

EXTERNAL SPEAKERS AND EVENTS POLICY

Document Title: External Speakers and Events Policy			
Version No.	1.0	Author Role Title	Legal & Governance Services
Superseded version	n/a		
Approval date	14.08.17	Approved by	Vice Chancellor
Effective Date	July 2017	Review Date	July 2018

External Speakers and Events Policy

For events on or off Campus

Introduction

Teesside University welcomes many visitors to various events throughout the year. Many of these events have external speakers attending. It is the responsibility of the University to make sure that everyone attending an event feels safe. The aim of the External Speakers Policy and Events Policy and Guidance Notes is to make sure that Teesside University is protecting students, staff and the reputation of Teesside University, whilst following current legislation.

Freedom of expression

Freedom of expression and speech are basic human rights that are protected by law. 'Academic freedom' is a term used to describe the law that allows for open and honest debate in an academic context. Teesside University has a legal duty to secure the development of students' and academics' ideas and understanding in the form of academic freedom on campus. "Academic freedom" applies to University staff and academics students and visiting speakers.

Student and staff safety and welfare is at the heart of Teesside University policies and practices. The freedom to express views needs to be balanced with the need to secure freedom from harm for students, staff and the wider community. Teesside University aims to ensure that all activities officially taking place on and off Campus are:

- safe
- without risk to the reputation of the University
- within the law.

Where an external speaker, their topic of discussion or other aspects of an event, for example display and or printed material has the potential to contravene these conditions, Teesside University will work together with event organisers and in some cases the external speakers themselves to make sure that any decisions made are reasonable, informed and within the law.

External speakers and Events

"External speaker" is used to describe any individual who is not a student or staff member of Teesside University or the Students' Union. This includes any individual who is a student or staff member from another institution or Students' Union. All events organised with external attendees including external speakers in and outside of a Teesside University building or property are still within the responsibility (and liability) of the University, including:

- Any event organised by a ratified student group/society or Student Council
- Events where external speakers are streamed live into an event, or a pre-recorded film is shown

The President, chair or leader of the group organising any event is responsible for the activities that take place within their events. Groups who book rooms must ensure that all speakers and other external attendees are made aware of their responsibility to abide by the law, and the University's various policies, as listed in the Policy and Guidance notes and attached to the booking form, including that they:

- must not incite hatred, violence or call for the breaking of the law
- are not permitted to encourage, glorify or promote any acts of terrorism including individuals, groups or organisations that support such acts
- must not spread hatred and intolerance in the community and thus aid in disrupting social and community harmony
- must seek to avoid insulting other faiths or groups, within a framework of positive debate and challenge
- are not permitted to raise or gather funds for any external organisation or cause without express permission of the Vice Chancellor's Office.

External Speakers Procedure – applicable to events on or off Campus

<p>Academic Staff</p> <p>If you book a guest lecturer to deliver or part-deliver a scheduled lecture, it is your responsibility to ensure that they are aware of and abide by the Policy and follow the guidance set out in these notes.</p>	<p>Departmental Staff</p> <p>If you organise an external speaker/presenter as part of your agreed schedule of departmental activities, it is your responsibility to ensure that they are aware of and abide by the Policy and follow the guidance set out in these notes.</p>
---	--

External Speakers and Events- procedure – Groups and Societies

Any Group booking a room on University property must do so via email or phone in the first instance, and complete a room booking form. They will be asked to name any external speakers (defined as individuals or organisations that are not part of the University or Students' Union) through this procedure.

Groups or Societies affiliated with Teesside University Students' Union must make room booking through the Activities Centre in the Students' Union.

No event involving any external speakers or other external attendees may be publicised or considered confirmed until the speaker and organisation requesting the booking has been cleared through the procedure detailed in this policy.

Teesside University reserves the right to cancel, prohibit or delay any event with an external speaker if this Policy is not followed or if health, safety and security criteria cannot be met.

Any room booking with an external speaker or other external attendees involved must be made no later than 14 days before the date of the event. Any request made outside of this timeframe may be rejected.

When booking for a room with external speakers or other external attendees, the person making the booking will be asked for the following details:

- brief description or booking title
- full description of the event detailing the exact purpose of the booking
- group size (please note that if this is over the limit for that room then it will be rejected automatically)
- name and contact details of the person making the booking
- start and end time of the event
- contact details for external speaker
- brief biography of the speaker
- description of any printed literature or display material to be used.

