

THE COURTAULD INSTITUTE OF ART COURTAULD GALLERY ACCESS POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out how The Courtauld Institute of Art (hereinafter referred to as “The Courtauld” conforms with the Equality Act 2010, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998 in respect to providing public access to specifically The Courtauld Gallery located in the North Block of Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The Courtauld recognises access as something which is made possible when physical, cultural, social, financial, intellectual, psychological and emotional barriers to learning from and enjoyment of The Courtauld Gallery are removed, reduced, or overcome. This policy therefore confirms how The Courtauld manages its approach to providing access to the art collection cared for by The Courtauld Gallery and to associated information and facilities.
- 2.2 Thus, in support of this Policy The Courtauld will follow national standards, ethical codes and best practice guidelines including, but not exclusively, BS8300 Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people, BS 8477:2007 Code of practice for customer service, PAS 197:2009 Code of practice for cultural collections management and PAS78 Guide to good practice in commissioning accessible websites.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 This policy is the overall responsibility of the Head of the Gallery. Day-to-day responsibility for implementation of the policy is delegated to the Visitor Services Manager with support from Courtauld Gallery curatorial staff, security staff and the Website Manager.

4. Procedure

- 4.1 This policy will be reviewed and updated at least once annually normally in the summer term of each academic year by the Registrar of Collections and or the Facilities Manager. The review and any updates made will reflect any changes in legislation and or good practice guidance issued. Amendments to this policy

will initially be made by the Registrar of Collections and or the Facilities Manager for review by the Head of the Gallery. Following agreement on updates, a revised version of the policy will be put to The Courtauld's Health and Safety Committee for formal approval in the autumn term.

5. Equality Implication

- 5.1 There are no known impacts on equality in relation to protected characteristic groups i.e. age, ethnicity, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief or non-belief, pregnancy or maternity, civil partnerships or marriage or gender identity for both staff, students and visitors in respect to this policy.
- 5.2 The Courtauld confirms its commitment to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and to provide an environment where individuals are treated fairly, with respect and dignity. This is set out in [The Courtauld's Equal Opportunities Policy \(October 2016\)](#) and complies with the relevant legislation.

6. Policy Document

- 6.1 As a central part of The Courtauld, the Gallery's mission is to care for, display and develop the collection, and to use it for disseminating knowledge and understanding for public benefit and enjoyment.
- 6.2 The Gallery has a clear commitment to enabling access to its collection for education, research and enjoyment by all within the reasonable constraints of resources, conservation and security. The Courtauld is committed to reducing barriers to both physical and intellectual access to the collection within The Courtauld Gallery.
- 6.3 The Courtauld is committed long term to achieving the optimum level of access to The Courtauld Gallery's collection, and to enable the widest possible spectrum of people from all sections of the community to enjoy independent use of The Courtauld Gallery's public facilities.
- 6.4 Access to the collection is balanced against the need for conservation, care and security of, or any ethical sensitivity to, the objects in the collection to ensure their long-term survival. Accordingly, The Courtauld may refuse any request for access that might jeopardise the long-term future of any objects. The Courtauld will offer full reasons for a refusal if that is its decision. However, the opportunity to examine a photographic reproduction of the object concerned will be granted wherever reasonably possible.
- 6.5 Sensitive collections information, for example, location records and valuations, is strictly controlled and only accessible to Courtauld Gallery staff.
- 6.6 The Courtauld's policy is to build accessibility into everything that it does to develop and improve The Courtauld Gallery. The Courtauld undertakes specific projects to eliminate barriers to access which are identified in its building and in relation to the exhibitions. The Courtauld considers:

6.6.1 Physical access:

- 6.6.1.1 The Courtauld strives to provide unrestricted access to all of its collections within the constraints of a Grade I Listed Building. Care is taken to ensure that the display spaces offer appropriate viewing conditions while maintaining correct environmental conditions for the works.
- 6.6.1.2 The Courtauld Gallery is fully accessible to wheelchair users and information on access to the Courtauld Gallery is provided on The Courtauld's website. Works not on permanent display are clearly labelled as such on The Courtauld's collections website (www.artandarchitecture.org.uk). These works can be viewed by contacting The Courtauld Gallery and making an appointment with the relevant curator. A notice of 48 hours is usually required for works stored on site and five days for those located off site. Complete curatorial and conservation files on each object in the collections can be consulted by appointment with the relevant curator by members of the public.
- 6.6.1.3 The Courtauld's on-site paintings, sculpture and decorative arts stores are not currently wheelchair accessible but the Gallery will make provisions for works of art to be viewed in the conservation studio, an easily accessible location on the ground floor. The Courtauld's off-site storage spaces are fully accessible.
- 6.6.1.4 Access to the Prints and Drawings study room is by appointment, with drop-in times scheduled on selected days. A small group of particularly fragile works can only be viewed by written permission. The list and permission can be obtained from the curators responsible for the collection of drawings and prints.

6.6.2 Sensory access:

- 6.6.2.1 The Courtauld Gallery is committed to improving access to the collections to visitors with sensory impairments. The Courtauld will be commissioning an access audit in 2016/2017 and will be consulting with user groups to develop enabling tools for visitors with sensory impairments, for example audio guides, large print and British Sign Language talks.

6.6.3 Virtual access

- 6.6.3.1 The Gallery is committed to having its collection in its entirety searchable online. All the paintings, sculpture, decorative arts and drawings, as well as a growing number of prints, are illustrated and clearly identified on the Art and Architecture website (www.artandarchitecture.org.uk), which can be reached through a link on the Courtauld's main website. A variety of searches (by artist, title, medium, etc.) are possible and the website indicates clearly whether objects are currently on public display or in store. In early 2017, this

section will be fully integrated within the Gallery pages of the Courtauld's main website.

