



Central Film School

Academic Freedom Policy –

August 2020

Academic freedom

Central Film School sees respect for academic freedom as a primary value without which no High Education Institution can exist. Through its commitment to academic freedom, CFS is committed to ensuring that academic staff, students and other members of the provider have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges.

It is similarly committed to ensuring that staff have the right to criticise the functioning of higher education institutions, including their own, without placing themselves in jeopardy.

CFS believes that the academic freedom of faculty members to research, teach or communicate ideas or facts (including those that are inconvenient to external political groups or to authorities) without being targeted for repression, job loss, or detriment is essential to the principles of academia.

However, academic freedom must be applied carefully and has limitations in practice. Academic staff should never make statements that are at variance with the institutional values of the provider, which they have agreed to support. In particular staff must be careful to ensure that they apply mutual respect to colleagues and opponents in debate and not promote views which can be interpreted as discriminatory in terms of gender, racial background, sexual orientation, age or any other personal characteristics. They are encouraged to avoid controversial issues not related directly to their fields of study and if communicating in public they should indicate clearly that they are not speaking for Central Film School unless they are authorised to do so.

Collegiality

Through its commitment to collegiality, Central Film School is committed to ensuring that members of staff have the opportunity to make their voice heard, directly or indirectly, on any matter of concern to them, and in particular to ensuring that they are consulted on the development of strategy and on matters of policy and principle, including the basis on which resources are allocated. Specifically, CFS is committed to principles including but not limited to:

1. Ensuring that academic decisions are taken by academic bodies;
2. Maintaining and where appropriate, introducing elected seats on the Academic Board and the Board of Directors.
3. Encouraging regular and effective staff meetings in schools and professional support departments and to encourage staff engagement in the development of strategy and policy issues;
4. Canvassing members of the provider to contribute to decision-making, through participation in staff meetings or through election to relevant CFS authorities and key committees