University of Exeter Speaker and Event Policy V10

Aim

The purpose of this policy is to set out the University's requirements for booking rooms and speakers for events, and booking guest speakers to attend or contribute to any University activity, whether on campus or external.

The University is committed to the protection of freedom of speech and academic freedom, alongside a duty of care to its staff, students and visitors. Freedom of Speech within the law will be protected. This freedom does not extend to allowing a speaker to commit a criminal offence, including those related to Hate Speech and Counter Terrorism legislation.

In order to fulfil that duty, the University has a responsibility to be aware of the context of events being held on campus or in its name. This policy ensures that this responsibility is met, and that the decision to allow or refuse an event is documented and transparent.

This policy also sets out the legal requirements for the arrangement of speakers and events to ensure that all staff and students undertaking this activity explicitly understand the obligations.

The University will always endeavour to allow an event go ahead, provided that it is within the boundaries of the law.

Key Objectives

The University is committed to the following key objectives and will have succeeded in the management of the Speaker and Event policy if:

- All events held at or in the name of the University are risk assessed, and if there is a concern have a documented approval recorded.
- Any event that goes ahead in breach of the policy or related regulation or legislation is reported and lessons learned.
- Any member of staff who breaches the policy is referred to the relevant University procedure, whether disciplinary or further training. Breach of legal obligations relating to the Counter Terrorism Act are required to be reported to the Local Authorities, and may also result in legal action.
- No event is refused that would have been delivered within the boundaries of the law and without threat to security, safety or University policy.

Scope

This policy applies to non-curriculum linked speakers, conferences, events and/or speeches and guest speakers held at or in the name of the University of Exeter, whether booked by University staff, students or external parties. This includes events held virtually via collaboration tools such as Zoom or Teams (not exhaustive).

Related University of Exeter and Student Union Policies:
University of Exeter Agreement on Academic Freedom
University of Exeter Freedom of Speech Policy
Students Guild Debate or Speaker Event Risk Assessment
FX Union Guest Speaker Process
FX Union No Platform
Teaching and Research External Speakers Policy

Relevant Regulation/Legislation:

Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
Education Act (No.2) 1986
Education Reform Act 1988

Responsibility for Implementation

The Registrar and Secretary has overall accountability for the implementation of this policy. Accountability at College and Professional Service level is noted within the table below, which sets out the requirements of the policy.

	Criteria to meet	Accountability	Reference documents and more information (links)
1	**Speakers and Events Policy** **1.1** The Speakers and Events Policy and associated Protocols are approved under the University Consultation and approval process. **1.2** The Registrar and Secretary is responsible for ensuring that all Speaker and Event policy, protocols and guidelines are written in accordance with the relevant Regulation and legislation and are fit for purpose.	Senior Vice-President and Registrar and Secretary	
2	**Training for Staff Responsible for Booking Speakers/Events** **2.1** Relevant training will be provided for all staff responsible for booking speakers and events, tailored to the type of events that they will be booking (i.e. Speakers at Colleges/Conferences/Corporate Events). Records of training will be kept centrally, and reviewed regularly to ensure that all relevant staff are trained.	• Event Exeter Staff • Staff responsible for requesting, booking or administrating the booking of speakers • Chaplaincy	LearnUpon session: Prevent Duty – Policy and Procedures on Freedom of Speech Training for temporary staff (where unable to access the LearnUpon session
3	**Bookings made with regard to University business, linked to Teaching / Study / Research / Employability** **3.1** It is the accountability of the College or Professional Services member of staff requesting the booking to perform an initial and unrecorded risk assessment of the speaker and content. If no concern is identified, no further action or documentation is required. If a concern is identified, move to 3.2 **3.2** If a concern is identified, a documented risk assessment must be completed and authorised by the relevant approver as set out within the risk assessment form **3.3** Any managing actions identified should be recorded within the risk assessment form along with the approval **3.4** If it is not clear whether the managing actions mitigate the risk, the risk assessment should be referred to the University Event Approval Panel for consideration **3.5** Any conditions set by the approval panel must be taken into account before the booking can go ahead. **3.6** Risk assessment forms for events/speakers referred and/or refused must be passed to the Compliance, Governance and Risk Department, to form part of the speaker and events information return to the regulator. It is the responsibility of the College Registrars to ensure that this process is followed **3.7** The event must be registered via the Event Summary form for central visibility of all events held on campus.	• Staff responsible for requesting, booking or administrating the booking of speakers • College Registrars (or nominated deputies • Compliance, Governance and Risk Department • Estate Patrol (Security)	Speaker and event risk assessment guidance Teaching and Research Speakers Risk Assessment Event Referral Panel Approval Process University of Exeter Online Events Guidance Event Summary Form

