

The Adult College of Barking and Dagenham

External Speaker Policy

Lead Responsibility	Service Manager Business Support
Designated Officer	Service Manager Business Support
Advisory Officer(s)	Administration and Facilities Manager, Student Services Manager
Approved by	Service Manager Business Support
Date of approval	September 2025
Date of next review	August 2027

A note to all teaching staff:

Please click [here](#) using a curriculum device to find a full list of Work and Skills policies & procedures

Please click [here](#) using an LBBD device to find a full list of LBBD policies

Related Policies and Procedures

- Safeguarding Policy
- Safeguarding Procedures
- Statement of Intent

Related Forms

[External Speakers Form](#)

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Policy Statement

The policy applies to the Work and Skills (the Service) community which includes staff, service users and external visitors.

The Service 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 our approach to ensuring that we are protecting both staff and service users and the reputation of Work and Skills 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. The Duty states that specified authorities including Further Education Colleges, in the exercise of their functions, must have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.”

The Service values opportunities presented by external speakers for service users to experience other opinions and to enter debate. This is an essential part of personal, professional and academic development.

The Service values freedom of opinion and speech but recognises that, in the interests of the whole learning community, this must exist within formal guidelines.

The Service will not accept the use of language by external speakers that offends and is intolerant. Direct attacks on any religions or beliefs are not permitted. The Service will not tolerate any person who intentionally demeans individuals and groups defined by their ethnicity, race, religion, and/or belief, sexuality, gender, disability, age, or lawful working practices and which give rise to an environment in which people will experience, or could reasonably, fear harassment, intimidation, or violence. The Service upholds a commitment to the promotion of British Values and expects external speakers to adhere to these same principles.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide an environment where freedom of expression and speech are protected, balanced with the need to ensure that our community is free from harm and that incitement to hatred is never acceptable.
- To provide a supportive, inclusive, and safe space for service users, staff, volunteers, and visitors.
- 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 service can meet their legal obligations.
- To encourage and provide a balance of opinion at any academic discussion or debate.
- To communicate to all staff, service users, volunteers, and visitors, that it is our mutual responsibility to comply with equality and safeguarding and that both Work and Skills 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.
- To consider the health, wellbeing, and safety of all members of the service community, buildings, and equipment.

- To supports the services commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion, and the promotion of British Values.

1. Freedom of Expression

- 1.1 Freedom of expression and speech are basic human rights that are protected by law. Freedom of speech and freedom of expression are not absolute freedoms but freedoms within the law. Universities and College have a history of being open to debate and ideas with service users at the forefront of pushing the limits of freedom of expression. 'Academic freedom' is a term used to describe the law that allows for open and honest debate in an academic context.
- 1.2 However, we have a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of our staff, service users and communities. The freedom to express views needs to be balanced with the need to secure freedom from harm for service users and communities. We want all our events, activities, and initiatives to be safe; without risk to the reputation of the service; and within the law.
- 1.3 Sometimes an external speaker or their topic of discussion has the potential to go against our conditions for a safe event. We are committed to working together with event organisers and external speakers, to make sure that we reach a judgement that is reasonable, informed and within the law.

2. External Speakers and their Responsibilities

- 2.1 An external speaker or visitor is used to describe any individual or organisation who is not a service user or staff member for Work and Skills or one of its contracted partners and who has been invited to speak to service users and/or staff. This includes any individual who is a service user or staff member from another institution. It also includes the main contact from any external venue hire client who is paying to use the service facilities.
- 2.2 An event is any event, presentation, visit, activity, or initiative organised by a service user group/society, individual or staff member that is being held on Work and Skills premises or where Work and Skills is being represented by a stand on non-service premises e.g., at an exhibition 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 activity being held on Work and Skills premises but organised by external venue hire clients.
- 2.3 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 Service Values and 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 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.

