
POLICY/PROCEDURE: EXTERNAL SPEAKER POLICY

Approval required by:	Executive	Y	Governing Body	N
Senior Lead:	VP Curriculum & Student Experience (DSL)			
Responsible Manager:	Head of Safeguarding (DDSL)			
Date approved:	November 2024			
Date to be reviewed:	July 2025			

Significant changes to policy:

Updated to clarify that where an event involves a staff member, student, governor, volunteer, sub-contractor, contractor, commercial letting and/or external hire client speaking on behalf of a third party, they will be classed as an external speaker and, as such, fall within the remit of this policy.

Update to 'Request for Prior Approval for External Speaker' form attached at Appendix 1.

Impact of changes:

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

Barnsley College or ITS ('the college') 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 the college's approach to ensuring that both staff and students are protected as well as the reputation of the 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 and, the Prevent Duty Guidance: Guidance for Specified Authorities in England and Wales 2023.

College is required to have in place policies and procedures to mitigate the risks of individuals being radicalised or drawn into terrorism. This includes making sure that risks around external speakers and events are rigorously assessed and managed.

Encouragement of terrorism, inviting support for proscribed terrorist organisations and fundraising for the purposes of terrorism are all criminal offences and college should not provide a platform for these offences to be committed. In addition, college will consider whether the views likely to be expressed constitute extremist views that risk drawing students into terrorism or are shared by terrorist organisations.

College will only allow organisations and individuals to use our facilities, whose views and conduct match college ethos. As such, we will ask all external speakers to sign up to and agree to abide by the College's commitment to equality and diversity, as set out in the College's Single Equality Scheme, prior to speaking at a College event.

This policy applies to all College staff, governors, volunteers, students, sub-contractors, contractors and visitors. It also applies to any individual or organisation that uses College facilities as part of a service level agreement, commercial lettings and/or external hire agreement. It applies to all Events which include participation by an external speaker.

The term “Events” refers to meetings, lectures, seminars, gatherings, assemblies, demonstrations, marches, visits, presentations and other events or activities of any description which:

- are held on premises which the College or its subsidiaries own or in respect of which the College or its subsidiaries hold a lease or habitually use by licence or permission, including those premises occupied by the Student Union or
- are affiliated, funded or branded in a manner which suggests an association with the College, its subsidiaries or the Student Union.
- “External Speaker” means a speaker who is not a member of staff or student of the College. However, where an event involves a staff member, student, governor, volunteer, sub-contractor, contractor, commercial letting and/or external hire client speaking on behalf of a third party, they will be classed as an external speaker and, as such, fall within the remit of this policy.

This includes events which are streamed live or pre-recorded.

The “Organiser” of an Event means:

- where an Event is organised by a Department (department, team, professional service group or similar body of the College), the person in charge of that Department;
- where an Event is organised by the Student Union, the President of the Student Union (or a member of the Student Union Executive in his or her absence);
- where an Event is organised by an outside person or body, the person authorising the Event on behalf of the College;
- in all other cases, the person organising the Event.

This External Speaker Policy should be read in conjunction with the Freedom of Speech Policy. Anyone organising an event must comply with this policy including the conduct requirements. Any breach may lead to the College taking disciplinary or other action, as appropriate, against the organiser or anyone else involved in the event

OBJECTIVES

- To provide an environment where freedom of expression and speech are protected balanced with the need to ensure that our College community is free from harm and that incitement to hatred, violence or intolerance 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 judgements 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 staff, governors, volunteers, students, sub-contractors, contractors, visitors, external hire and/or commercial lettings clients that it is our mutual responsibility

to comply with equality and safeguarding legislation and that both the 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.

External Speakers and their Responsibilities

An external speaker or visitor is used to describe any individual or organisation who is not a student or staff member or one of its contracted partners and who has been invited to speak to students and/or staff. However, where an event involves a staff member, student, governor, volunteer, sub-contractor, contractor, commercial lettings and/or external hire clients speaking on behalf of a third party, in such instances, they will be classed as an external speaker and, as such, fall within the remit of this policy. 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.

