

Share Point location:				
Author (job role/staff initials):	AW	Date & version no. :	Version 4: 12/7/18	
E&D Impact Assessment date or NA:	25/6/15	Review date:	June 2019	

POLICY FOR ORGANISING EVENTS WITH EXTERNAL SPEAKERS

1. Introduction

New College Swindon is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where diversity is valued. This policy outlines the procedures relating to events involving the use of external speakers regardless of who is organising them.

It also details our approach to ensuring that we are protecting both staff and students and the reputation of New College Swindon whilst following the legislation that we're responsible for upholding. This policy is written with reference to the Prevent Duty contained within Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Duty states that specified authorities including Further Education Colleges, in the exercise of their functions, must have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

2. Objectives

- To provide an environment where freedom of expression and speech are protected balanced with the need to ensure that our community is free from harm and that incitement to hatred is never acceptable.
- To provide a supportive, inclusive and safe space for students
- To provide clearly defined and effective procedures to ensure that the law is upheld.
- To collaborate with others to reach sound, evidenced judgments about proposed external speakers ensuring that the College can meet their legal obligations
- To encourage and provide a balance of opinion at any academic discussion or debate
- To communicate to all members, volunteers, staff and visitors, that it is our mutual responsibility to comply with equality and safeguarding and that both New College and the individual can be held liable if they contravene the law.
- To provide clear instructions for organising an event with external contribution e.g. speaker, representatives, film and guidance for researching an external speaker

3. Freedom of speech and expression

3.1. Freedom of expression and speech are basic human rights that are protected by law. Freedom of speech and freedom of expression are not absolute freedoms but freedoms within the law. Universities and Colleges have a history of being open to debate and ideas with students at the forefront of pushing the limits of freedom of expression. 'Academic freedom' is a term used to describe the law that allows for open and honest debate in an academic context.

3.2. However, we have a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of our staff, students and communities. The freedom to express views needs to be balanced with the need to secure freedom from harm for students and communities. We want all of our events, activities and initiatives to be safe; without risk to the reputation of the College; and within the law.

3.3. Sometimes an external speaker or their topic of discussion has the potential to go against our conditions for a safe event. We're committed to working together with event organisers and in some cases, external speakers themselves, to make sure that we reach a judgement that is reasonable, informed and within the law.

4. External speakers and their responsibilities

4.1. An external speaker or visitor is used to describe any individual or organisation who is not a student or staff member for New College Swindon or one of its contracted partners and who has been invited to speak to students and/or staff This includes any individual who is a student or staff member from another institution. It also includes the main contact from any external venue hire client who is paying to use College facilities.

4.2. An event is any event, presentation, visit, activity or initiative organised by a student group/society, individual or staff member that is being held on the New College premises or where New College is being represented by a stand on non-College premises e.g. at an exhibition, school event or fair. It also includes: events where external speakers are streamed live into an event or a pre-recorded film is shown; activity being held on New College premises but organized by external venue hire clients.

4.3. All speakers or visitors should be made aware by the person or group arranging the event (by referring visitors to this policy on the College website)) that they have a responsibility to abide by the law and the College's policies including that they:-

- Must not advocate or 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 be mindful of the risk of causing offence to or 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 College (available from Head of Student Services and Safeguarding or Head of Marketing and Customer Services)

5. **Guidance for New College staff and students organising an event with an external speaker or venue hire client**

5.1. Faculty Managers and Team Leaders or Head of Marketing and Customer Services or Head of Student Services and Safeguarding must be informed of any events that involve external speakers through this procedure. No event involving any external speakers may be publicised or considered confirmed until the speaker has been cleared through the procedure detailed in this policy. This includes advertisement through any social media platform.

5.2. New College Swindon reserves the right to cancel, prohibit or delay any event with an external speaker if the policy is not followed or if health, safety and security criteria cannot be met.

5.3. Any room booking/ event organisation with an external speaker involved must be made no later than 14 days before the date of the event. This is to allow for the organizer to have made adequate safeguarding checks as well as allowing time for alterations to the event if necessary. Any request made outside of this timeframe will be rejected unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances.

5.4. The individual/group organising an external speaker should conduct brief research into the proposed speaker. If in doubt as to the suitability of a speaker, they should refer the decision to:- Faculty Manager or Head of Marketing and Customer Service or Head of Student Services & Safeguarding. Reasons for doubt could be (but are not restricted to) the following: - any person or group on/or linked to the UK Government list of proscribed terror organisations <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2>; talks by organisations generally considered to be extremist; 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 accepted in mainstream as being highly controversial; a link or links to any person or group that has been connected with any controversy of a negative or positive nature; a speaker who has significant profile and attracts a following that could create crowd control and health and safety issues; a speaker from a political party during an election purdah.

