celebrated & championed throughout the Institution

Desired Outcome: All students, staff, and other stakeholders are aware of and understand the Institution's values and aims in relation to equality and diversity. The Institution works to support and promote the interests and successes of its students and staff, especially those coming from traditionally underrepresented groups.

### 1.1 Metric

Target group or measure	Baseline Data	Target	Previous Actual	Latest Actual	Commentary	Trajectory	Status
Number/percentage of new staff undertaking equality, diversity and inclusion e-learning course	2018/2019: 84 new staff, 31 completed (37%)	100% completion	2023/2024: 79 new staff; 26 completed (33%)	2024/2025 to date: 407 <sup>1</sup> allocated training; 214 completed/in progress (53%)	Year on year improvement and above baseline but below target		А

# 1.2 Equality and Diversity activities

#### Promoting and celebrating diversity

Each year Trinity Laban runs a number of events aligned to national awareness raising days, including Black History Month, International Women's Day and Pride Month. Black History Month has been a springboard for embedding a year-round programme celebrating Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse creativity in our artforms of music, dance and musical theatre under the banner of Black Culture 365. Many of these events are student-led, enabling the Conservatoire to directly activate and enable their interests. Events over the past year have included:

• Sounds of West Africa at Blackheath Halls, an extraordinary celebration of West African music featuring Trinity Laban students and alumni including Dele Sosimi, Ola Akindipe and Nathan Dawkins. This performance drew on the long history of Afrobeat at Trinity Laban, dating back to and inspired by alum Fela Kuti, the 'King of Afrobeat'. Our students are encouraged to explore music from a wide range of backgrounds, including opportunities to take part in Afrobeat bands, and tutor Dele Sosimi leads an Afrobeat module with our popular music students.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> All staff without a recent record of completion have been reallocated this training, hence the much higher numbers of compared to previous years.

• Awaaz: Sounds from South Asia with Trinity Laban students performing an evening of music reflecting the rich diversity of Indian classical and contemporary performance, featuring *Bombay Theme* and *Raga Dance* by our Honorary President A.R. Rahman and *Awaaz* by alum Soumik Datta.

Over the course of 2023-2024, we presented *Kaleidoscope: Celebrating Black British Music*, a groundbreaking initiative celebrating the work of Black British composers and Black musical artists in Britain. The repertoire presented ranged across all genres, featuring solo, small and large ensemble, and staged performances, with selected works set in the context of music by composers from other backgrounds whose work is also frequently overlooked in mainstream programming. Kaleidoscope not only provided an opportunity for audiences to experience Black British music from across history and the current moment but also ensured that our students were exposed to work that reaches beyond the established classical music canon taught in conservatoires, in which Black British composers and artists are routinely overlooked.

#### Diversity and inclusion training

The eLearning course *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace* is provided to all new salaried employees as part of their induction; this is mandatory and line managers are required to ensure that staff undertake the programme. The Principal's Management Group has approved a mandatory training action plan to address low completion rates and in 2024 the module has been reallocated to all staff without a recent record of completion. This has significantly bolstered the number of staff who have received training but the current percentage completion rate of 47% remains disappointing. Progress on the action plan measures is set out below:

1. Increase staff resource to enable efficient and regular monitoring, follow up and reporting. This resource will help us to monitor and administer all staff learning and development across the institution in a more targeted and efficient manner, helping to collate all training and development activities across Trinity Laban into one central data source.

It has not yet been possible to implement this action. The Institution has introduced a plan to secure financial efficiencies, and budget has not been available to increase staff resource to ensure regular monitoring and reporting of progress. Heads of Department have been asked to make sure that all salaried staff complete their mandatory training by 31st July 2025 with regular reminders issued.

2. Ensure that induction and onboarding processes are appropriate and monitored properly, and that all managers are effectively and efficiently engaged in the process and accountable for full completion of their staff induction in a timely manner.

While induction processes are appropriate, it appears that some managers are not sufficiently monitoring nor ensuring completion of the training by their staff. This is being followed up in 2024-2025 by the HR Executive lead who is regularly monitoring completion rates.