All speakers or visitors should be made aware, by the person or group arranging the event, 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 operate 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
- Must agree to abide by the College's commitment to equality and diversity, as set out in the College's Single Equality Scheme, prior to speaking at a College event.

Guidance for staff, governors, volunteers, students, sub-contractors, contractors, visitors, external hire and/or commercial lettings clients organising an event with an external speaker
Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff team and students are aware of and support the policy.

The relevant Head of Department and Safeguarding must be informed of any events that involve external speakers through this procedure. For external hire or commercial lettings clients, the relevant member of College staff who is the point of contact and Safeguarding must be informed.

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. Prior to publishing an event, the College's Marketing Department must be consulted.

The college 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.

The following stages set out how to make an external speaker request through to managing the external speaker event, should it be approved.

Stage 1: Submission of an external speaker request

The organiser of the event must submit A 'Request for Prior Approval for External Speaker' form (attached at Appendix A) to the central Safeguarding team at safeguarding@barnsley.ac.uk for any event organised with an external speaker(s) involved. Details of all external speakers involved in

the event must be submitted.

The organiser of the event must be present during the planned event with external speakers.

The request must be made no later than 14 days before the date of the event. However, if the event or speaker are potentially high risk, organisers should allow the College 21 days' notice to ensure there is adequate time to plan for the event. This is to allow for adequate safeguarding checks to have been made as well as allowing time for alterations to the event if necessary should risk mitigation measures be required. Any request made outside of this timeframe may be rejected unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances.

The event organiser is responsible for immediately communicating to the central Safeguarding Team any changes to the original request made, for example, an approved speaker is replaced or other material changes occur to the proposed event. The College reserves the right to review the original external speaker decision if further information emerges about the event and, amend its original decision.

The College acknowledges that there are occasions where opportunities for speakers arise at short notice or situations are fast changing. Where it has not been possible to follow these processes in the defined timescale, the College will still consider late bookings and accommodate where possible but cannot commit to agreeing bookings outside of the specified timescales. In these instances organisers should complete and send the forms as usual and follow up with a phone call to the central Safeguarding Team.

The event organiser must highlight on the form, any grounds for believing that the speaker may be controversial or will potentially commit a criminal offence.

Stage 2: Review of external speaker request

The external speaker request will be reviewed within the full legal context that applies to such activity. Safeguarding will risk assess the external speaker and complete checks on the speaker/s and associated organisations. Assessment of risk is holistic and includes consideration of potential risks to the speaker, attendees, organiser and the College; risks could be physical or reputational. A potentially high risk event may include where the speaker or topic of the event is political, religious or controversial in any way. The potential risk of an event not going ahead would likewise be considered.

Where appropriate, College may seek external input, depending on the circumstances of the specific request.

Lower risk events involving external speakers, where no major issues are identified, will be approved by the Central Safeguarding Team.

Medium and higher risk events involving external speakers will be referred to the Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Leads for further consideration and a final decision. If approved, specific conditions linked to the risk mitigation may be requested prior to approval.

Alternatively, where the risk can't be fully mitigated, the likely outcome will be not to allow the event to proceed.

Stage 3: Communication of the external speaker request decision

Decisions will be communicated by the central Safeguarding Team to the organiser of the event. The outcome of an external speaker request will be one of the following;

- Request approved no conditions – lower risk events.
- Request approved with conditions – medium/higher risk events.
- Request refused – risk cannot be fully mitigated.

