

FREEDOM OF SPEECH & EXTERNAL SPEAKERS POLICY

The University of Law's Freedom of Speech & External Speakers Policy has been informed by the Office for Students Sector-Recognized Standards and the General Ongoing Conditions of Registration and has regard to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. These definitive reference points for all English higher education institutions set out how academic standards are established and maintained and how excellence in the quality of learning opportunities is assured.

This policy sits within The University of Law's Quality and Standards Code, which provides a suite of policies designed to safeguard the academic standards of The University of Law and to assure the quality of learning opportunities offered; this policy should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the code.

Policy Statement

1. The University of Law values diversity and is committed to the principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech and expression. It believes that an atmosphere of tolerance is essential to enable open discussion and to debate a wide variety of ideas, some of which may be controversial.

Definitions & Abbreviations

University	The University of Law
Chair	The presiding officer at a meeting
Premises	Any premises owned or managed by The University of Law
Event	Any University or Student Union branded or affiliated meeting, event, demonstration, protest, or activity held on or off University premises or online, with the exception of: (1) Timetabled academic activities; (2) Administrative activities related to the business of the University; (3) Careers and Employability activities; (4) Visiting Professors' lectures.
Students' Union	The University of Law Student Union (including its societies and clubs, and any other organisation over which it exercises control), its employees, agents and representatives
CMT	Campus Management Team

Employees	Employee, agent, officer or otherwise on behalf of any person, firm or corporation directly or indirectly engaged by the University
External Speaker	Any speaker from outside the University who is not a member of the University
Member	Academic Board Members, employees, and students at the University. (See definition of student below)
Principal Organiser	Member leading the organisation of the event
Proscribed Organisations	Terrorist groups or organisations banned under UK law
Responsible Officer	The person responsible to the Academic Board for compliance with this Policy
Student	Anyone who has accepted a place at the University, is currently studying at the University, including studying online courses, or who has completed their period of study but has outstanding assessments.

2. This Policy is issued in accordance with section [43 of the Education \[No 2\] Act 1986](#) for the following purposes:

- To identify the reasonably practicable steps that must be taken to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for all Members, students and employees and for External Speakers; and
- To specify arrangements for the management of events on University Premises which are not an integral part of the day-to-day academic or administrative business of the University.

Policy Scope

3. This policy sets out the rights and obligations inherent in supporting the principles of freedom of speech and applies to:

- The University (including its subsidiaries and all bodies or persons with authority to determine any matter relevant to this policy);
- Members
- The University Law Student Union
- External Speakers and visitors
- Members of our university community hosting and/or speaking on behalf of an external organisation
- Holders of University 'honorary titles'
- Any individual or organisation, hiring a venue controlled by the University for an Event
- Any individual organising or delivering a University or Student Union branded or affiliated event
- There is no requirement for the University to accommodate an External Speaker, but it will make reasonable efforts to do so.

- There is no requirement for the University to display promotional materials on behalf of an External Speaker.

- This policy will be posted on the University's intranet and website.

Governance & Review

4. Campus Deans and the Marketing Director are authorised by the Academic Board to appoint a Responsible Officer to act on their behalf to ensure compliance with this Policy and its review.

5. The Responsible Officer is responsible for
 - Authorisation of Events notifications
 - Reviewing the risk assessment for the event and consulting with appropriate colleagues such as the Facilities Manager and Safeguarding Officer
 - Maintaining a central record of Events on the [External Speakers Tracker](#)
 - Reporting to the Campus Dean

6. The Principal Organiser is responsible for
 - Appointing a Chair for the Event
 - Completing the External Speaker Request Form
 - Completing a risk assessment for the event
 - Ensuring Chairs/speakers/visitors abide by this Policy
 - Update the Responsible Officer of any change of circumstances

7. This policy should be read in conjunction with

[Security Policy](#);
[Data Protection Policy](#);

[Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#);
[Staff](#) and [Student](#) IT Acceptable Use Policies
[Staff](#) and [Student](#) Codes of Behaviour
Student Disciplinary [Policy](#) and [Regulations](#);
[Employability Service Protocol: Outside Speakers and Employer Events](#)
[Staff](#) and [Student](#) Voicing Concerns Policies
[Dignity at Work and Study Policy](#)

