ARCHIP Equal Opportunities & Inclusion Policy

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

The Architectural Institute in Prague (ARCHIP), established in 2010 and accredited by the Czech Ministry of Education, is an international English-language architecture school located at Horská 3, 128 03 Prague 2 – Albertov. ARCHIP serves approximately 30 students per year from over 30 countries through a 3-year Bachelor and 2-year Master programme, employing a distinctive Vertical Studio Model where students from different years collaborate.

This policy aligns with RIBA Themes and Values for Architectural Education and demonstrates ARCHIP's commitment to RIBA validation standards for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

1. PURPOSE & LEGAL COMPLIANCE

ARCHIP is committed to providing an inclusive, supportive, and discrimination-free educational environment
for all students, staff, applicants, and visitors.

Legal Compliance:
- Czech Anti-Discrimination Act No. 198/2009 Coll., as amended
- Czech Higher Education Act No. 111/1998 Coll., as amended
- EU Directives 2000/78/EC (Employment Equality) and 2000/43/EC (Racial Equality)
- GDPR (EU 2016/679)
- RIBA Validation Procedures (2021) and Themes & Values framework

2. SCOPE

Applies to all ARCHIP students, staff, applicants, and external collaborators across all premises, activities, and learning environments (physical, digital, field trips, events, assessments).

3. PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Sex, gender identity/expression; sexual orientation; race, ethnicity, nationality, cultural background; religion/belief; age; disability, learning difference, neurodiversity, health condition; pregnancy/parenthood; socio-economic background; language background.

4. POLICY COMMITMENTS

ARCHIP commits to:

1. Equal access to education and facilities for all
2. Zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and stereotyping
3. Promoting diversity in teaching, studio culture, and staffing
4. Ensuring accessibility of ARCHIP facilities at Horská 3 and digital content
5. Providing reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities or learning differences
6. Supporting international students with language, cultural integration, and practical matters

7. Supporting mental health and wellbeing
8. Creating inclusive studio culture within the Vertical Studio Model
9. Monitoring and transparently reporting on EDI outcomes annually
10. Continuous improvement based on data and feedback

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

Administration: Policy oversight, compliance, resource allocation, report approval

EDI Coordinator (Paul DeLave, Student Advisor, reporting to Rector):
- Support reasonable adjustments
- First contact for discrimination/harassment concerns
- Coordinate staff EDI training (annual, 3+ hours mandatory)
- Collect/analyze EDI data (GDPR-compliant)
- Prepare annual EDI reports

Studio Leaders & Academic Staff:
- Design inclusive teaching materials representing diverse architectural traditions
- Ensure respectful studio culture, especially in mixed-year Vertical Studios
- Avoid biased assessment (anonymous marking where feasible)

Student EDI Representatives (part of Student Senate responsibilities):
- Two senators designated annually (one undergraduate, one postgraduate)
- Gather student feedback, participate in policy review

All Students: Treat others with respect, engage constructively with diverse perspectives, report barriers to participation

6. ADMISSIONS & RECRUITMENT

Student Admissions:
- Assessment based solely on academic merit, portfolio quality, and motivation
- Protected characteristics do NOT affect decisions
- Application procedures accommodate international qualifications
- Financial aid and visa information transparent and accessible
- Annual review of admissions data by protected characteristics

Staff Recruitment:
- Job descriptions emphasize diversity commitment
- Recruitment panels trained in unconscious bias
- Decisions based solely on qualifications and teaching philosophy fit

7. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS & ACCESSIBILITY

Requesting Adjustments: Contact EDI Coordinator with documentation of need. Response within 10 working days

Types of Adjustments:
- Assessment: Extra time, alternative formats, quiet spaces

- Learning materials: Accessible digital formats, advance materials provision
- Studio: Adjusted workspace, specialized equipment, modified deadlines (exceptional cases)
- Field trips: Accessible arrangements or alternative assignments
- Physical access: Accessible facilities

Accessibility: ARCHIP is located in the ČVUT Faculty of Transportation Sciences building at Horská 3. The school collaborates with building management on accessibility matters and is committed to communicating accessibility features to students in advance and to implementing reasonable adjustments within building constraints.

