# Policy on Speakers and Events

## Purpose of Policy
To protect freedom of speech for events/speakers on campus while ensuring compliance with the University's various statutory obligations.

## Overview
The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and related guidance requires the University to strengthen its policies and procedures around the management of events and external speakers. The Policy on Speakers and Events sets out how the University will meet its requirements under the above act as well as other relevant acts whilst ensuring freedom of speech on campus.

## Scope: Mandatory Policy
The Policy is University-wide and applies to all events that are organized on campus that are not part of the core academic or administrative business of the University.

## Contact Officer
| Gavin Douglas | Deputy Secretary (Student Experience) | Gavin.douglas@ed.ac.uk |

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Prevent duty, freedom of speech, speakers, events, counter-terrorism, proscribed
POLICY ON SPEAKERS AND EVENTS

1. Context

1.1 Freedom of expression within the law is central to the concept of a university. To this end, the University seeks to foster a culture which permits freedom of thought and expression within a framework of mutual respect. As part of this, the University has a long and proud tradition of hosting speakers from around the world who come to the University to share their thoughts and insights, and help the University fulfil its mission of advancing and disseminating knowledge.

1.2 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and related guidance requires the University to strengthen its policies and procedures around the management of events and external speakers.

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this Policy is to set out arrangements for the management of those events which are held under the auspices of the University but which do NOT form part of the University’s normal academic or administrative business, so that the University can fulfil its legal obligations with regard to speakers and events, while maintaining at all times its commitment to freedom of thought and expression.

3. Principles

3.1 The University recognizes and upholds the fundamental importance of freedom of thought and expression, and does not seek to restrict this fundamental freedom through this policy.

3.2 Where the University, having considered the available information, believes that there is a demonstrable and serious risk that the speaker and/or those at an event may break the law, breach the University’s statutory duties - including the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism - and/or will pose a demonstrable and significant risk to the wellbeing of students, staff or visitors, it may require that certain conditions are met or, in exceptional circumstances, it may refuse to allow the event to go ahead.

4. Scope

4.1 This Policy applies to all staff and students of the University and to any other person in attendance at any event which has been duly authorised under this policy.

4.2 This Policy applies to any event:
  • That is organized by students or staff at the University and
  • That is held under the auspices of the University (including eg a student society), regardless of location and
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- That is not directly related to the University’s normal academic or administrative business.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 The University Secretary has ultimate responsibility for:
- agreeing to the provision of University accommodation for a speaker or event and/or
- granting permission for the University to be associated with an event although she may delegate authorization of events deemed to be low risk to the Head of the Timetabling Unit, the Assistant Director, Business Development (within Accommodation Services), the Commercial Director of EUSA or managers of locally owned space. In the absence of the University Secretary responsibility rests with the Deputy Secretary (Student Experience).

5.2 The “University Compliance Group” has responsibility for supporting the University Secretary with consideration of events or speakers deemed to be high risk in relation to the University’s statutory duties.

5.3 The Event Organizer is responsible for assisting the University in its statutory duties by:
- informing the University of events they are organizing
- providing details of the event / speaker in a timely manner as required
- implementing any actions that may be required by the Secretary in order to ensure the event runs peacefully and lawfully.

5.4 The Room Booker is responsible for assisting the event organizer by submitting accurate and timely room booking requests to the relevant space owner, e.g. University Timetabling Unit (for events in centrally managed space).

5.5 The Head of the University Timetabling Unit, the owners of locally bookable space, the Assistant Director, Business Development (Edinburgh First) and the Commercial Director of EUSA are responsible for:
- receiving room booking requests/event notifications.
- requesting further information from the event organizer as needed.
- ensuring that requests/notifications are competently assessed against a standard checklist and authorized if deemed to be low risk.
- referring higher risk events to the University Compliance Group for further consideration.

5.6 Persons in attendance at events are responsible for:
- complying with the instructions of the event organizer.
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6. Definitions

Centrally Bookable University space – a collection of teaching, meeting and event spaces for which bookings, subject to approval by the relevant authorizing department, can be requested by all staff and students.

Event – a planned public or social occasion. As identified above, only events which do NOT form part of the University’s normal academic or administrative business are within scope of the policy.

Event Organiser – a current student or member of staff who is responsible for oversight and management of the planned event. Where the event involves a third party booking, there must be a nominated Event Organizer from within the University community, such as a member of staff from Edinburgh First (for commercial bookings). An event organiser must be a named individual.

External Speaker – an individual who is not a current:
- student;
- member of staff;
- member of University Court; or
- holder of an honorary position at the University who is invited to speak at a University event.

