Events Management, Events and Speaker Policy

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University of Strathclyde, Events Management, Events and Speaker Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Freedom of expression within the law is core the University of Strathclyde's values. With this in mind, the University seeks to foster a culture which permits freedom of speech within a framework of mutual respect. As part of this, the University has a long and proud tradition of hosting both national and international speakers who come to the University to share their thoughts and insights, and help the University fulfil its founding mission as a '*place of useful learning*'. This tradition remains at the heart of the university's ethos today, as a leading international technological university.

2. PURPOSE

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 professional services 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

- The University recognises and upholds the fundamental importance of freedom of speech, and does not seek to restrict this fundamental freedom through this policy.
- 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, 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

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.

This Policy applies to any event:

- That is organised by students or staff at the University *and*
- That is held under the auspices of the University (this includes events organised by Faculties, Academic or Professional Services Departments and USSA), regardless of location *and*
- That is not directly related to the University's normal academic or professional services (administrative) business.

Private bookings such as celebratory events e.g. weddings, dinners, parties etc., and corporate bookings such as training events, away days etc. or those made with University industry partners, will automatically be deemed to be low risk, and will continue to use existing booking procedures via either the Conferencing and Events or Room Bookings teams.
Centrally organised conferences, CPD courses, and events are likewise able to continue to use existing procedures. Such events are not required to adhere to the booking arrangements outlined below.

External parties wishing to book University facilities should contact the Room Bookings Team or the Conference & Events Team as appropriate. Staff or students should not request room bookings on behalf of external parties, with the exception of instances where they are hosting an external speaker as part of an event organised under the auspices of the University. As outlined above, existing booking procedures for external party bookings should continue to be used.

Staff organising those events outlined above which are exempt from this policy must be aware of the University's statutory duties outlined below, and seek advice from appropriate members of staff, including the Head of Security, whenever there are concerns about an event and/or speaker.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

The University Secretary and Compliance Officer (SCO) 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 the University SCO may delegate authorisation of events deemed to be low risk to the Head of Security Services, the Director of Estates Services, the Director of Student Enhancement and Experience Services in the case of University-managed property and the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Student President of the University of Strathclyde Students Association (USSA) in relation to USSA managed spaces. In the absence of the University SCO, responsibility rests with the University Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

The University's Events Sub-Group of the Prevent Working Group has responsibility for supporting the University SCO with consideration of events or speakers deemed to be high risk in relation to the University's statutory duties.

An Event Organiser is responsible for assisting the University in its statutory duties by:

- Informing the University of events they are organising
- providing details of the event / speaker in a timely manner as required
- Implementing any actions that may be required by the University in order to ensure the event runs peacefully and lawfully.

The Event organiser is responsible for submitting accurate and timely room booking requests to the relevant space owner, e.g. Room Bookings (for events in university managed space) or USSA (for events in USSA managed space).

The Room Bookings Team, and the USSA Events Management team are responsible for:

- Receiving room booking requests/event notifications.
- Requesting further information from the event organiser as needed.
- Ensuring that requests/notifications are competently assessed and authorized if deemed to be low risk.
- Referring events and speakers requests for which there are concerns to the Head of Security initially for further consideration.
- Ensuring that a copy of the events and speakers form is retained centrally in line with records retention guidance.

Persons in attendance at events are responsible for complying with the instructions of the event organiser.

6. EVENT AND SPEAKER BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS AND PROCEDURES

6.1 Stage 1 - Submission of a speaker/event request

The Event Organiser must give the University timely notice (wherever possible, at least 15 working days) of any event that will involve an external speaker or for which they require the use of University premises. Notice is to be given by submitting a room booking request to the USSA Events Management or University Room Bookings team (dependant on whether the space is located within the Students Association building or elsewhere within the university campus).

The event organiser should complete the events and speaker form and submit this with the request to provide sufficient information about the event and/or the speaker to enable a short assessment to be carried out. No room bookings will be confirmed until a properly completed events and speakers form has been received and a decision on approval is subsequently advised to the organiser.