3. Guidance for Staff and Service Users Organising an Event with an External Speaker

- 3.1 Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff team and service users are aware of and support the policy.
- 3.2 Managers must be informed of any events that involve external speakers through this procedure and staff supported to submit an external speaker approval form. 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.
- 3.3 Work and Skills 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.
- 3.4 Any event organisation with an external speaker involved must be made no later than fourteen working days before the date of the event. This is to allow the service to make adequate safeguarding checks as well as allowing time for alterations to the event if necessary. Any request made outside of this timeframe may be rejected unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances.
- 3.5 Student Services will conduct research into the proposed speaker. If in doubt as to the suitability of a speaker, they should refer the decision to the Safeguarding and Prevent Lead or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Reasons for doubt could be (but are 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 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 service users or staff.
- A speaker accepted in mainstream 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 political party during a pre-election period (purdah).

In the event of referral, one of the following decisions will be made: -

- to fully permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead unrestricted.
- to permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead on the basis of regulatory steps designed to reduce risk. These may include observation; independent filming; the inclusion of opportunities to debate or challenge the view being held.
- to not permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead.
- to not permit the external speaker to attend the event (if it is a wider event).

4. Additional Guidance for Venue Hire Clients organising an event or booking

- 4.1 The Administration and Facilities Team will make external venue hire clients aware of this policy and request details of any external speakers, presentations, or any other material that they are bringing in. This information should be provided no later than fourteen working days before the booking goes ahead.
- 4.2 Work and Skills 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.
- 4.3 If in doubt as to the suitability of speakers, the Student Services team should refer the decision to the Safeguarding Lead.

5. Operational Arrangements

- All requests for external speakers are to be submitted by staff at least fourteen working days on the [External Speakers Form](#)
- Please forward a copy of the speaker's resources power point presentation/ handouts etc to studentservices@lbbd.gov.uk These will not be made public.
- Student Services will undertake due diligence checks.
- Student Services reserves right to request references for the proposed speaker and to refuse permission for the speaker to visit the service sites. A refusal is final.
- Approved external speakers will receive the External Speakers Agreement to review and sign. See Appendix A. This must be returned to studentservices@lbbd.gov.uk prior to the event.
- A copy of the Work and Skills Statement of Intent to be shared with all confirmed speakers.
- A member of staff must meet and greet a visiting speaker at reception and ensure all visitor protocols are adhered to.
- A member of staff must be present at all talks and will intervene if the speaker significantly deviates from the proposed schedule or causes offence.

Appendix A - External Speakers Agreement

External Speakers to read and indicate their consent to abide by the contents noted below.

The Adult College is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where diversity is valued. We value opportunities presented by external speakers for service users to experience other opinions and to enter debate. This is an essential part of both personal, professional, and academic development.

It also details our approach to ensuring that we are protecting both staff and service users and the reputation of Work and Skills whilst following the legislation that we are responsible for upholding.

The Adult College values freedom of opinion and speech but recognises that, in the interests of the whole learning community, this must exist within formal guidelines.

The Adult College will not accept the use of language by external speakers that offends and is considered to be intolerant. Direct attacks on any religions or beliefs are not permitted.

The Adult College will not tolerate any person who demeans individuals and groups defined by their ethnicity, race, religion, and/or belief, sexuality, gender, disability, age, or lawful working practices and which give rise to an environment in which people will experience, or could reasonably, fear harassment, intimidation, or violence. The Service upholds a commitment to the promotion of British Values and expects external speakers to adhere to these same principles.

Please acknowledge your responsibility to abide by the law and the Adult College policies including that you: -

- 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 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.
- To consider the health, wellbeing, and safety of all members of the service community, buildings, and equipment.
- To supports the Services commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion, and the promotion of British Values and adhere to the values in the Work and Skills Statement of Intent

The following provisions apply:

- A member of staff will greet you at reception and ensure all visitor protocols are followed.
- You must always wear a visitor's ID badge, adhere to the Adult College safeguarding, and fire procedures.
- A member of staff will be present at all talks and will intervene if you significantly deviate from the proposed schedule or causes offence.

I agree to adhere to abide by to the contents of this agreement.

NameSignature.....Date.....

Please return to: studentservices@lbbd.gov.uk