4	**Bookings made by Event Exeter**
	a) **Bookings initiating externally**
	   4.1 A risk assessment should be completed by the client as part of the booking process.
	   4.2 The Event Exeter member of staff handling the booking will perform an initial and unrecorded risk assessment. If no concern is identified, the event can be booked with no further action or documentation. If a concern is identified, move to 4.3.
	   4.3 If a concern is identified, a documented risk assessment must be completed and authorised by the relevant approver as set out within the risk assessment form.
	   4.4 Any managing actions identified should be recorded within the risk assessment form along with the approval
	   4.5 If it is not clear whether the managing actions mitigate the risk, the risk assessment should be referred to the university approval panel for consideration.
	   4.6 Any conditions set by the approval must be taken into
		5 Event Exeter Staff responsible for booking speakers/events
		6 Event Exeter Staff responsible for approving speakers /events
		7 Chaplaincy
		8 Research Events Team
		9 Senior Risk and Compliance Advisor
			Event Exeter Speaker Risk Assessment
			
			Event Referral Panel Approval Process
			
			University of Exeter Online Events Guidance

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	account before the booking can go ahead. **b) Bookings initiating from students or staff** **4.7** Any bookings dealt with by Event Exeter for students or staff of the university may only be booked once the relevant approval process has been completed. This includes: i. Bookings for university business (see section 3) ii. Bookings by student groups/individual students (see section 5) **4.8** Bookings may only be confirmed once confirmation has been received that the correct process has been followed, the appropriate risk assessment has been completed, and any managing actions are in place. **4.9** Risk assessment forms for events/speakers referred and/or refused must be passed to the Senior Risk and Compliance Advisor, to form part of the speaker and events information return to the Regulator. It is the responsibility of the relevant Head of Service (or equivalent) to ensure this process is followed. **4.10** The event must be registered via the Event Summary Form, for central visibility of all events held on campus.		Event Summary Form
5	**Bookings made by Students or Student Groups** **a) Affiliated student groups** **5.1** It is a requirement of the Student Guild and FXU respectively that all guest speaker and event bookings organised by their affiliated student groups must have the relevant standard risk assessment completed capturing high level details of the organiser, the speaker(s), any organisations that they represent, and the topic of the event and any health, safety and security requirements. Each organisation undertakes an internal review, and the University is informed about debate/speaker events. **5.2** If appropriate the University may escalate a risk assessment via the review system at **point 6** prior to approval. **5.3** The risk assessment must be completed within the timeline set out by the Students' Union (see links→). **5.4** The event must be registered via the Event Summary Form, for central visibility of all events held on campus. **b) Non-affiliated student groups or individual students** **5.4** If a booking is made by a student(s) who is not affiliated to either the Students Guild (Exeter) or FXU (Cornwall), the room bookings team will not confirm the booking unless a non-affiliated student risk assessment has been completed by the student(s). The Students' Guild risk assessment advice may also be a useful resource. **5.5** The risk assessment must be submitted at least 10 days prior to the event. **5.6** Room Bookings will send the completed form to Prevent@exeter.ac.uk to assess whether controlling actions are required **5.7** the booking may only be confirmed once approval has been provided from Prevent.exeter.ac.uk that either: a) the speaker/event can go ahead with no conditions attached b) the speaker/event can go ahead with specific conditions attached c) the speaker/event is refused Where the response is (b) or (c), the reason for the decision will be stated in the response. There is a right to appeal against a refusal, see **point 7** **5.8** The event must be registered via the Event Summary Form, for central visibility of all events held on campus.	• Students' Guild • Events Team • FXU Events Team • Student Societies affiliated to either students' union • Students • Students • Room Bookings Team	Event Referral Panel Approval Process Speakers and Events Process FXU University of Exeter Online Events Guidance Event Summary Form Event risk assessment (nonaffiliated students) Exeter Event risk assessment (nonaffiliated students) FXU Event Summary Form
6	**Referral Process for Events of Concern** **6.1** If a speaker or event booked by any student, student body or member of University staff meets the criteria for an Event of Concern and managing actions identified cannot successfully mitigate, it must be referred to the Event Approval Panel for review. **6.2** The panel will assess based on the evidence provided to identify	• This includes the below or their nominated deputies: • Senior Vice President and Registrar and Secretary • University General Counsel	Event Referral Panel Approval