Confidentiality: All personal/medical information strictly confidential, GDPR-compliant, shared only with consent on need-to-know basis.

8. HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION & BULLYING

Zero Tolerance For:
- Verbal abuse, derogatory remarks, stereotyping based on protected characteristics
- Humiliation during critiques or excessive negative criticism
- Sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct
- Discrimination in grading or access to opportunities
- Exclusion from activities based on protected characteristics
- Retaliation for raising EDI concerns

Reporting Options:
1. **Informal:** Speak with tutor, staff member, or Head of Study Department
2. **Confidential:** paul.delave@archip.eu
3. **Formal:** Written complaint to Rector or EDI Coordinator

Investigation Process:
- Impartial investigation by uninvolved person
- Completed within **30 working days** (possible 15-day extension if complex)
- Written outcome to both parties
- No retaliation policy strictly enforced

Outcomes: Training recommendations, mediation, studio reassignment, warning, disciplinary action (up to expulsion/dismissal), or external referral.

External Review: Appeal to Rector within 15 days; students may contact Czech Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman).

9. INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY & STUDIO CULTURE

Vertical Studio Model EDI Protocols:
- Balanced attention across year levels
- Senior students support (not dominate) juniors
- Year-appropriate assessment with shared learning objectives

Curriculum Diversity:
- Diverse architectural precedents from all continents, including non-Western and Indigenous architecture
- Contemporary global practices showcasing underrepresented practitioners

- Social justice themes (housing equity, accessibility, climate justice, community-led design)
- Critical examination of Eurocentric canon

Critique Culture: Constructive, respectful, inclusive, culturally sensitive, free from humiliation

Assessment: Clear criteria, anonymous marking where feasible, moderation for borderline cases, annual grade distribution analysis by protected characteristics

Language Support: Academic writing workshops, presentation skills development, optional Czech classes, translation support for essential documents

Guest Critics: Actively seek diverse visiting critics, brief on inclusive culture, track diversity in annual reports

10. MONITORING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Data Collected Annually (voluntary, anonymous):

Applications & Admissions: Total applications, by gender/nationality/age; offer rates; conversion rates; withdrawal reasons

Student Body: Enrollment by year/programme/protected characteristics; retention; progression; reasonable adjustments (numbers only); international students by region

Academic Performance: Grade distributions by protected characteristics; graduation rates; destination data

Staff: Demographics (academic/administrative); visiting critics diversity; training participation

Support: Reasonable adjustments requested/granted; language support usage; mental health referrals (numbers only); financial aid

Complaints: Number, type, timelines, outcomes, follow-up actions

GDPR Compliance: Voluntary, anonymous, aggregated reporting only, secure storage, 5-year retention, annual practice review

11. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT

Pre-Arrival: Information about Prague living, visa/residence guidance, cost estimates, housing support (Zeitraum/CIEE partnership)

Orientation: Dedicated international student week, Prague introduction, Czech basics, buddy programme

Ongoing Support:
- Language: Academic English workshops, presentation skills, optional Czech classes
- Cultural: Integration events, student-led cultural exchange, field trips
- Practical: Czech bureaucracy support, translation services, English-speaking healthcare referrals

Wellbeing: Mental health resources, English-speaking counselors list, crisis contacts, regular check-ins, peer support

12. MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Support:
- Internal: Personal tutors, peer networks, flexible deadlines (exceptional circumstances), quiet study spaces
- External: English-speaking mental health professionals, CIEE counseling, Czech helplines, specialized services

Awareness: Staff trained to recognize distress, stigma reduction, information in student handbook, anonymous wellbeing surveys

Crisis Response: Clear protocols, emergency contacts, coordination with services, follow-up support

13. KEY CONTACTS

EDI Coordinator: paul.delave@archip.eu

Rector: regina.loukotova@archip.eu

Student EDI Representatives: [Elected annually - details published each year]

External Resources:
- Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman): www.ochrance.cz
- Czech Anti-Discrimination info: www.mvcr.cz

APPROVAL

Policy Drafted: July 2025
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Next Review: September 2027

Approved by:

Regina Loukotová, Rector   Date: 25th July 2025