



RWA Access Statement 2015

This statement provides an overview of the Royal West of England Academy's (RWA) policies regarding access to the collection and exhibitions, including commitment to equal opportunities in employment.

Statement of General Principles

The Royal West of England Academy is committed to providing the widest possible access to its collections, associated information and building. Our commitment extends to staff and volunteers as well as visitors and we aim to build accessibility into the heart of everything we do.

As a service provider and equal opportunities employer, the RWA aims to comply with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and makes every effort to meet these standards.

Access to Collections/Exhibitions

Physical access

The RWA seeks to provide all visitors with equal access to the building and site, making alternative provision where necessary, within the constraints of the historic nature of the building and its Grade II* listed status. We are committed to ensuring that future building projects provide appropriate physical access for all visitors. Expert advice is sought wherever necessary. The RWA takes into account the needs of the elderly and of people caring for young people.

Learning about Exhibitions and the Permanent Collection

The RWA encourages and enables the widest possible audience to use and study their changing exhibition programme and wherever possible the permanent collection. We allow free admission to all our exhibition to students and those aged under 16. We continually seek ways to improve and extend access to information and the collection through consultation people with

disabilities, specialist organisations, and other museums and galleries, on the best and most practical ways of improving physical and intellectual access. We aim to ensure people with a range of learning styles and/or learning difficulties can engage with and enjoy the exhibitions and the permanent collection.

Safety in the building

The RWA takes account of the needs of visitors with disabilities in all safety procedures. It is the policy of the Gallery to enable all occupants of the building to be evacuated at the same time in an emergency.

The RWA also provides all fire marshals, identifiable staff, and staff trained in first-aid with training in the evacuation of people with disabilities and other emergency procedures.

Information and signage

The RWA strives to provide information in forms that are accessible to all visitors and to cater for most needs to ensure the visitor environment and Front of House staff are welcoming to visitors from all sections of the community. We offer information in alternative formats (for example large print guides) and review this regularly. Signage is designed and situated to be as legible as possible and methods of communication are regularly reviewed to ensure the adoption of best practice in this area.

When undertaking our annual review of our admission charges we take into account that ability to pay can be a barrier to access, and are committed to offering occasional free days and other opportunities for no- or low-cost entry.

Employment and training

The RWA aims to ensure that its employment practices do not discriminate against people with disabilities and maintains a system for monitoring and reviewing procedures. We aim to provide disability awareness training for all staff and consults specialist organisations and other experts on ways to improve training in this area.

Through regular development reviews and staff meetings the opportunity is offered to discuss improvements to the provision and to agree upon

recommendations for further action. Recommendations are implemented through the core staff team, and, where appropriate, approved by the Trustees.

This policy will be reviewed in February 2017.