

External Speaker and Event Policy

1. Introduction

This document sets out the policy governing events involving external speakers. It is relevant to any individual or organisation wishing to organise an event involving an external (i.e. non-University), speaker. It explains what the University will or will not allow when booking external speakers at an event¹.

Although the Policy relates primarily to external speaker event bookings that take place on any University campus, this Policy and the related procedures also apply to events that are organised with University sponsorship / approval, or under University auspices on other premises.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the *Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech; and External Speaker and Event Procedures* available on iCity; *The Equal Opportunities Statement* (URL - <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/equality-and-diversity>). If you do not have access to iCity or the website, please email the University Secretariat (secretariat@bcu.ac.uk) who can provide copies.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Birmingham City University students and staff; and to individuals and organisations external to the University who wish to organise an external speaker event.

The policy applies to one-off events, meetings, lectures or talks, as well as to conferences and symposia. It applies to all events which involve an external speaker who is not a member of staff, or a student, of the University whether those events form part of the curriculum or whether they are stand-alone events, such as public talks or conferences.

3. Principles

The University has adopted a Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech. The University will only permit events to be held which are consistent with this Code of Practice. Participants must also feel free from unlawful discrimination and harassment as reflected in the *Equal Opportunities Policy Statement*.

¹ An 'event' may also be referred as a meeting or assembly happening at a fixed time and place

The University will consider requests for external speaker events in line with this Policy. Where relevant the associated form must be completed and the procedures followed. The University reserves the right to cancel an external speaker event if not satisfied that the person making the booking, (the 'Organiser') is willing or able to follow the procedures and conditions specified for that event.

The University reserves the right to refuse permission for an event if the proposed speaker, or their subject matter, are considered to contravene the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech, or the University's statutory duty on Prevent, or which could pose a potential security threat or safeguarding risk.

Segregation² of the audience at any event on campus or off campus, organised in the University's name, on the basis of any of the protected (equality) characteristics or other irrelevant grounds, is not allowed.

Members of the press, radio or television may attend an external speaker event provided that prior approval has given, via the organiser.

The University, through its security staff, reserves the right to terminate any event if there is felt to be a risk to the safety of speakers or any other person, or that the law has been or may be about to be breached and will summon assistance from other members of the University or from the police if necessary to make sure people can safely access or leave the meeting room. The University may charge the organiser for the cost of any such assistance or if this policy is contravened.

Permission to use University premises for an event will only be granted to those who undertake to comply with this policy and instructions issued by the University in relation to the location, arrangements for and conduct of such events, including adequate stewarding and control of entry. The details of such arrangements must be agreed for each individual case.

Banners and flags on poles are not allowed in a building where a meeting or activity is taking place and must not be used elsewhere on University premises in a manner likely to cause injury or damage, or to incite actions leading to injury or damage.

Food and drink are not normally allowed to be taken into an event

In the event of any damage to University property arising from the external speaker event, the University may charge the organiser for the repair costs.

² Segregation on the basis of gender is only permissible during collective religious worship as it is exempt from equality law

5. Review

The *External Speaker and Event Policy* will be reviewed by the University Executive Group every three years or sooner where new developments in relevant legislation or operational practices require.

Last reviewed/ approved: December 2015

Policy owner: University Secretary