5.5. In the event of referral, one of the following decisions will be made:-

- To not permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead
- To not permit the external speaker to attend the event (if it is a wider event)
- 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. These may include observation; independent filming; the inclusion of opportunities to debate or challenge the view being held

5.6. In making recommendations, a Faculty Manager or Head of Marketing and Customer Service or Head of Student Services and Safeguarding may consult on a wider basis with the College's Prevent Committee and risk will be assessed on the following basis:

1. The potential for any decision to limit freedom of speech
2. The potential for the event going ahead to cause reputation risk to the College

3. The potential for the speaker’s presence on site to cause fear or alarm to students or members of staff AND/OR to give rise to breach of peace

5.7. The External speaker consent form (Appendix 1) should be completed and forwarded to the relevant Faculty Manager, or Head of Student Services and Safeguarding, or Head of Marketing and Customer Services no later than 14 days before the planned event. The completed form should be forwarded to Customer Services for logging on the Central Record.

5.8. Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff team and students are aware of and support the policy.

5.9. The staff member responsible for organizing an event with an external speaker(s) must ensure that the correct signing-in procedures are followed and that the speaker(s) are issued with Visitor badges and escorted whilst in College.

6. Additional Guidance for Venue Hire Clients organising an event with external speakers

6.1. The Venue Hire Officer will make external venue hire clients aware of this policy and request details of any external speakers, presentations etc that they are bringing in. This information should be provided no later than 12 days before the booking goes ahead. A shorter version of this policy for Venue Hire Clients is available and they will also be signposted to this version via the website.

6.2. New College Swindon reserves the right to cancel, prohibit or delay any venue hire booking with external speakers if the policy is not followed, requested information not produced or if health, safety and security criteria cannot be met.

6.3. If in doubt as to the suitability of speakers, the Venue Hire Officer should refer the decision to:- Head of Marketing and Customer Service or Head of Student Services & Safeguarding. Reasons may be as outlined in 5.4.

6.4. In the event of referral, one of the following decisions will be made:-

- To not permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead
- To not permit the external speaker to attend the event (if it is a wider event)
- 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. These may include observation; independent filming; the inclusion of opportunities to debate or challenge the view being held

Linked Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Groups Policy• Health and Safety Policy• Freedom of Speech and Expression Policy
-------------------------	---

NEW COLLEGE EQUALITY IMPACT ANALYSIS	DATE:
Function: Enter the topic of the policy, procedure or plan	

This policy, plan, procedure, process has been examined for equality impact, i.e., the impact that this function will have on different groups of actual and potential learners, service users and staff taking account of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 (**age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation**).

1. If Equality Impact Analysis is not relevant to this function, give reasons and proceed to section 5 below.

2. In what ways could this function have a negative impact on any of the groups above? What actions have been taken to eliminate these?

Implementation of this policy could have a negative impact on a range of groups predominantly race and faith groups so staff following this policy need to act with discretion and sensitivity especially where they have initial concerns that are not upheld. This policy has been developed using policies from other FHE institutions and circulated for comment across the Prevent Committee.

3. In what ways could this function have a positive impact on any of the groups above? How will this function be used to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups? Are there plans for the future which will further advance equality?

4. What evidence supports your judgment e.g. consultations, observations, expert opinions, quantitative or qualitative surveys? If the evidence is in the form of an additional document, where is it stored?

5. Name and job title of manager responsible: Amanda Walton, Head of Marketing and Customer Services

Approval Form for the use of external speakers at New College

1. Complete **all** boxes and ensure that you have signed the form
3. Forward to Faculty Manager, Head of Student Services and Safeguarding or Head of Marketing and Customer Services to obtain consent.
4. When complete, this form should be forwarded to Head of Marketing for maintaining central records

NAME OF PERSON REQUESTING CONSENT:	
GROUP:	GROUP SIZE:
NAME OF PERSON TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVENT:	
NAME OF OUTSIDE SPEAKER(S):	ORGANISATION THEY REPRESENT:
ADDRESS OF ORGANISATION THEY REPRESENT:	
POSTCODE:	
Is there any known or likely media interest in the proposed event? YES/NO	

<p>Have adequate background checks been completed? YES/NO</p> <p>Are there any matters that require further investigation/action? Supply brief discussion.</p>	
<p>I would like to invite/accept the (group):</p>	
<p>On (topic):</p>	
<p>In (room):</p>	
<p>On (date):</p>	<p>Start time:</p> <p>Finish time:</p>

CONSENT APPROVAL:

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:	DATE OF SUBMISSION:
FACULTY HEAD, HEAD OF STUDENT SERVICES OR HEAD OF MARKETING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES NAME:	
CONSENT APPROVAL SIGNATURE:	