Any failure to disclose the full details of an external speaker may result in an event/booking being cancelled. The University will check all speakers' details, group links and other connections (on the first three pages of a search on the internet, using a suitable search engine, and any web link provided). The University will also check details of any external groups due to attend the event. If there is cause for a referral then the details for the booking will be sent to the Vice Chancellor's Office, for further investigation and guidance. Reasons for a referral may include but are not limited to any of the following:

- any person or group on/or linked to the UK Government list of proscribed terrorist organisations
- a speaker tour
- talks and events by organisations generally considered to be extremist by HMG, NUS, UUK and related organisations
- a speaker who is known to have spoken previously at another institution on a topic that has caused fear or intimidation of students or staff
- a speaker or group accepted in mainstream as being highly controversial
- a speaker or group known to/or likely to cause harm to a specific group of staff or students
- a link or links, to any person or group that has, in those Google listings, been connected with any controversy of a negative or positive nature.

- a speaker or group who have a significant profile and may attract a following that could create crowd control and health and safety issues.
- a speaker from a political party during an election period

Speaker validation

The Vice Chancellor's Office or their nominee (normally Campus Services) will conduct a short investigation into the speaker and the event and wherever possible, takes representations from the group related to the booking and from a wide number of concerned groups, University officials and external bodies.

In making recommendations they will assess risk based on the potential for:

- any decision to limit freedom of speech as per the University's code of practice in pursuance of the 1986 Education Act
- the event going ahead to cause the University to be in breach of its equal opportunities (or other) policy
- the event going ahead to cause the University to fail in its wider legal duties
- the event going ahead to cause reputational risk to the University
- the speaker or groups presence on campus to cause fear or alarm to members of staff or students, or the wider community
- the speaker or groups presence on campus to give rise to breach of peace and/ or overcrowding issues leading to health and safety fears
- any other factor which is felt to be appropriate to take into account

They may make one of the following recommendations:

- to not permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead
- to fully permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead unrestricted
- to permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead on the basis of regulatory steps designed to reduce risk
- to permit an event to go ahead on the basis that no external speakers are permitted to address the event.

Regulatory steps may include requiring that:

- the event be filmed by an independent body
- the event be observed by the University or third party officials
- the event is stewarded or subject to security (or extra security) on the door (at the expense of the group, club or society hosting the event)
- an event promoting a particular view includes an opportunity to debate or challenge that views
- an event closed to society or group members only be opened to all students and staff of the University
- a copy of any speech to be delivered by the speaker is submitted to the University

When considering any regulatory steps designed to reduce risk, the potential of those steps to cause risk (for example, the sense of oppression felt by having security on the door) should be taken into account. Where the group in question disagrees with the decision made they shall have the right to appeal to the University.

In the event that a decision has to be taken to cancel an event due to concerns over the speaker(s), the Deputy Director of Student Services will be informed. The Deputy Director (or representative in their absence) will be responsible for informing the members of the North East Universities Regional Prevent Group and the North East HE/FE Regional Prevent Coordinator for dissemination.

Useful references

Room bookings requests may be made

via email roombookings@tees.ac.uk or

by phone 01642 342080.

A booking form will be emailed or posted.

Bookings should not be considered to be confirmed until the booking form has been fully completed and received by the University, the deposit has been paid and the University have confirmed acceptance of said booking.

More information on the law and Teesside University's policies relevant to freedom of speech and freedom from harm can be found within the following:

- [Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales updated 18 September 2015](#)
- [Terrorism Act 2000](#)
- [The Education \(No. 2\) Act 1986 S43](#)
- [Education Reform Act 1988 – Academic Freedom](#)
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [Equality Act 2010 \(s.10 relates to religion & belief as a protected characteristic\)](#)
- [Discrimination Law – religion and belief](#)
- [Public Order Act 1986 – Violent, Threatening or Abusive Conduct and Speech](#)
- [Teesside University Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)
- [Teesside University's Equal Opportunities Policy](#)
- [Teesside University Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#)

External Speakers and Events Policy Form

This form should be completed by any groups wishing to invite an external speaker or other external representatives to campus for an event. It is not to stop such a person coming to speak or an event taking place. It is instead to ensure that the correct arrangements can be put in place to allow such an event to take place safely.

All forms must be submitted by email - conferenceoffice@tees.ac.uk - 14 days prior to the planned date of the event, and one form must be submitted for each speaker wishing to attend.

Name of Activity Group:

Name of Organiser:

.....

Contact Email:

.....

Contact Telephone Number:

Event details – please see attached Policy Notes

Name of Speaker (*if applicable*): **Date of Event:**

Title of Event: **Planned Event Venue:**

Speaker details:

Please give as much detail as possible. Please include information about the speaker's position and organisations they're affiliated with, the subject they will be speaking about and any other information you think we need to be aware of.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

The organiser should ensure that the University's guidance notes, attached to this booking form, are passed to the speaker and that they fully understand the implications contained therein.