The form will request information such as:

- Details of the event/speaker, including time and venue
- Overview of the event, subject matter and ticketing arrangements
- Relevant information relating to the speaker
- Likely press or media interest
- Information about how the event will be promoted.

It is expected that most requests will be of low risk, and the event or speaker can proceed as planned. At any stage of these event and speakers' procedures, further information may be requested from the event organiser to properly consider any concerns raised.

Events that are to be held off campus but which are held under the auspices of the University should be made known locally to line managers, Heads of Department, and/or to CEO of USSA. Staff may request further information, such as that listed above, to consider whether or not there are any concerns associated with the event. A record of any decision made about such events, including any mitigating action to be taken to allow the event to go ahead safely, should be made.

6.2 Stage 2- Review of speaker/event request

The completed forms will be reviewed by the University Room Bookings or USSA Events Management Team. Staff reviewing forms will be provided with a guidance sheet providing advice on when forms should be escalated for further discussion. For all events that are deemed to be low risk, such as routine student society meetings, the University Room Bookings or USSA Events Management Team are responsible for approving room booking requests, and for ensuring that a copy of the form and decision is archived in the central database. It is anticipated that the majority of event and speakers requests will be approved quickly provided that a fully completed form is provided with room booking requests.
Where a form identifies that there might be possible concerns to consider, the University Room Bookings or USSA Events Management Team will liaise with the University Head of Security Services (and any other member of staff or relevant external agency, as appropriate) to give further consideration to the risks or concerns that might need to be addressed.

For example, the following points are to be considered:

- Does the proposed speaker have links to or represent an extreme right wing or white supremacist group, or proscribed terror group or organisation as designated by the UK Government?

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- What is the focus of the event and might the subject matter or title be controversial or cause distress? Will both sides of the argument be represented?
- Has the speaker any recent history of controversy, particularly at a HE institution?
- What security provisions are proposed, and are they considered to be sufficient?
- Will hosting the event pose a reputational risk for the university?

As outlined above, further information may be requested from the event organiser to properly consider and discuss any concerns raised.

Consideration of events will be in keeping with the guidance issued by the Scottish Universities Prevent Working Group, which states that:

"While upholding the fundamental importance of freedom of speech, institutions may nevertheless require to place conditions on certain speakers or events, or indeed to refuse to allow them on campus. This should be done only in exceptional circumstances, and where the institution, having considered carefully the available information, believes that there is a serious risk that the speaker or event will breach the law and/or will pose a significant risk to the wellbeing of students, staff or visitors".

"Common to all Scotland's higher education institutions is a commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression. Indeed, higher education plays an essential societal role in providing a culture where challenging and controversial views may be expressed. While recognising their responsibility to address the statutory duty, the Scottish HEIs are committed to supporting freedom of expression within the law."

6.3 Stage 3 – Referral to the Events Sub-Group of the Prevent Working Group

Should any of the above issues arise, the event should be referred to the University Secretary and Compliance Officer (or nominated delegate), as Chair of the University's Events Sub-Group. They will consider what practical steps should then be taken to: allow and securely manage; postpone; or cancel the event.

A range of mitigating actions may be offered. These might include:

- Varying the time and location of the event from the original plan
- Requiring a different person to chair the event
- Making the event all-ticket and requiring attendees to show ID
- Requesting an advance copy of any guest list
- Placing restrictions on attendee numbers
- Enhancing security arrangements
- Imposing conditions on how the event is to be advertised
- Mandatory attendance of specified senior University representatives
- Restricting or refusing media attendance
- Imposing an alcohol ban
- Imposing conditions on how the event is run, for example in relation to requests for segregation of the audience
- Requesting a copy of any presentation in advance
- Briefing the chair in advance to make clear their responsibilities under the law
- Restricting what materials are available at the event

6.4 Stage 4 - Communication of an Event/Speaker Decision

Decisions should be clearly communicated to the organiser of the event, and this will be done as soon as is reasonably practicable, but normally within 5 working days of the submission of any request (i.e. at least 10 working days before the event is due to take place).