Held under the auspices of the University – an event is deemed to be held under the auspices of the University if:
- Regardless of who is organising it, it takes place on University-owned premises (including premises leased to EUSA) or
- Regardless of where it takes place, it is organised in the name of the University or one of its departments, including University-supported groups such as EUSA-affiliated student societies or EUSU-affiliated sports clubs.

Locally Bookable University space – a collection of teaching, meeting and event spaces for which bookings, subject to approval by the relevant authorizing department, can be requested by staff and students associated/attributed to the department in question.

Owner of locally bookable space: the member of University staff with responsibility for authorizing use of that space by staff/students.

Statutory Responsibilities – the University’s responsibilities with regard to events and speakers are governed by a wide range of legislative requirements including:
- The duty to have particular regard to the need to ensure freedom of speech, including its obligations under the Human Rights Act (1998)
- The duty to protect academic freedom (Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005)
- The duty to prevent people being drawn into terrorism (Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015)
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- The duty (Terrorism Act, 2000) not to arrange or assist in arranging a meeting in the knowledge that the meeting is to support the activities of a proscribed organisation, or is to be addressed by a person who belongs or professes to belong to a proscribed organisation
- The duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination against certain groups, and advance equality of opportunity between groups, (Equality Act 2010)
- Obligations under criminal law eg with regard to use of threats, incitement of violence, inflaming religious or racial hatred
- Obligations under charities law, ie whether the proposed activity is consistent with the University’s charitable objects
- A general duty of care to students, staff and visitors, including avoiding placing students, staff or visitors in situations that may expose them to risks to their health and safety.

Room Booker - any member of staff outwith the University Timetabling Unit or Edinburgh First who uses University systems to request a room booking for an event.

7. Arrangements and procedures

7.1 University Events in Centrally Managed Space

i. The Event Organiser must give the University timely notice (typically at least 10 working days) of any event that will involve an external speaker or for which they require the use of centrally managed University premises. Notice is to be given by submitting a room booking request to the University Timetabling Unit (events to be held in centrally Bookable University space). The request should contain sufficient information about the event and/or the speaker to enable a short risk assessment to be carried out.

ii. No room bookings can be confirmed until a properly completed room booking request or event notification form has been received by the Timetabling Unit.

iii. On receipt of the completed Event Details form, the Head of the Timetabling Unit arranges for the form to be assessed against a standard checklist. Where the assessment suggests that the event is low risk, authorization is granted and the room booking confirmed. There is no need for any further approval by the University unless the circumstances of the event change (see below).

iv. Where the Event Organiser becomes aware of changes to the event such that
   - an external speaker is now to be invited and/or
   - the external speaker(s) have changed and/or
   - the Event Organiser now has reason to believe that there is a risk that the speaker or event may break the law, breach the University’s statutory duties and/or will pose a demonstrable risk to the wellbeing of students, staff or visitors
then they must inform the Head of the Timetabling Unit, by submitting a new booking request form, who arranges for the event to be re-assessed against a standard checklist and proceeds as per para iv) above.
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v. Where the assessment suggests that the event is higher risk, event/speaker details are forwarded to the University Secretary's Office for further consideration by the University Compliance Group (see 9 below)

7.2 University Events in locally bookable space

i. The Event Organiser must give the University timely notice (typically at least 10 working days) of any event that will involve an external speaker or for which they require the use of locally managed University premises. Notice is to be given by submitting a request to the manager with responsibility for that locally owned space, in line with procedures in place locally. The request should contain sufficient information about the event and/or the speaker to enable a short risk assessment to be carried out.

ii. Managers of locally managed space must carry out an initial risk assessment of any event that is to be held in that space. A standard risk assessment form is available online for this purpose.

iii. Where the assessment suggests that the event is low risk, there is no need for any further approval by the University unless the circumstances of the event change (see below).

iv. Where the risk assessment suggests that the event is higher risk, the manager of that space must notify the University by forwarding details to the University Secretary's Office for further consideration by the University Compliance Group (see 9 below). In such cases, the event must not be confirmed or advertised until a properly completed authorisation has been received from the University Secretary's Office.

v. Where the Event Organiser becomes aware of changes to the event, or - where a block booking has been made - to one or more sessions within a series of events, such that:
   - an external speaker is now to be invited and/or
   - the external speaker(s) have changed and/or
   - the Event Organiser now has reason to believe that the event poses a higher risk

then they must inform the University as set out in i) above.