Office Use Only

Authorised By: **Signed:** **Date:**

Teesside University - Guidance on Events Involving External Speakers Definitions

“External Speaker” is defined as any individual or organisation who is not a student or staff member of Teesside University or Teesside University Students’ Union.

SECTION I – Introduction

1. Freedom of expression and speech are basic human rights that are protected by law.
2. Universities have a history of being open to debate and radical ideas with students at the forefront of pushing the limits of freedom of expression.
3. That said, Teesside University has a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff.
4. As such, the freedom to express views can sometimes be limited by the need to secure freedom from harm for students and communities. It is important to note that students and external speakers are not covered by the legal right to academic freedom.
5. Teesside University has an obligation to make sound, evidenced judgements on the suitability of potential speakers given their dual responsibilities as outlined above.
6. All speakers will be made aware, by way of these Guidance Notes of their responsibility to abide by the law and the University’s various policies, including that:
 - a) They must not incite hatred, violence or call for the breaking of the law
 - b) They are not permitted to encourage, glorify or promote any acts of terrorism including individuals, groups or organisations that support such acts
 - c) They must not spread hatred and intolerance in the community and thus aid in disrupting social and community harmony
 - d) Within a framework of positive debate and challenge seek to avoid insulting other faiths or groups.
7. Whilst every attempt will be made to prevent controversial statements as outlined in this document, there may be incidents where a speaker makes an offensive statement. In such a case, it will be made clear that these are the views of the speaker and not the University.

SECTION II - Procedure for Organising an Event with an External Speaker

8. Campus Services will notify the external co-ordinator of the proposed event of their External Speakers Policy. This will be done by forwarding the room booking Form, together with the Policy and Guidance Notes. The event must either be delayed or cancelled until the completed Form is completed and returned to Campus services.

9. Once a decision has been made to consider an external speaker for an event, initial investigations into the speaker as outlined in Section III, must commence.

10. If under Section III it has been decided to give the event the go ahead, the speaker may be invited to attend the planned event, and Campus Services will confirm the venue booking. If investigations under Section III have led to a referral, further investigations as outlined in Section IV must be completed before inviting the speaker and booking the location.

SECTION III – Procedure for Researching a Speaker

11. Campus Services will conduct a short investigation into all potential speakers using the following procedure:

a) Firstly, Campus Services will search for a short biography of the speaker, noting details such as title, educational history, affiliated organisations, and usual country of residence.

b) Campus Services will then conduct research into the speaker's previous works, to get more of a feel of the speaker. This includes any videos of the speaker's previous speaking engagements on YouTube.

c) If Campus Services is unable to find a lot of information on the speaker, they will consult concerned third parties.

d) Finally, Campus Services will search the speaker and any organisation the speaker is affiliated with, on a suitable Search Engine and look at the first three pages of results. They will then repeat the search with 'controversy' added to the search terms.

e) Campus Services will refer to previous speaker history of, or has in the past been accused of:

- Inciting hatred, violence or calling for the breaking of the law
- Insulting or making derogatory remarks to other faiths or groups
- Using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour

12. If it has been decided not to refer a speaker to the Campus Services Line Management, Campus Services will proceed with event confirmation.

SECTION IV - Referred speakers

13. Any events with referred speakers will be investigated further by Campus Services, who will also liaise with Students' Union (if appropriate) and the Vice Chancellor's Office.

14. They will investigate further evidence provided by their department (or concerned student / staff member), conducting a short investigation into the speaker, affiliated organisations and the event, wherever possible, taking representations from a wide number of concerned student groups, University and union officials, and external bodies.

15. In making recommendations they will assess risk on the following basis:

- a) The potential for any decision to limit freedom of speech
- b) The potential for the event going ahead to cause the University to be in breach of various Policies or the relevant Laws
- c) The potential for the event going ahead to cause reputational risk to the University
- d) The potential for the speaker's presence on campus to cause fear or alarm to members of the student body or staff
- e) The potential for the speaker's presence on campus to give rise to breach of peace

16. They may make one of the following recommendations, which may be passed to the VCE for a final decision

- a) On the basis of the risks presented to not go ahead with the event with the external speaker
- b) On the basis of the risks presented to go ahead with the event with the external speaker

More information on the law and Teesside University's policies relevant to freedom of speech and freedom from harm can be found within the following:

- [Terrorism Act 2000](#)
- [The Education \(No. 2\) Act 1986 S43](#)
- [Education Reform Act 1988 – Academic Freedom](#)
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [Equality Act 2010 \(s.10 relates to religion & belief as a protected characteristic\)](#)
- [Discrimination Law – religion and belief](#)
- [Public Order Act 1986 – Violent, Threatening or Abusive Conduct and Speech](#)
- [Teesside University Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)
- [Teesside University's Equal Opportunities Policy](#)
- [Teesside University Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#)