Freedom of Speech

- So far as is reasonably practicable and within the law, no individual or body of persons shall be denied the right to speak at an Event on any grounds connected with:
 - The beliefs or views of that individual or body; or
 - The policy or objectives of that individual or body
- 8. This Policy extends to ensuring academic freedom within the law for all Members without the risk of disciplinary proceedings. No person to whom this Policy applies shall take any action to prevent any academic activity because of the views held or expressed by a Member (subject to paragraph 8).
- 9. Freedom of speech is a qualified privilege.
 - It is limited, for example, by laws to protect national security and public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, and to prevent the disclosure of information received in confidence. An External Speaker from an organisation proscribed by law would therefore not be allowed to speak at an Event.
 - A significant strand in the regulatory framework is the [Equality Act 2010](#) which protects certain protected characteristics namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
 - The [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) also imposes a duty on the University to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This Code of Practice fulfils the requirement in the Prevent Duty for Universities to have policies and procedures in place for the management of events on Campus and use of the University's premises.
 - Freedom of expression also has to be set in the context of the University's values, and the values of a civilised, democratic, inclusive society. The University expects speakers and those taking part in protest activities to respect those values, to be sensitive to the diversity of its inclusive community,

and to show respect to all sections of that community. These precepts include the way in which views are expressed and the form of any protest activities.

- In considering whether or not to authorise an Event, the University has to consider:-

10.1 whether the views or ideas to be put forward (or the manner of their expression) infringe the rights of others, or discriminate against them, or constitute views that risk drawing people into terrorism or are shared by terrorist groups. For the avoidance of doubt, the definition of terrorism above is that as set out in the Terrorism Act 2000 (or as subsequently amended).

10.2 whether the activity in question constitutes a criminal offence, constitutes a threat to public order or to the health and safety of individuals, incites others to commit criminal acts, or is contrary to the civil and human rights of individuals.

10.3 whether adequate arrangements can be made to safeguard the safety of participants in the event, and other people within the vicinity, and to ensure that public order is maintained.

- 11 Principal Organisers are responsible for ensuring that Chairs, Members, External Speakers and visitors at Events are aware of this Policy and adhere to it.

Events Procedure

- 12 The Principal Organiser must seek permission from the Responsible Officer to invite an External Speaker to speak at an Event no less than 10 working days prior to the Event by submitting the University's External Speaker Request Form [Annex A]. The Responsible Officer may in their absolute discretion refuse to accept forms submitted after this deadline.

- 13 The Responsible Officer may use whatever resources they deem necessary to assist in making the decision to authorise the Event. In addition to the details contained in the External Speaker Request Form, the following points may be considered:-

- If the External Speaker has links with a Proscribed Organisation or feature on HM Treasury's list of organisations subject to government sanctions.
- If a risk assessment in accordance with the [Safeguarding Procedures for Children and Adults at Risk](#) should be completed
- Whether interested parties should be consulted
- The capability and impartiality of the Chair to provide balance and challenge during the Event.
- Potential public order and health and safety concerns.
- Security provisions.
- If attendance is restricted to University Members only or open to the public.

- Reputational risk.
 - Promotional materials available at the Event.
- 14 Within five working days of receiving the notice, the Responsible Officer or their nominee, will advise the Principal Organiser in writing (electronically or otherwise) of their decision as to whether or not the Event is authorised.
- Where the event is planned to take place at a University of Law campus which is based on a site owned by another University the Responsible Officer will only approve the event if it also complies with the host University's external speakers' policy.
 - Where the Responsible Officer has concerns, the matter will be referred to the Campus Dean or the Marketing Director. Where the Campus Dean assesses that the event presents high risks and/or reputational damage, it will require the approval of the Pro Vice Chancellor External.
 - Where the Principal Organiser feels that a decision to refuse the event or attach conditions is unfair, they may raise the matter with their Campus Dean or make a complaint via the University's Complaints procedure or, if a member of staff, through their Line Manager
 - To ensure compliance with the University's obligations to ensure free speech within the law and mitigate risk, conditions may be attached to an authorisation, including but not limited to:-
 - Methods of promoting the Event and the provision of promotion material for review (and potentially restricting what is available at the Event)
 - Provision of an advance copy of the guest list for review prior to the Event
 - Admittance or non-admittance of members of the public
 - Inviting other speakers with differing views to those held by the External Speaker
 - Making the Event ticketed or specifying that attendees must show a valid University of Law I.D.
 - Provision of a specified number of suitable stewards
 - Varying the time and location of the Event.
 - That the Event is declared 'public' or 'private' (and if declared public whether it will require a police presence)
 - The University to be responsible for security arrangements
 - Presence of specified employees of the University
 - The refusal or admission of the media to the Event
 - Recording the Event
 - Restricting the broadcasting of the Event (by whatever means)
 - The mode of appointment of the Chair
 - The availability of a translator at the Event