	whether additional controls are required to allow the event to go ahead. **6.3** Depending on the circumstances of the event, input may be sought from one or more other bodies, as detailed within the Event Referral Procedure. In rare cases, it may be necessary to refuse a speaker or event in line with the University's duties relating to safety and safeguarding. **6.4** The final decision on whether a speaker/event will be approved or refused rests with the Registrar and Secretary. The panel will return the decision to the principle organiser in writing, confirming: d) the speaker/event can go ahead with no conditions attached e) the speaker/event can go ahead with specific conditions attached f) the speaker/event is refused. Where the response is (b) or (c), the reason for the decision will be stated in the response. There is a right to appeal against a refusal, see **point 7**	• Head of Security • An Appropriate nominated Senior member of Staff • Senior Risk and Compliance Officer	
7	**Appealing a refusal decision** **7.1** Individuals have the right to appeal a refusal decision. An appeal must be submitted to Prevent@exeter.ac.uk by the principal organiser, stating the basis for the appeal. **7.2** The principal organiser should provide evidence to substantiate their assurance that the event/speaker should not be refused. **7.3** A review will be undertaken by a nominee of the Provost, independent from the initial review panel. **7.4** A further decision will be provided in writing. If the event/speaker is still refused, the reason for the decision will be included in the response.	• Students' Guild events team • FXU events team • Event Exeter staff • Any staff responsible for booking or authorizing events • Senior Risk and Compliance Office • Nominee of the Provost	Event Referral Panel Approval
8	**Unauthorised events** **8.1** The university reserves the right to stop any event on campus that goes ahead without following the approval process set out in this policy. **8.2** If an event is stopped, all attendees must comply with the request of university staff to cease the event. **8.3** Event organisers must assist the university in the safe and orderly dispersal of attendees. **8.4** Sanctions may be applied to organisers of events that have not followed the correct process, including a ban on holding future events at the university.	• Students' Guild events team • FXU events team • Students	
9	**Information sharing with relevant bodies** **9.1** the university has a duty to share information with the Police and other universities if it is legal and right to do so. This includes sharing information about speakers and events. This can apply to events: i. that have been successful and effective ii. That have breached or intended to breach legal obligations, particularly in regard to legislation listed in the scope section of this policy	• Event referral panel	

Standard monitoring and measurement criteria

Each College, Service, and Student Union will keep records of documented risk assessments and carry out an annual review to ensure that all elements of the policy are being implemented effectively. An annual summary of compliance and any necessary action plans required will be submitted to the Senior Risk and Compliance Advisor.

Specifically the following will be measured:

1	The number of speakers/events that were referred to the event referral panel under this policy.
2	The number of referred speakers/events that were allowed with mitigation and the number of events that were refused, with the reason for refusal
3	That External Speaker/Event Risk Assessments are completed correctly, stored and able to evidence declaration of compliance and valid reasons for the decision to allow or refuse where a concern was identified
4	That a valid Local Information Sharing agreement is in place enabling sharing of information with relevant authorities and other institutions
5	Evidence that if a serious incident has occurred under Counter Terrorism legislation, it has been assessed appropriately and reported to the Local Authority and to HEFCE within 10 days
6	That regular and effective reporting has been provided to VCEG, and annually to Council to provide assurance of compliance

Document Revision History

Initiation Date:	14/07/2016		
Author:	Risk and Compliance Officer		
Key Contributors:	Prevent Compliance Group		
Approver:	Council		
Latest Review date:	01/09/2023	Next review due:	September 2024

Version	Revision Date	Modified By	Description of Revision	Approved by
10	01/09/2023	Interim Insurance and Risk Manager	Updated Compliance Governance and Risk Directorate to "Department", and amended the Prevent Lead to University Counsel	N/A
9	27/09/2021	Interim Insurance Audit and Risk Manager	Addition of requirement to register all events via the Event Summary Form, for visibility of all events held on campus.	N/A – non-material change to include as a requirement where the process is already in place.
8	14/09/2020	Risk and Compliance Officer	Addition of new section 8 regarding unauthorised events, plus guidance for online events drafted and linked at relevant sections.	Registrar and Secretary
7	25/11/2019	Risk and Compliance Officer	"Out of Scope" removed, as this caused confusion. Internal speakers are only excluded when booked by University staff for academic events.\nClarification at section 5 that risk assessments for affiliated student groups must follow the timelines of the relevant Students' Union.	Prevent Compliance Group
6	02/10/2019	Risk and Compliance Officer	Event risk assessment for non-affiliated student groups updated to provide more information on event context and re-linked	N/A – non-material change
5	06/08/18	Risk and Compliance Officer	Links to training and guidance added at section 2	Prevent Compliance Group
4	15/01/18	Risk and Compliance Officer	Link to risk assessment guidance document added at section 3	Registrar and Secretary
3	26/07/17	Risk and Compliance Officer	Updated to bring together separate policies into one overarching document, with procedure documents linked	VCEG
2	21/12/2016	Risk and Compliance Officer	Updated to reflect amendments made to the Teaching and Research Linked External Speakers	Prevent Compliance Group
1	14/07/2016	Risk and Compliance Officer	First publication of policy	Council