

## **Royal College of Art - Poster and information display policy**

**Date: 15 March 2023**

### **1 Background**

The RCA supports its students in raising awareness of their work, shows and events across the broader RCA community. A common way of doing this is via posters on the RCA campuses, both on noticeboards and in public spaces.

This policy is designed to administer the use of posters and information displays in communal spaces across RCA campuses and applies to all RCA students, staff, contractors and visitors. Posters and information displays may be displayed in communal spaces on campus only if they comply with the procedures outlined in this document. This policy aims to avoid issues such as:

- Damage to the University's property.
- Authorised promotional spaces becoming cluttered, not allowing fair usage for all
- Compromised appearance of public spaces
- Inadequately secured posters littering the environment
- The promotion of illegal or offensive material
- Combustible display material in corridors and circulation spaces causing fire hazards

### **2. What posters and materials are allowed on campus?**

The Royal College of Art recognises that freedom of speech within the law is fundamental to the life of a higher education institution. The RCA is committed to maintaining academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law, alongside our commitment to tolerance, understanding and equality and diversity. [This is set out within our Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and meetings or other activities on College premises.](#)

The primary focus of posters and materials displayed on campus should be:

- Publicising student, staff or visitor events
- Publicising student, staff or visitor work
- Requests for help with student, staff or visitor work or on collaborative projects
- Raising awareness of issues specifically affecting RCA students, staff or visitors (these posters should be agreed via the RCA Students' Union or Student Support)

### **3. What posters and materials are not allowed on campus?**

The following posters and materials will be removed if they are displayed on campus, provided that they don't contravene our Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech:

- Any materials containing hate speech:
  - The UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech defines hate speech as...“any kind of communication in speech, writing or behaviour, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor.”
  - Hate speech can be conveyed through any form of expression, including images, cartoons, memes, objects, gestures and symbols.
  - Hate speech is “discriminatory” (biased, bigoted or intolerant) or “pejorative” (prejudiced, contemptuous or demeaning) of an individual or group.

- Hate speech calls out real or perceived “identity factors” of an individual or a group, including: “religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender,” but also characteristics such as language, economic or social origin, disability, health status, or sexual orientation, among many others.
- Any materials that contain defamation:
  - Defamation is legally defined as “the publishing of a statement which lowers the individual or the company in the estimation of right thinking members of society generally.” Broadly, the test is whether a statement would cause one to think less of the person or company to whom it refers.<sup>1</sup>
- Materials that promote or encourage illegal activities.
- Materials that are in breach of copyright, either through use of commercial trademarks or images without the correct copyright licences.
- Materials negatively targeting or specifically naming RCA students, staff or Council, either as a group or individually, without their consent.
- Materials promoting specific political parties (however students can promote activities eg a political party/society social/meet and greets/events).
- Unauthorised commercial materials eg external catering, selling or advertising products not associated with RCA.
- Materials that do not comply with any other university policies.

NOTE: The [Public Exhibition of Work Policy](#) outlines the requirements to all displays of work (in the form of exhibitions, publication, performance, lecture, seminar, webcast, broadcast, telecast, symposium or festivals) produced by students or staff, hosted by the Royal College of Art either at its premises, at premises which the College has hired for the purpose, or via virtual means, to which members of the public are invited. Equally, it applies to events that are not hosted by the RCA but that utilise the RCA’s identity in their labelling or promotion.

#### ***4. Where can posters and materials be displayed and how?***

RCA seeks to support the many activities on campus but in doing so requires that there are restrictions around where such postings take place. This is to balance the needs of the wider campus and keep the fabric of the Estate in good order.

Posters should be placed on notice boards and should not be placed over other current notices. However, they can also be displayed in communal space, provided that:

- Posters are secured with blu-tac or non permanent adhesive spray. Sellotape should not be used
- Stakes are not to be driven into the ground to provide a display point for posters
- Posters are not to be secured to trees, shrubs or other plants
- Posters should not be attached to building fixtures or wiring, should not cover alarm call points, statutory signage and must not be placed in fire escape stairwells
- Posters should not be placed on any wayfinding signage, sculptures, on bin stores, on shelters or externally on any RCA buildings or facilities
- Posters are internally positioned for the RCA community

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hse.gov.uk/enforce/enforcementguide/court/reporting-defamation.htm>

***5. How long can posters and materials stay up?***

In order to keep spaces clear and to regularly refresh materials, out of date posters and materials should be removed by the owner and recycled when no longer required. The RCA Estates team will monitor the installations and may remove any item as required by other needs and in keeping with this policy. The RCA Estates Team also has the right to clear posters if this is needed in a particular space for eg filming, photography or a specific event.

***6. Who should I speak to if I have any questions?***

If students, staff or visitors have questions or concerns about the posters, materials or suitable locations, they can contact and/or report this to RCA Estates helpdesk.

The Chief Operating Officer will make the final decision about the suitability of posters and materials as outlined in Section 2 of this policy.