- 3. Ensure all levels of management (including Executive) complete the mandatory training. In doing so, they set an example to their staff. *This has been actioned. Senior managers as well as Board members have completed the course or undertaken refresher training.*
- 4. Improve communications and messaging to staff as to why the training is important. Send regular messages (via staff bulletin etc.) and specific messaging to managers when required.

Regular communications have been implemented and both general and targeted approaches will continue in 2024-2025.

5. Ensure managers undertake annual review of training completion in Performance Management Reviews

Although some managers have been proactive in addressing training requirements with their staff, the POD team has lacked the resource and capacity to monitor and follow up on performance review outcomes in all cases. We shall assess improvement measures once the annual performance review cycle has been completed.

6. Consider removing/deferring incremental awards to staff who have not completed training within specified timeframes

Following the recent communications from the Executive lead for HR to Heads of Department, we will review levels of training completion by the deadline date of 31st July 2025. Once the extent of non-compliance is known, we shall consult with our unions and relevant line managers on appropriate sanctions to be applied.

#### Cultural change and anti-racism

The Conservatoire has sought external help and guidance in implementing its anti-racism policies. Two key partnerships have been formed with Black Lives in Music and Black Artists in Dance to help improve African and Caribbean heritage students' voice, staff representation, recruitment and progression of staff, curriculum design and performance programmes. Representatives from these organisations have held regular open forums and drop-in sessions giving global majority students and staff opportunity to meet, discuss their experiences and concerns, and provide anonymous feedback to the Institution.

A key mechanism to deliver the cultural change we seek is our 2024-2027 Anti Racism Strategy. An Anti-Racism working group has met monthly across the past year with a remit to develop, review and monitor the implementation of the Strategy, and progress has been reported to each meeting of the Equality and Diversity Board (EDB). The Board has noted improvements in leadership accountability and staff development in areas previously identified as priorities. Positive feedback has been received around new support staff appointments and departmental shifts in approach, but concerns persist regarding continued feelings of othering among students, a lack of institutional awareness of the Anti-Racism Strategy, and engagement with students from dance artforms.

Efforts have been made to strengthen ownership at programme level, improve internal messaging, and reach underrepresented student cohorts. A renewed focus has been placed on integrating public engagement areas and achieving cross-institutional alignment. A set of success indicators has been identified to promote systematic planning and accountability for the effective delivery of the Strategy which comprise:

- Success Measure 1 We have robust data, and the skills and systems to analyse and evaluate it in order to make evidenced-based decisions
  on our approach and what we need to change.
- Success Measure 2 We have a structure that enables the Anti-Racism working group and EDB to feed into key decision-making processes.
   Individuals in these groups feel empowered to perform their roles.
- Success Measure 3 Our processes for staff and student complaints (both formal and informal) are more compassionate and supportive, with clearly defined expectations and outcomes, reporting and escalation routes. This could be measured by annual benchmarking of the anecdotal narrative.
- Success Measure 4 Our policies and processes are person-centred, clear, and developed with the consideration of ethnic protected characteristic in mind. New policies and processes will include an equality impact assessment as standard to be resourced as required.
- Success Measure 5: The pillars of accountability across institutional structures will be embedded and ensure that individuals and the institution are answerable for their actions, decisions and their impact on stakeholders
- Success Measure 6 All staff (including hourly paid staff) will understand expectations around conservatoire values and the culture we want to establish Staff and students are upskilled and empowered to support the delivery of this strategy.
- Success Measures 7 We have a programme of activity that celebrates Black History Month. Students and staff of colour are supported to develop and lead initiatives that validate their lived experience, and feel valued

# Equality Objective 2: To increase the institution's understanding of the differences in challenges and barriers to Global Majority and Disabled student attainment and progression and work to eliminate those gaps

Desired Outcome: The Institution has a clear understanding of how to successfully remove barriers and address challenges so that students, regardless of background and experience, succeed.