Stage 4: Effective management of an external speaker event

The event organiser of an event that involves a speaker(s) to be hosted by the College must ensure that;

- This policy and associated procedures are followed.
- The relevant Head of Department in College must be made aware of the external speaker request.
- The event organiser has sent out and received back confirmation that the external speaker(s) will abide by the College's commitment to equality and diversity, as set out in the College's Single Equality Scheme, prior to speaking at a College event.
- The event organiser verifies the ID of the external speaker on arrival to the event, including online. If attending an event on College premises, the external speaker will be issued with a visitor badge.
- The speaker(s) is supervised at all times by the event organiser and never left unsupervised with students, including online events.
- All such events have completed a Request for Prior Approval for External Speaker Form, submitted to the Safeguarding Team (safeguarding@barnsley.ac.uk) for approval at least 14 days in advance of the event taking place. However, if the event or speaker are potentially high risk, organisers should allow the College 21 days' notice to ensure there is adequate time to plan for the event.
- Any requested modifications are implemented before the event takes place.
- Where an event has been previously agreed but has been rearranged, the 14 or 21 days' notice may not be required but organisers should submit their booking form to the Safeguarding Team for re-approval as soon as possible.
- Where there are changes to speakers or other material changes to the previously agreed events, the 14 or 21 days' notice may not be required but organisers should submit their booking form for the new speakers to the Safeguarding Team for re-approval as soon as possible. The new/replacement speaker should not be allowed to just turn up on the day without prior checks and agreement having taken place.
- The event organiser has had sight of and read through any presentation slides and other materials being used by the external speaker, prior to the event.
- The event organiser will remind students that they are not permitted to give the guest speaker their name, address, contact numbers or any other personal details.
- Appropriate action must be taken by the event organiser should the event not go to plan, for example, attempts being made to disrupt the event, unexpected guests appearing, inappropriate material being made available at the event, or views expressed by the speaker or an audience member falling outside of the law. There are a number of options in such circumstances including delaying the start of the event, stopping the event, cancelling the event, warning individuals of sanctions to behaviour, requesting individuals leave the event
- As appropriate, a guest login is requested from the IT department. Staff must not allow guest speakers to use a member of staff or student login.

Under no circumstances should an event be advertised or take place if the External Speaker Policy and process has not been followed or an event approved. Failure to comply with the External Speaker Policy may result in the booking being cancelled and the organiser may be subject to formal action under the College's normal disciplinary process.

Appeal a decision

The event organiser can appeal a refusal decision. If the event organiser is a college staff member, an appeal can be made to the Principal and Chief Executive.

If the event organiser is external to college, an appeal can be made via the college's complaints procedure.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

An EqIA is not required for this policy.

LINKED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Freedom of Speech Policy.
- Prevent Policy.
- Safeguarding Policy.

LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

This policy is available on the college intranet.

Appendix 1

REQUEST FOR PRIOR APPROVAL FOR EXTERNAL SPEAKER

The organising member of staff or client requesting participation of an external/ guest speaker must complete this form and submit it to the central Safeguarding Team (safeguarding@barnsley.ac.uk) at least **14 days** prior to the visit by the external speaker. This member of staff or client is responsible for supervising the external/guest speaker.

Event organiser (staff member/ Client):			
Date of Request:			
Course(s)/ Event:			
Attendees/Audience including expected numbers:			
Conditions applying to event? (e.g. open to the public, ticketed, segregation)			
Scheduled Date for Speaker:		Time(s):	
Name(s) of Speaker(s): Please state if the speaker (s) is an existing College student, staff member governor, volunteer, sub-contractor, contractor, commercial lettings and/or external hire client (s)			
Organisation Represented (where applicable):			
Topic of Speaker:			
Is the topic and/or speaker likely to be controversial in any way:			
Qualification of Speaker to address this topic:			
How does this topic specifically support your curriculum/ event?			
How and where will the event be advertised? For external events you must liaise with College's Marketing Team.			
Is there any known or likely media interest in the proposed event? YES/NO			
If yes, you must liaise with College's Marketing Team.			
Have adequate checks been carried out? Yes/No. If yes, please give detail			
Has the Speaker (s) agreed to abide by College's commitment to equality & diversity as set out in the Single Equality Scheme? Please record date/time confirmation received and if verbally or in writing.			
Section to be completed by Safeguarding Team only			
Low Risk		Medium Risk	High Risk
Risk summary:			
Request approved		Yes/no	
Request approved with the following conditions to be met;		Yes/no	
Request refused		Yes/no	
Safeguarding Team Member Name			

Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Lead Name (when appropriate)	
Date	