



Policy for events and external speakers

Scope:

This policy covers any events that are organised on the College premises, or are branded by, funded by, or affiliated with Regent's Park College.

External speakers are defined as speakers invited to attend an event who are not current members of either the staff or student body of the University of Oxford or its Colleges. This includes attendance in a virtual capacity, such as through Skype or other videoconferencing platforms.

Context:

Regent's Park College has a long and proud history rooted in that of the Dissenters, and the rights of academic freedom, freedom of speech and inclusivity and equality are fundamental to the College's mission, teaching and research. Academic freedom and freedom of speech are core components of the College's functioning, where debate, challenge and dissent are not only permitted but expected, and where controversial and offensive ideas are likely to be advanced.

That said, all freedoms have limits imposed by law, in order to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to maintain public order and safety. When organising an event, organisers must consider their duties surrounding: individuals' private rights, protecting individuals from harassment, bullying, defamation and unlawful breaches of their human rights, as well as from unfair treatment under equality law; how they minimise the possibility of extremism or unlawful conduct, including, but not restricted to, incitement to terrorist activity, hate crimes, harassment, and breaches of the peace; and how they will ensure the safety and welfare of their guests, College members, and the General Public.

Policy:

1. Those organising events with external speakers are required to risk assess their event, in line with the procedure set out below.
2. Those risk assessing events should be aware of their responsibilities to consider the College's duties under the *Prevent* duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015) within the context of pre-existing rights, including under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Education (No 2) Act 1986 and the Equality Act 2010.
3. Criminal speech is proscribed, including, but not restricted to, incitement to terrorist activity, hate crimes, harassment, and breaches of the peace. The College will not provide a platform for these offences to be committed.

4. The College safeguards the lawful exercise of freedom of speech, and expects that all speakers and attendees are respectful of the beliefs and opinions of others.
5. Speakers and audience alike are reminded of their responsibilities to observe the College's *Harassment and Bullying Policy* and *Single Equality Policy* and to conduct civil academic discussions at all times.
6. The College reserves the right to cancel, postpone or request amendment to any proposed event should risks be identified. The responsibility for fulfilling these conditions rest with the organisers. The College will normally seek to ensure that events or speakers identified as posing a risk will go ahead subject to the agreement of appropriate safeguards. Cancellation of an event will only occur in exceptional circumstances.
7. The raising or gathering of funds is not permitted without written permission of the College.

Procedure:

For academic and non-academic staff:

Staff must self-assess their event using the form in Appendix 1, to determine the level of risk associated with the event.

If the event is deemed to be low risk, the completed form should be returned to Reception, and will be kept on file for 24 months.

If the event is deemed to be medium or high risk, or if there is any doubt, the staff member should discuss the event with the Dean, who will consider any mitigating control measures or decide to cancel the event. The completed form, which includes details of the control measures and/or decision, should be returned to Reception, and will be kept on file for 24 months.

No event involving external speakers may be publicised until the speaker and event have been assessed to not pose a risk, or controls have been put in place to mitigate against any identified risks.

For students:

All events involving external speakers must be approved in advance by the Dean as part of the room booking process. As part of this process, students are asked to complete a form and give details of any external speakers.

Copies of completed room booking forms and risk assessments are kept on-file by the Operations Team for 24 months. No event involving external speakers may be publicised until the speaker and event have been approved.

For conferences:

External bodies who hire College facilities for meetings or conferences are required to risk assess their events.

Our contractual terms allow us to exercise appropriate contractual rights, including event cancellation, as necessary to comply with legal requirements.

As part of the contract and booking process, organisers are made aware of the Prevent duty, are asked to inform the College of any potential risks, and are made aware of the College's right to cancel events or put appropriate measures in place to control risks.

Appeals:

In the event that a staff member, student, or conference organiser is dissatisfied with the decision to cancel an event, or with any control measures put in place, they may make an appeal to the Principal (the College's Prevent Lead).

Concerns:

Should any College member have concerns that an external speaker has breached, or is likely to breach, the terms of this policy, they should discuss this immediately with the Principal (the College's Prevent Lead).

Further guidance:

The Dean and Principal can offer further guidance and advice. The Safe Campus Communities website (www.safecampuscommunities.ac.uk) offers a number of useful resources.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually, unless there are internal or legislative changes that necessitate earlier review.

Last reviewed: February 2020

Next review: February 2022

Organiser's name	
Date/time of event	
Location of event	
General topic/theme	
Speakers (name, affiliation, topic if different to above) <i>You may attach a term card or programme</i>	

Risk assessment	
Is/are the proposed external speaker(s) a member of, or likely to use the event to encourage support for, a proscribed organisation? <i>Proscribed organisations are those on the Home Office and Treasury lists (see below).</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Likely <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly <input type="checkbox"/> Highly unlikely
Might the meeting or event give rise to an environment in which people will experience, or could reasonably fear, discrimination, harassment, intimidation, verbal abuse or violence, particularly (but not exclusively) on account of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Likely <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly <input type="checkbox"/> Highly unlikely
Is the meeting or event likely to pose a risk to health and safety of those lawfully on College premises; or might it prompt a risk to public safety?	<input type="checkbox"/> Likely <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly <input type="checkbox"/> Highly unlikely

Organiser's signature		Date	
Outcome	<input type="checkbox"/> Event goes ahead, self-assessed as low risk <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to the College Dean		

To be completed if the event may pose risks:

Dean's comments, including details of any mitigating control measures:			
Dean's signature		Date	
Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Event goes ahead, with suitable control measures in place <input type="checkbox"/> Event does not go ahead		

You should check against the following lists of proscribed groups and organisations:

- Home Office: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2>
- HM Treasury: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/financial-sanctions-consolidated-list-of-targets>

Please familiarise yourself with the College's Policy for Events and External Speakers: <http://www.rpc.ox.ac.uk/about-regents/governance-and-compliance/>