### 2.1 Metrics

Target group or measure	Baseline Data	2022-2023 Target	Previous Actual	Latest Actual	Commentary	Annual Trajectory	Status
Reduce percentage difference in continuation rate of white students and BAME students	13.4 pp	6 рр	1.3 pp (2yr aggregate 19-20 to 20-21 entrants)	2.1 pp (22-23 entrants)	Performance above baseline and target but declined year on year		A-G
Reduce percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between white and BAME students.	19.2 pp	13 рр	9.4 pp (21-22 2yr aggregate)	8.9 pp (22-23 2yr aggregate)	Performance improved year on year and above baseline and target	1	G
Reduce percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between students not known to be disabled and students with a disability	11 рр	4 pp	6.1 pp <i>(21-22)</i>	3.2 pp (22-23 graduates)	Performance improved year on year and above baseline and target	1	G

# 2.2 Equality and Diversity activities

Understanding differential attainment

Trinity Laban has established the first in-depth and long-term research within the conservatoire sector exploring learning experiences of students from global majority and marginalised ethnic backgrounds linked to differential success, taking a whole-institutional approach to supporting students from global majority backgrounds. This large research project includes over 50 student participants and a number of staff from contrasting ethnic backgrounds from across Trinity Laban.

A key focus of this work is understanding how student experiences of 'belonging' within education and at Trinity Laban shape variances in academic success and continuation between different students. The research considers intersectional socio-economic factors and most recently has expanded its scope to encompass the experience of neurodiverse students.

In the last year we have further consolidated our evidence of influences upon equality in our art forms through our long-term in-depth research together with co-research and voice platforms developed with students and alumni. We have a deeper understanding of influences on student belonging and outcomes, such as around the key roles of student preparation, social support and pedagogy in shaping differential attainment and persistence. This knowledge has shaped what we do to support all students thriving. Alongside ongoing work to address curriculum provision, we have made critical changes to Welcome Week and students' transition into Trinity Laban in order to foster peer support relationships and socialise all our students into an inclusive learning culture. Our support approach is now also more integrated into the learning of all students, and we employ more interactive group learning approaches to help students support each other's learning. We have also transformed our evaluation of related outreach and participation activity to ensure what we do is aligned with our evidence and we know what works and how we can improve.

#### Learning and Teaching

Access and inclusion are key priorities with our Learning and Teaching Plan, with commitment to the diversification of curriculums and opportunities for students. We continue to reflect on the visibility of underrepresented groups among our staff and visiting artists, with a drive to continue to increase the number of positive role models from diverse backgrounds involved in learning and teaching. In the past year, we have focused on key initiatives aimed at enhancing student engagement, refining feedback mechanisms, supporting pedagogical development, and fostering institutional improvements within an inclusive teaching and learning environment, including the following:

- We have launched the Report + Support online platform for students and staff to report issues of harassment or sexual misconduct, either anonymously or with contact details provided. The EDB reviewed initial usage data and received updates on promotional activity, including a campus-wide campaign featuring QR-coded posters to encourage engagement. It will continue to monitor reporting patterns to identify areas of concern in relation to equality and diversity such as harassment in relation to race, gender or disability.
- A review of Additional Considerations, Reasonable Adjustments and Personal Study Plans has been undertaken with consideration of how process can be streamlined to support students and staff and the tracking of individual students that will in turn support successful transition for those experiencing physical or mental health issues.

- A Student Voices group has been formed to amplify the diverse voices within our student community. A clear set of actions has been created to promote student engagement across all programmes. Focus includes ensuring the development of a committee structure that includes student representation that is representative of the student body; positioning of the Student Union to continue to embed regard for the student voice in decision making processes; and how feedback mechanisms can be enhanced to support engagement across all student constituencies.
- A Wellbeing Group has also been created to lead institutional efforts around mental health and community support. The group has developed action plans to address wellbeing needs with clearly allocated tasks. It will also take responsibility for overseeing delivery of the Mental Health intervention strategy within our new Access and Participation Plan which is designed to build a learning environment and effective support for students experiencing poor mental health so that they are able to succeed in their studies, mitigating the heightened risk of mental health issues affecting student success among global majority students, students from low-income backgrounds, and care leavers and care experienced students.