6.6.3.2 The redesign of the Courtauld's website was initiated in 2015-16 and is ongoing, with the aim of regularly increasing the amount of information on the collection accessible online. Information on access to the collection is now provided in nine foreign languages and the entire website is fully accessible to disabled people including those who may be using it with the help of assistive technology. In consultation with user groups, website-specific projects and further user engagement will be developed in the longer term.

6.6.4 Intellectual access:

6.6.4.1 In addition to its display, temporary exhibitions and loans programme, The Courtauld Gallery provides a regular programme of talks, lectures and tours to disseminate information on its collection.

6.6.4.2 The Courtauld Gallery encourages and enables the widest possible audience to study the collection. It seeks ways to improve and extend access to information and scholarly research. The Courtauld Gallery aims to improve access through consultation and feedback from visitors and stakeholder organisations.

6.6.4.3 The Courtauld's Public Programmes are designed to promote the understanding and enjoyment of art and art history and engage the public with The Courtauld Gallery collection as well as the historical research and conservation work carried out behind the scenes. The Courtauld provides an exceptional range of events that offer opportunities for gallery visitors, adult learners, teachers and young people to benefit from The Courtauld's unique resources. The formal public programme is free of charge to state schools and colleges located in economically disadvantaged areas and which have more than 20% of pupils who qualify for free school meals.

6.6.4.4 Every request for information addressed to The Courtauld Gallery is considered by our Visitor Services and Curatorial Teams and a response given wherever possible within one week.

6.7 The Courtauld Gallery is committed to reducing barriers to both physical and intellectual access to the collection.

6.8 The Public Programmes Department has established consultative groups and partnerships which advise upon, test and evaluate Gallery learning activities. These include The Courtauld Youth Council made up of young people aged 16 to 20 from widening participation backgrounds, the Teacher's Forum a group of state school and further education teachers, lifelong learners, SMart, a community group for socially marginalised artists, Gordon Road Services, Haringey, the Newham New Deal Partnership (NDP) and the Sorrell Foundation.

- 6.9 A catalogue of highlights of the collection is available in other languages (French, Spanish, Italian and Japanese, with plans to include a version in German also) and there are foreign language pages on the website providing visitor information in French, Spanish, Italian, German and Japanese. In addition, The Courtauld Gallery is committed to developing foreign language interpretation in digital form.
- 6.10 The Courtauld Gallery's seeks to maintain its admission charges at an affordable level. When reviewing its admission charges the Gallery will take into account that ability to pay can be a barrier to access.
- 6.11 The Gallery shop stocks a range of low cost souvenirs.
- 6.12 The Courtauld pays due regard to intergenerational equality. The rights of future generations to enjoy access to our present collection are safeguarded by high standards of collection care and where necessary by restrictions on handling, or exposure to light, moisture or other harmful environmental conditions.
- 6.13 The Courtauld Gallery is open to the public seven days per week between the hours of 10:00 and 18:00 with the exception of 25 and 26 December when the Gallery is closed.
- 6.14 Signage is provided for the benefit of all throughout The Courtauld Gallery and through further development works, the Institute will review signage and where appropriate will introduce braille signage.
- 6.15 As part of a staff induction process, new Visitor Services and Security staff receive disability awareness training including addressing the needs of visitors with specific requirements, appropriate use of language and assisting those with disabilities throughout the evacuation procedure.
- 6.16 Security staff are trained to ensure safe evacuation of all visitors in the event of an emergency and or a requirement for The Courtauld Gallery to be evacuated.
- 6.17 The Courtauld will seek to continually review and update this policy as appropriate. It is committed to engaging an access consultant in order to highlight areas for improvement which The Courtauld will endeavor to deliver incrementally as resources permit and it will continue to positively respond to feedback from visitors and other third party satisfaction survey audits that may be periodically undertaken.

7. Courtauld Connects

- 7.1 The Courtauld is developing a major capital project to improve and upgrade its grade 1 listed building and to transform access to its resources and facilities. Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Courtauld Connects seeks to remove or reduce physical barriers to entry to The Gallery, to expand and diversify

audiences, to improve facilities for all visitors, to create new platforms and programmes for audiences to participate in and benefit from The Courtauld.

8. Document Owner and Approval

- 8.1 The Head of the Gallery is the owner of this document and is responsible for ensuring that this policy is annually reviewed and updated to comply with statutory guidelines and or other Institute policies and procedures. A current version of this document is available on The Courtauld's web-site.
- 8.2 This policy was updated and approved by The Courtauld's Health and Safety Committee on 23 November 2016. It is issued on a version controlled basis under the signature of the Head of the Gallery.

Signature: Ernst Vegelin van Claerbergen	Date: 23 November 2016
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Change History Record

Issue	Description of Change	Approval	Date of Issue
1	Initial issue	Julia Blanks	24.01.2014
2	Initial issue	Anthony Tyrrell	01.07.2014
3	Amended 1.1; 6.6.3.2 and 6.14	Anthony Tyrrell	07.07.2014
4	Amended (terminology) throughout	Ernst Vegelin	08.07.2014
5	Amended 2.1; 6.6.1.2; 6.6.1.3; 6.6.1.4; 6.6.3.1; 6.6.3.2; 6.9; 6.10 and 7 added	Ernst Veglin / Julia Blanks / Anthony Tyrrell	18.11.2016
6	Amended 5.2 and 6.17	Anthony Tyrrell	23.11.2016