



External Speakers Policy

POLICY / DOCUMENT PURPOSE STATEMENT

The College is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment that promotes learning, critical thinking, academic enquiry and freedom of expression within the law.

The College recognises the educational value that external speakers, guest presenters, employers, community groups, campaigners and other visitors can bring to the learner experience. At the same time, the College has legal duties relating to safeguarding, equality, health and safety, and the prevention of people being drawn into terrorism.

The College will not unreasonably restrict lawful debate or discussion. Decisions regarding external speakers will be evidence-based, proportionate and consistent with the principles of free expression, safeguarding and equality.

APPLICATION

The policy applies to all individuals visiting or interacting with the college, regardless of purpose or activity. Any event involving an external speaker, whether delivered on college premises, online, through livestreaming, through recorded content or off site where the college is organising or hosting an activity

INTERPRETATION

Further guidance on the use or interpretation of this policy may be obtained from the Colleges Curriculum Manager.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES / DOCUMENTS

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Student Charter
Freedom of Expression Policy
External Events and Activities Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Prevent Policy
Health & Safety Policy

Version number	1
Owner / Department	Anik Goutoura/Admissions
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Next review date	July 2027
Ratified / Authorised by	

External Speakers Policy

PRINCIPLES

This policy sets out the arrangements for approving, managing and reviewing events involving external speakers to ensure that:

1. Freedom of speech and lawful expression are protected. The College supports freedom of speech within the law and the open exchange of ideas, including discussion of challenging or controversial topics. Lawful views should not be excluded solely because they may be unpopular, controversial or offensive to some individuals.
2. Students, staff and visitors are safeguarded. The College has a duty to safeguard learners from harm, including radicalisation, exploitation, harassment, bullying and other risks.
3. Risks are appropriately assessed and managed. These include Health & Safety risks as well as Prevent Risks. The College must have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and to assess and manage risks associated with external speakers and events.
4. The College complies with its legal and regulatory obligations.
5. Events do not unlawfully discriminate against, harass, intimidate or threaten others. The College is committed to fostering an environment where individuals are treated with dignity and respect and where discrimination, harassment and victimisation are not tolerated.
6. The College maintains its reputation as a safe and inclusive learning environment.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal and Governors

Responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with legal requirements.
- Approving the policy in light of current legislation and emerging risks.
- Ensuring effective implementation.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Responsible for:

- Advising on safeguarding risks
- Supporting risk assessments
- Making referrals where concerns arise
- Advising on Prevent-related risks

- Supporting due diligence processes
- Escalating concerns where appropriate
- Approving event requests

Event Organiser

Responsible for:

- Completing the required approval process
- Conducting appropriate checks
- Ensuring speakers understand College expectations
- Ensuring the event complies with College procedures

External Speaker

Responsible for:

- Complying with the law
- Respect the rights and dignity of others.
- Maintain appropriate professional conduct.
- Avoid discriminatory, threatening or abusive language.
- Avoid promoting extremist narratives or ideologies.
- Avoid encouraging support for terrorist organisations or activities.
- Follow safeguarding and health and safety requirements.
- Comply with College policies and procedures.

The College may require speakers to confirm acceptance of these requirements in writing before an event takes place.

APPROVAL PROCESS

Low-Risk Events

Routine educational events involving known and reputable organisations may be approved through normal curriculum or departmental arrangements.

Medium and High-Risk Events

Additional scrutiny will be required where:

1. The speaker is unknown to the College
2. The topic is classed as controversial or may invoke strong opinion or feeling
3. The event may attract significant public interest
4. There is a safeguarding concern
5. There is a risk relating to extremism, community tensions or hate speech
6. Concerns have previously been raised regarding the speaker or organisation

Where appropriate, a formal risk assessment must be completed and reviewed by the DSL or duty manager.

The College may undertake reasonable checks including but not limited to:

- Reviewing publicly available information.

- Reviewing professional credentials and affiliations.
- Checking organisational websites.
- Reviewing media reports.
- Considering previous speaking engagements.
- Reviewing concerns raised by recognised authorities or regulators.

Where required, risk assessments will be undertaken to understand the potential risk and identify if mitigating information is available. Risk assessments will consider safeguarding or Prevent risk, Equality and inclusion considerations, Health and safety issues, Reputational risk, Security requirements and Audience vulnerability.

The assessment process must be proportionate and evidence based in line with the colleges wider risk assessment processes.

GROUNDINGS FOR REFUSAL

The College may refuse, postpone or impose conditions on an event where there is credible evidence that a speaker may:

Break the law
 Incite violence
 Encourage terrorism
 Promote terrorism or support terrorist organisations
 Encourage criminal activity
 Incite hatred against individuals or groups
 Promote unlawful discrimination
 Create a significant safeguarding risk
 Present an unacceptable health and safety risk

Any restriction enforced by the college will be lawful, proportionate and based on evidence rather than personal disagreement with a speaker's views.

MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING

During the event, the College reserves the right to monitor a speaker's content and behaviour, provide staff oversight and stop an event or speaker where safety concerns arise. The college may remove a speaker or attendee whose behaviour breaches this policy. Where appropriate, the college may report illegal activity to relevant authorities.

The College will maintain records of external speaker applications and approvals, risk assessments, any conditions imposed or concerns raised. It will document any actions taken in line with any mitigating actions outlined in the risk assessment. The college will also record findings from any incidents arising from event.

Records will be retained in accordance with college data protection and data retention policies.