7.3 Events facilitated by Edinburgh First

i. The Edinburgh First booking contract terms and conditions for all events includes an acknowledgement by the customer that they will take all appropriate means to advise Edinburgh First, and thus the University, as to the nature of the event and provide information, if so requested, on all and any speakers and on the content of their presentations. Furthermore, such contract terms and conditions must include an acknowledgement by the customer to keep Edinburgh First appraised of any [material or significant] changes to the nature of the event of the speakers or the content of the speakers’ presentations.

ii. When an event booking is received by Edinburgh First, the Assistant Director, Business Development arranges for the booking to be screened against a high level checklist.
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iii. Where the initial screening suggests that the event is low risk, the event booking can be confirmed. There is no need for any further approval by the University unless the circumstances of the event change (see below).

iv. Family celebrations such as weddings, dinners, parties etc, and corporate bookings such as training events, away days etc will automatically be deemed to be low risk.

v. Where the assessment suggests that the event is higher risk, the Assistant Director, Business Development is responsible for requesting further information from the Event Organiser as to the precise nature of the event, details of the speaker(s) and such other information as is necessary. On receipt of this further information, the Assistant Director, Business Development arranges for the information to be assessed against a more detailed checklist. Where the detailed assessment suggests that the event is low risk, authorization is granted and the room booking confirmed. There is no need for any further approval by the University unless the circumstances of the event change (see below).

vi. Where the detailed assessment suggests an event poses a higher risk to the University, the Assistant Director, Business Development must notify the University by forwarding details to the University Secretary’s Office for further consideration by the University Compliance Group (see 9 below). In such cases, the event bookings cannot be confirmed by Edinburgh First until a properly completed authorisation has been received from the University Secretary’s Office.

vii. Where an Event Organiser becomes aware of changes to an event such that
    • an external speaker is now to be invited and/or
    • the external speaker(s) have changed and/or
    • the Event Organiser now has reason to believe that there is a significant risk of unlawful conduct occurring at the event

then they must inform the Assistant Director, Business Development who arranges for the event to be re-assessed and proceeds as per para ii) above.

7.4 Events facilitated by EUSA

i. When an event booking is received by EUSA, the Commercial Director at EUSA arranges for the booking to be assessed against a standard checklist.

ii. Where the assessment suggests that the event is low risk, the Event Organiser can confirm the event booking. There is no need for any further approval by the University unless the circumstances of the event change (see below). The Event Details form will be kept on file until three months after the event has passed.

iii. Family celebrations such as weddings, dinners, parties etc, and corporate bookings such as training events, away days etc will automatically be deemed to be low risk.

iv. Where the assessment suggests that the event is higher risk, the Commercial Director at EUSA notifies the University by submitting details to the University Secretary’s Office for further consideration by the University Compliance Group (see 9 below). In such cases, the event bookings cannot be confirmed by EUSA until a properly completed authorisation has been received from the University Secretary’s Office.

v. Where an Event Organiser becomes aware of changes to an event such that
    i. an external speaker is now to be invited and/or
    ii. the external speaker(s) have changed and/or
iii. the Event Organiser now has reason to believe that there is a significant risk of unlawful conduct occurring at the event then they must inform the Commercial Director at EUSA, who arranges for the event to be re-assessed against a standard checklist and proceeds as per ii) above.

8. The University Compliance Group

8.1 The University Compliance Group is chaired by the University Secretary or nominee, it comprises a number of key, senior staff with specific knowledge / expertise in the relevant legal and philosophical issues. Membership of the Group is set out separately in the Terms of Reference for the Group.

8.2 The Group, which may convene electronically if needed, assesses the information contained in the Event Details form against a range of established criteria including:
- The University’s commitment to freedom of thought and expression.
- The University’s statutory obligations.
- The provisions of this policy.

8.3 The established criteria used by the University Compliance Group when assessing events are set out separately in the Terms of Reference for the Group.

8.4 Before reaching a decision the Group may request further information from the Event Organiser, and may also seek further information from other sources.

8.5 The Group will recommend to the Secretary:
- Approving the event with no conditions;
- Approving the event but with certain conditions which the event organizer must undertake to comply with; or
- Refusing approval for the event.

8.6 The Secretary will write to the Event Organiser with the final decision and details of any conditions.

8.7 Where conditions are imposed, these will be communicated in writing to the Event Organiser on behalf of the University Secretary. The Event Organiser must ensure that the conditions are met in full, with support from University professional services such as Security where needed.

8.8 Recording of decisions

All recommendations made by the University Compliance Group and decisions taken by the University Secretary will be recorded, together with a summary of the reasons given. An annual report on numbers and types of decision taken will be submitted to University Court as part of the University’s annual statement on compliance with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

8.9 Right of appeal
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Where the University Secretary has refused approval for an event, the Event Organiser may make an appeal against that decision to the University Principal. Requests for a review must be made in writing to the Principal’s Office no later than 10 working days after receipt of the original decision. The Principal or his nominee will hear the appeal as soon as is reasonably practicable. The Principal’s decision will be final.

9. Monitoring and review

9.1 This policy will be reviewed periodically by Central Management Group.