- Restricting the sale of alcohol
 - Specifying the platform for the Event where it is being held online
 - Disabling the chat function where the Event is being held online
 - Using the lobby to admit attendees where the Event is being held online
 - Such other conditions considered necessary after taking into account advice from the police or an authorised authority.
- 15 The cost of security arrangements deemed necessary by the Responsible Officer will be discussed with the Principal Organiser who may be required to make a contribution. The Principal Organiser may be required to accept a limit on the number of Events organised if the costs incurred are significant.
- 16 Where the event is authorised, the Responsible Officer will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out by the Principal Organiser and reviewed by appropriate members of staff. See Annex C for a sample risk assessment.
- 17 The Principal Organiser (or nominee) must attend the Event and take all reasonable steps to ensure that:-
- Nothing in the preparation for, or conduct of, the meeting or activity is likely to breach the law or this Policy.
 - The Chair is sufficiently competent to act as a presiding officer.
- 18 Segregation of any groups entering, attending or leaving the Event will not be allowed.
- 19 The Chair and the Principal Organiser have a duty, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that both the audience and the External Speaker act in accordance with the law during the meeting. In case of unlawful conduct, the Chair will give appropriate warnings and if the conduct continues the offending individual(s) will be excluded from the Event.
- 20 No articles or objects will be permitted on University Premises which are likely to lead to death, personal injury, damage or breach of the law.
- 21 University Premises will be left in a clean and tidy condition and free from damage, in default of which the Principal Organiser may be liable for the costs incurred in making good. Payment or evidence of ability to pay towards these costs may be required by the Responsible Officer at the time of authorising the Event.

Compliance

- 22 Failure to comply with this Policy may result in one or more of the following measures:-
- In respect of any Member, the implementation of the University's disciplinary procedures.

- The Principal Organiser may be banned from arranging future events for a specified period.
- The External Speaker or a visitor may be excluded from University Premises for any specified period.
- Any other measures the Campus Dean deems appropriate.

23 Suspected or actual breaches of the law will be reported to the police or appropriate authorised body. Any disciplinary proceedings may be stayed pending the outcome of any criminal proceedings.

Annex A

The University of Law External Speakers Request Form

Please do not market or publicise the appearance of this speaker as attending your event until approved by the University. Please complete for each External Speaker attending the event. Principal Organiser to complete and return to the Responsible Officer by email:

Principal Organiser Details	
Name	
E-mail and Phone Number	
Event Details	
Event Title	
Date and Time [arrival and departure]	
Venue details or online platform details	
Principal Organisers Nominee – name, phone number, email address where Principal Organiser will not be present	
Appointed Chair	
Speaker Details	
Name	
Organisation Speaker associated with	
Has this Speaker spoken at the University previously? If yes please give details	
Has this Speaker spoken at other Universities previously? If yes please give details	
Has the Speaker been refused permission to attend an event at the University or another University?	
What will the talk cover?	

Has the Speaker in the past, or might the Speaker on this occasion, cause offence to the groups defined in the Equality Act 2010 (including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation)? If YES, please provide details	
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Event Procedures and Promotion

If in addition to English the event be advertised in a different language please give details	
What material will be available at the event?	
Will the event be open to the public or only to members	
Is there any intention to segregate the event in any way?	

Do you foresee that the event could cause disruption and if so why?	
Will the media be permitted to attend?	
Please provide details of any sponsor	
Will the event be filmed or broadcast live?	

Educational Gains – please indicate which of the following educational gains the session will help the student participants to acquire (minimum of 1 and maximum of 6)

Please note the Educational Gains section is not considered by the Responsible Officer as part of the approval process.

Cognitive	Social	Learning
<input type="checkbox"/> Integrity	<input type="checkbox"/> Identity	<input type="checkbox"/> Problem solving
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Efficacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Welfare	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Agency	<input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Critical reasoning
<input type="checkbox"/> Self determination	<input type="checkbox"/> Presence	<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding
<input type="checkbox"/> Growth mindset	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural	

Please explain why you believe the session(s) will advance the Educational Gains that you have highlighted (50-100 words):

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PLEASE NOTE: Premises used for meetings must be left in clean and tidy condition, in default of which the organisers may be charged for any additional cleaning and repairs that are subsequently required. Payment in advance or evidence of ability to pay towards these costs may be required. The University reserves the right to re-charge the organisers of any meeting for any extraordinary expenditure it incurs as a result of that meeting.

Principal Organiser to read and sign: I have read the Freedom of Speech and External Speakers Policy and Annexes and confirm that this event and its speakers will adhere to the principles of the statement. I will resubmit this form if any declared details in this submission change prior to the event taking place.