# Equality Objective 3: To increase the number of Global Majority students and staff

Desired Outcome: We see rich and diverse student and staff bodies across all programmes, departments and levels of engagement with the institution.

### 3.1 Metrics

Target group or measure	Baseline Data	Target	Previous Actual	Latest Actual	Commentary	Trajectory	Status
Number (%) of UK domiciled Global Majority students	97 students (11.5%) (2019-20 students)	Exceed conservatoire average % ((2022-23 = 15.5%)	157 students (17.6%) (2023-24 students)	187 students (19.3%) (2024-24 students)	Performance improved year on year in absolute and percentage terms. Above baseline and target.	1	G
Number (%) of UK UG domiciled Global Majority entrants	26 entrants (14.9%) (2020-21 entrants)	Exceed conservatoire average % (2022-23 = 18.7%)	46 entrants (19.5%) (2023-24 entrants)	60 entrants (19.5%) (2024-25 entrants)	Performance improved year on year in absolute and percentage terms. Above baseline and target.	1	G
Number (%) of Global Majority staff	53 staff (9.1%) (2018-19 staff)	Exceed HE sector averages (2022-23 = 12.9%)	70 staff (12.6%) (2022-23 staff)	99 staff (19.9%) (2023-24 staff)	Performance improved year on year in absolute and percentage terms. Above baseline and target.	1	G

### 3.2 Equality and Diversity activities

#### Student access and diversity

Trinity Laban places access and equity at the heart of its mission, strategy, and organisational design. We facilitate lifelong engagement in our art forms from early years to retirement and recognise the necessity of diversifying our HE student body in order to provide a world leading artistic and educational experience for all our students. We have sought to build connections and ladders of opportunity between our own access programmes, and across partnership activities with schools, arts organisations, government bodies and community and third sector groups. Trinity Laban continues to develop strong links with our local communities to provide access to music, dance and musical theatre at the pre-HE level to children and young people from varied backgrounds.

There has been a consistent upward trend in the number and percentage of global majority students enrolling at Trinity Laban. Successful approaches have been progressively refined and include:

- Pre-HE access and talent development programmes, including our flagship Centres for Advanced Training (Junior Trinity and Trinity Laban Dance CAT) with c.450 weekly participants. We have set and met demanding targets for global majority participation in outreach activities (minimum 50%). A key component of the Children and Young People's programme is work directly in schools and with youth groups, which in Lewisham and Greenwich have a high proportion of young people from Black, Asian and Mixed ethnic backgrounds.
- Partnership working: Trinity Laban is an active collaborator with schools, FE Colleges, informal and non-formal learning providers, community and voluntary groups, arts organisations, local authorities, and arts and educational sector bodies. We are a founding partner in the newly configured South East London Music Hub. Important associations with organisations such as Black Artists in Dance, Black Lives in Music, Tomorrow's Warriors and Candoco enrich our approach and challenge us to achieve inclusive and equitable access to, and experience of, study at Trinity Laban. In 2024-25, a newer association with Artistry Youth Dance under the banner of their AYD100 Silver partnership programme offered targeted support for progression to higher education to young dancers of African and Caribbean heritage.
- Admissions processes that thoroughly engage with each candidate's individual capabilities, potential and ambitions through personal audition, and identify the full range of talents able to succeed on programme and in the arts industry.
- Flexible study routes and responsive modes of delivery: Programme development and design has allowed a wider population of performing artists to access conservatoire learning by broadening our programme offer (for example, we have introduced level 0 foundation years in both Dance and Music, and an HE Certificate in Musical Theatre) and offering more flexible delivery modes (blended and distance learning).