Should conditions be required, these should be clearly stated at that point along with a requirement for written agreement before the event will be allowed to take place on campus.

6.5 Stage 5 – Right of Appeal

Where the University SCO has refused approval for an event or speaker, the Event Organiser may make an appeal against that decision to the University Principal. Appeal requests must be made in writing to the Principal's Office no later than 5 working days after receipt of the original decision. The Principal or their nominee will hear the appeal as soon as is reasonably practicable. The Principal's decision will be final.

6.6 Stage 6 – Recording of Decisions

All decisions taken by the University SCO will be recorded, together with a summary of the reasons given. The number of applicable event requests submitted and the types of decision taken will be reported to Court as part of the University's annual statement of compliance with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Copies of all applicable event requests, decisions and appeals will be archived in the central database in line with the University's records retention guidance.

7. DEFINITIONS

Event – a planned public or social occasion. As identified above, only events which do NOT form part of the University's normal academic or professional services (administrative) business or do not fall within one of the exemptions listed above, 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. 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 USSA) 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 USSA-affiliated student societies or USSA-affiliated sports clubs.

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)**
- 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 e.g. with regard to use of threats, incitement of violence, inflaming religious or racial hatred
- Obligations under charities law, i.e. 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.

University of Strathclyde External Room Booking Enquiry Form

SECTION A – EVENT ORGANISER DETAILS

1.	Organiser's Name:	
2.	Organiser's Email Address:	
3.	Organiser's Telephone Number:	
4.	Student Society/Club ID (if applicable)	

SECTION B – GUEST SPEAKER'S DETAILS

1.	Speaker's Name:	
2.	Speaker's Email Address:	
3.	Organisation or Society that the Speaker represents (if applicable):	
4.	Where possible, please provide weblinks to any background material relating to your guest speaker *(this can be a company or personal website, LinkedIn profile or relevant social media page)*:	
5.	Has the speaker spoken at University of Strathclyde *(or any other educational institution)* events previously?	
6.	If 'Yes' to (5), please provide details /dates:	

SECTION C – ROOM BOOKING ***PLEASE DO NOT ADVERTISE YOUR EVENT UNTIL YOU HAVE RECEIVED CONFIRMATION OF ROOM BOOKING***

1.	Date of Event:			
2.	Start Time:		3. Finish Time:	
4.	Title and purpose of event?			
5.	Room Requirements (location, room name if known, AV facilities, accessibility requirements)			
6.	Is the event ticketed?	*Yes/No*		
7.	*How will the event be advertised? *(E.g. internally / social media / press)*			

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8. Is there any known or likely media interest?	*Yes/No*	
9. Is the event likely to impact on the University's / Student Union's reputation?	*Yes/No*	
10. Is there any known or likely impact on the safety of students, staff or the wider community attending the event?	*Yes/No*	
11. Do you have any reason to believe that extremist views are likely to be expressed at the event? *'Extremism' is considered to be vocal or active opposition to fundamental university values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.*	*Yes/No*	
12. Are you or anyone else involved in organising the event aware of any reason why any part of the University (or wider University community) would take issue with the speaker and potentially protest?	Yes/No	
13. Will any literature, publications or other materials (such as CDs/DVDs, presentation materials) be distributed or made available to attendees?	Yes/No	
14. Will the event be recorded / broadcast?	Yes/No	

SECTION D – ATTENDEES

1. Is the event open to:		2. Please indicate below how many attendees you expect (approximately)
Students	Yes/No	
University Staff	Yes/No	
Invited Guests	Yes/No	
General Public	Yes/No	
Total Number =		

* Please do not advertise the event until you have received confirmation that the room booking has been approved
Please submit the completed form via email to: roombookings@strath.ac.uk (where the event is envisaged to be located in University facilities outwith the Students Association building) or to ussa.space@strath.ac.uk (for bookings within the Students Association building).

External Room Bookings Flowchart

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