

“Everyone has the right to freedom of expression”



We talk about the importance of free speech in this country, but did you know, that in actuality, what we are really talking about is freedom of

expression? Article 10 of the Human Rights Act of 1988 protects our right, not to freedom of speech, but to freedom of expression.

"Article 10 protects your right to hold your own opinions and to express them freely without government interference. This includes the right to express your views aloud (for example through public protest and demonstrations) or through:

- published articles, books or leaflets
- television or radio broadcasting
- works of art
- the internet and social media

The law also protects your freedom to receive information from other people by, for example, being part of an audience or reading a magazine."

EqualityHumanRights.com

Whilst for many, words are the tool with which we express ourselves, this is not true for everyone. And more importantly, it would be a mistake to think that, for all or any of us, words are always the most eloquent tool we possess, to express what it is we need to express.

Let's reiterate again, the 1998 Human Rights Act, a contract between government and citizens,

protects our right to freedom of expression.

And yet...

Does the government deliver upon this Article, by enabling expression through education?

The government should not make the mistake of thinking that everyone is able to express themselves, and that it is "good enough" to protect that expression. The ability to express ourselves, through the myriad of forms of expression open to us (the visual arts, dance, music, drama and the written and spoken word, to name a few), is something to be nurtured, encouraged and enabled. Humans also need to be supported in discovering, through safe ways, what it is they want to express, as well as how they might want to express it.

I asked AI:

"How does article 10 of the human rights act impact art education?"

AI answered

"Article 10 of the Human Rights Act, which protects freedom of expression, has significant implications for art education:

Protection of Artistic Expression

Article 10 explicitly protects artistic expression as a form of free speech. This means that art

students and educators have the right to create, display, and discuss artwork without undue censorship or interference, even if the art is controversial or provocative.

Fostering Creativity and Critical Thinking

The freedom of expression guaranteed by Article 10 creates an environment that encourages creativity, innovation, and critical thinking in art education³. Students and teachers can explore diverse ideas, techniques, and subject matter without fear of repression.

Limitations and Responsibilities

While Article 10 provides broad protections, it's important to note that freedom of expression in art education is not absolute. The right can be limited in certain circumstances, such as:

- To protect national security or public safety
- To prevent disorder or crime
- To protect health or morals
- To protect the reputation or rights of others

Art educators must balance freedom of expression with these potential limitations, teaching students about the responsibilities that come with artistic freedom.

Promoting Diverse Perspectives

Article 10 supports the inclusion of diverse artistic voices and perspectives in art education

curricula. This encourages a more inclusive and representative approach to teaching art history and contemporary practices.

Protection Against Censorship

The right to freedom of expression helps protect art education programs from unwarranted censorship or interference by government bodies or other institutions¹. This allows for the exploration of challenging or controversial themes in art.

Fostering Democratic Values

By protecting artistic expression, Article 10 reinforces the role of art education in nurturing democratic values and civic engagement. It emphasizes the importance of art as a means of social commentary and political expression.

In summary, Article 10 of the Human Rights Act plays a crucial role in safeguarding and promoting a vibrant, diverse, and intellectually stimulating environment for art education. It protects the rights of students and educators to explore, create, and express themselves freely through art, while also teaching the importance of responsible expression within the bounds of law and social responsibility."

AI drew heavily on the [article here](#), written by The Council of Europe.

I cite this here, at a time when the Government is

undertaking a [Curriculum & Assessment Review and invites a Call for Evidence](#) (deadline November 22 2024).

So remember, for your own well-being, and for the well-being of those who you care for:

“Everyone has the right to freedom of expression.”

How do we make that a reality? How does the government deliver upon that Article? What do we need right now?

Have your [say here](#) - and in any way you see fit to express.

[Paula Briggs](#), November 2024, [The Everyday School of Art](#)

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We believe everyone has the right to be

creative and by working together and sharing ideas we can enable everyone to reach their creative potential.