#### Staff recruitment

Staff recruitment practices have developed towards a better level of inclusivity. All vacancies are published on websites and with agencies that have a significant global majority readership, and this list is regularly reviewed and updated. All vacancies are also shared with our partners Black Lives in Music and Black Artists in Dance for wider circulation. In addition, an underrepresentation statement has been added to job advertisements to set out a clear intention to address a lack of diversity in some areas. There are areas of excellence emerging at Trinity Laban in terms of representative recruitment. Our new Popular Music programme has been introduced with a commitment to ensuring that the staff profile is reflective of the professional industry at large; the ability to grow this staff from scratch has enabled rapid progress. Many of these new global majority staff members are now growing their remit to extend beyond the Popular Music provision.

Diversity statistics are collected on shortlisted applicants and reported termly to the Finance and General Purposes committee, and annually to the Equality and Diversity Board. This data is enabling a deeper understanding of where Trinity Laban should be making improvements.

Ongoing and planned work to deliver an inclusive recruitment strategy includes regular recruitment and selection training for line managers including unconscious bias awareness, Equality Impact Assessments for all recruitment advertising campaigns, and establishment of a Recruitment Panel Register to give recruiting panels access to global majority staff. Improvements are needed to ensure that job descriptions and interviews contain clear requirements for equality competencies.

# Equality Objective 4: To develop the Institution's understanding of issues faced by trans and/or non-binary students and staff and work to address those issues

Desired Outcome: The Institution has a clear understanding of trans and non-binary student and staff experience and has addressed any challenges or barriers to engagement identified.

#### 4.1 Metrics

Under this objective we aim to capture qualitative feedback from trans and non-binary students.

# 4.2 Equality and Diversity activities

The strand of our equality work was taken forward initially by a dedicated Trans and Non-Binary Working Group. The Group was convened through an open call for members and consisted of students and administrative and academic staff across dance, musical theatre and music. On conclusion, it presented a report to the Equality and Diversity Board which identified some existing positive aspects of the trans and non-binary student experience at Trinity Laban including:

- Well-received staff workshops delivered by *genderedintelligence*
- Expanded curriculum and networking projects such as LGBTQI+ social events with book chat and dance workshops led by LGBTQI+ artists for TL students across faculty, *Queer Book Chat* with a prominent book display at the Laban library, engagement by the Musical Theatre department of a visiting lecturer for a 2-hour session to discuss trans issues within performers/performance, and the *Asking Queerer Questions* intensive professional development initiative for queer and allied creatives, facilitated by TL lecturers across dance and music faculty.
- The provision of gender-neutral toilets
- The updated TL Trans student journey webpage with much clearer signposting and other student support information

However, the Group also heard of difficult encounters which were shared in the group within a confidential framework, and negative experiences including the repeated incorrect use of pronouns and names (i.e. legal names rather than preferred names), intrusive questions related to trans and non-binary identities, openly dismissive statements, inappropriate jokes, difficulty in finding relevant support and issues with a curriculum content based on (often historic) binary assumptions.

As an increasing proportion of our students and staff define as trans or non-binary, we aim to achieve measurable positive change in interpersonal relationships, the experience of the curriculum and studio practice, reflective pedagogy, and institutional frameworks. Recent actions taken to improve the experience of trans and non-binary members of our community have included inclusive workshops during LGBTQ+ Month, the addition of gender-neutral changing spaces to our legal requirement to provide single-sex facilities, revised toilet signage, and the embedding of pronoun registration during enrolment.

The Equality and Diversity Board also considered the Supreme Court ruling that references to 'sex', 'man' and 'woman' in the Equality Act refer to biological sex (a person's sex at birth). It was acknowledged that transgender members of the Trinity Laban community might be distressed by this ruling and it was reiterated that discrimination and harassment laws are in place to protect against bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour in relation to any protected characteristic, including trans identity, or protected belief. A communication to staff and students further emphasised the importance we place on respecting and celebrating the different perspectives that all individuals bring to Trinity Laban, and our support for people who wish to make or have made changes to their gender identity. The message signposted to an anonymous survey for feedback, to sources of information and individual support and to the harassment and sexual misconduct policy.

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance June 2025