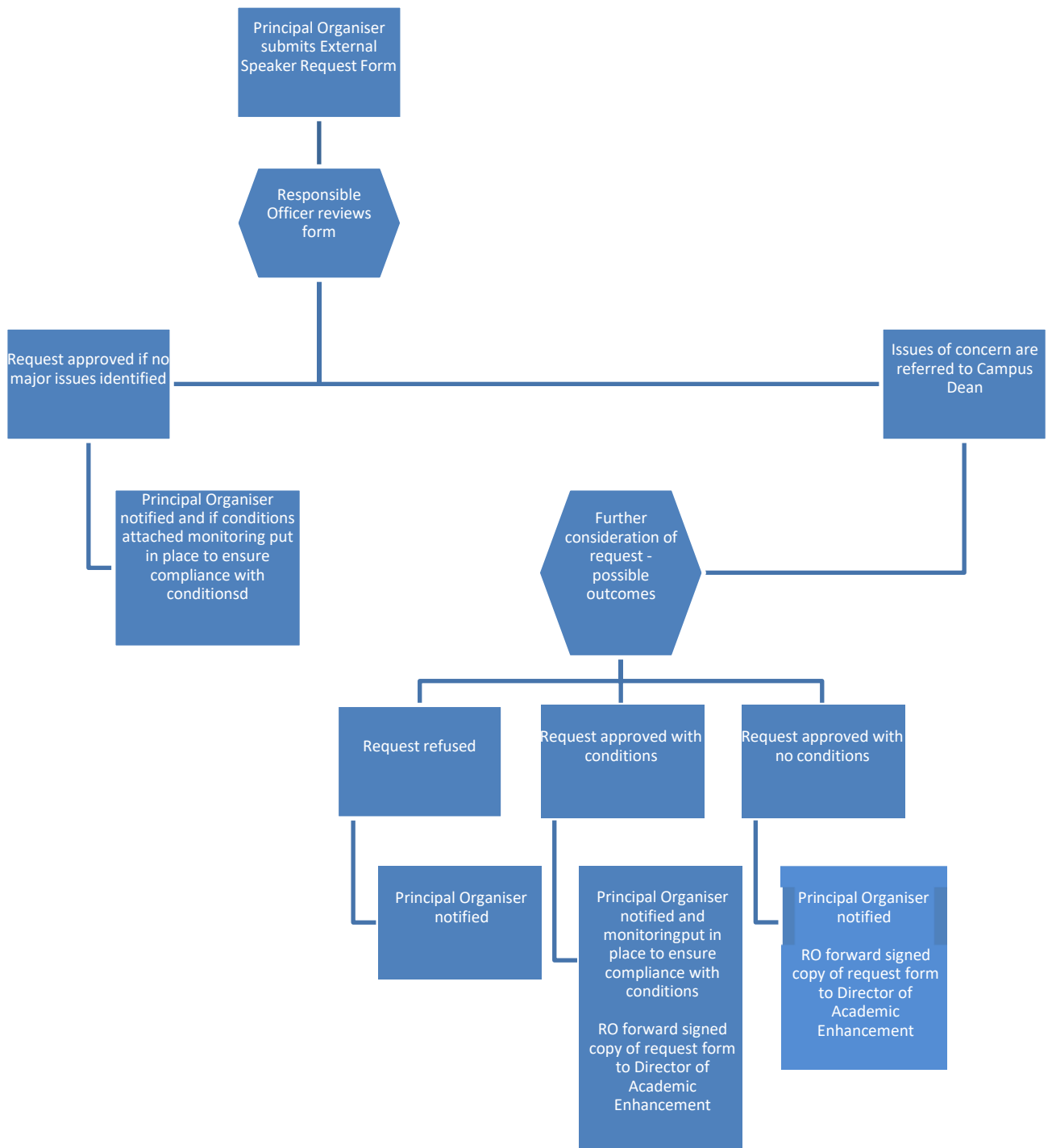
Signed.....Date.....



<p>Responsible Officer to complete Speaker Approved/Declined Risk Assessment Approved/Rejected Conditions imposed [please insert all conditions imposed to enable speaker event to go ahead] Signed.....Date.....</p>
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Form to be returned to the Principal Organiser and a copy to be forwarded to Director of Academic Enhancement

Annex B
University of Law Events Procedure



Annex C

Risk Assessment Short Form

Although control measures to reduce and manage Health and Safety risks may be in place, formal risk assessments need to be carried out and recorded.

Hazard	Potential Harm	Who is at Risk	Existing Risk Control Measures	Further Action Required and Person Responsible

Version history

Version	Amended by	Revision	Date
V1.0	Director of Operational Services		05/08/2016
V1.1	Director of Operational Services		09/08/2016
V1.2	Director of Operational Services		25/10/2016
V1.3	Director of Operational Services		31/05/2018
V1.4	Senior Quality Officer	Change to the document coding convention	March 2020
V1.5	Director of Student Experience, Wellbeing and Inclusion	Review	October 2021
V1.6	Safeguarding Manager	Amendments to request form	April 2023