

## POLICY FOR ORGANISING EVENTS WITH EXTERNAL SPEAKERS

### 1. Introduction

Queen Mary's College is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where equalities, diversity and inclusion are valued. This policy outlines the procedures relating to events involving the use of external speakers. It also details our approach to ensuring that we are protecting both staff and students and the reputation of Queen Mary's College whilst following the legislation that we are 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. Sometimes an external speaker or their topic of discussion has the potential to go against our conditions for providing a safe event. We are 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.

### 2. Objectives

- To provide an environment where freedom of expression and speech are protected and balanced with the need to ensure that our community is free from harm and that incitement to hatred is never encouraged or accepted.
- To provide a supportive, inclusive and safe space for students and staff.
- 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 Queen Mary's College as well as 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. Legal Requirements

Queen Mary's College maintains its responsibility to comply with the Human Rights Act (1998) and the Education (No.2) Act (1986) allowing staff and students their freedom of speech and expression, particularly in the context of academic freedom to question and put forward new ideas including controversial or unpopular opinions, Education Reform Act (1988). This must co-exist with the due regard to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) and the requirement of the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (2021), which ensures that any risk of attempted radicalisation is considered when inviting speakers to the College or responding to requests from speakers.

Queen Mary's College has a duty to safeguard information that it holds on individuals, so as not put them at risk through disclosure and therefore complies with the Data Protection Act (2018).

Queen Mary's College seeks to comply with all relevant legislation and is also informed by:

- The Equality Act (2010)
- Terrorism Act (2000, 2006, 2008)
- Public Order Act (1986)
- Protection from Harassment Act (1997)
- The Crime and Disorder Act (1998)
- The Racial and Religious Hatred Act (2006)
- Consumer Rights Act (1998)
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (2021)

#### **4. External speakers and their responsibilities**

The term external speaker or visitor is used to describe any individual or organisation who is not a student or staff member of Queen Mary's College, who has been invited to speak to, present or perform 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.

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 Queen Mary's College premises or where Queen Mary's 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. It also includes activities being held on Queen Mary's College premises but organized by external venue hire clients.

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 actions that are unlawful
- 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 (The Principal or a delegated alternate)
- Comply with legislation regarding freedom of speech.

#### **5. Guidance for Queen Mary's College staff and students organising an event with an external speaker or venue hire client**

Queen Mary's College is committed to providing students with opportunities to meet and share the views of a range of subject specialists. The majority of external speakers' requests will be straightforward and can be authorised by the Director of Learning and Support Staff Team Leaders, however where any concerns are raised the referral will be further considered by the Senior Leadership Team.

- 5.1. All Directors of Learning and Support Staff Team Leaders must be informed of any events that involve external speakers. No event involving any external speakers may be publicised or considered until the speaker has been cleared through the procedure detailed in this policy. This also includes advertisement through any social media platform.
- 5.2. Queen Mary's College reserves the right to cancel, prohibit or delay any event with an external speaker or performer 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 or performer involved should ideally be made no later than 14 days before the date of the event. This is to allow for the organiser to have made adequate safeguarding checks as well as allowing time for alterations to the event if necessary.

- 5.4. Prior to the confirmation of an external speaker, the individual/group organising an external speaker should conduct solid research into the proposed speaker and any associated groups, gathering information on the Approval Form (Appendix 1).
- 5.5. If in doubt as to the suitability of a speaker, the event organiser should refer the decision to the Principal or a delegated alternate. The college delegate should contact the Prevent Regional HE/FE Co-ordinator or local authority for advice and further due diligence.
- 5.6. There should always be a member of staff present at events when speakers are invited in.
- 5.7. Automatic exclusion would apply to (but is 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 media 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 single political party only during an election purdah (ie, without an alternative view being represented also.)
- 5.8. In making recommendations, Directors of Learning and Support Staff Team Leaders may consult more widely on and the 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 reputational 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.
- 5.9. Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff team and students are aware of and support the policy.

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

- 6.1. The Commercial Operations Manager will make external venue hire clients aware of this policy and request details of any external speakers, presentations that they are bringing in. This information should ideally be provided no later than 14 days before the booking goes ahead.
- 6.2. Queen Mary's College and QM Leisure Ltd 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 Commercial Operations Manager should refer the decision to the Principal or a delegated alternate. Reasons may be as outlined above.
- 6.4. Consultation with the Police force or regional FE Prevent coordinator may be necessary if there is a risk of harm to staff or students as a result of this aforementioned process.

## **7. Review and Monitoring**

Queen Mary's College monitors and reviews the procedures annually to ensure they are robust and in line with any changes made to legislation. The completion of the External Speakers Approval Form provides documentation to review for the monitoring process.

**APPENDIX 1**
**Approval Form for the use of external speakers at Queen Mary's College**

1. Complete all boxes and ensure that you have signed the form
2. Forward to Commercial Operations Manager, Director of Learning or Support Staff Team Leader to obtain consent.
3. When complete, this form should be retained by each relevant department for monitoring purposes.

NAME OF PERSON REQUESTING CONSENT:	
GROUP:	GROUP SIZE:
NAME OF PERSON TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVENT:	
NAME OF OUTSIDE SPEAKER, OR PERFORMER(S):	ORGANISATION THEY REPRESENT:
ADDRESS AND WEBSITE OF ORGANISATION THEY REPRESENT:	TEL:
Speaker topic/details and how will students benefit:	
Speaker reputation / other information:	
How will the event be advertised:	
Is there any known or likely media interest in the proposed event? YES/NO	
Have adequate background checks been completed? YES/NO Check website, printed literature and any resources that may be presented.	
Are there any matters that require further investigation/action? Supply brief discussion.	
I would like to invite/accept ( ): as described above	
Room / Virtual Place of Event:	
On (date):	Time:
<b>CONSENT APPROVAL:</b>	
SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:	DATE OF SUBMISSION:
APPROVED BY:	
CONSENT APPROVAL SIGNATURE:	

