



Procedures Manual

01.12.01 EXTERNAL SPEAKERS POLICY

PURPOSE	To clarify what arrangements are in place for external speakers delivering talks on our College site
SCOPE	All staff and students
RESPONSIBILITY	Group Head of Student Welfare

PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

West Suffolk College is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where diversity is valued. This policy clarifies the procedures relating to the use of external speakers at College events regardless of who is organising them.

External Speakers are:

- Visiting lecturers
- Conference delegates
- Anybody not on a fixed term or hourly paid or permanent contract
- Therefore, anybody who volunteers or is paid by invoice

AIMS

It is College policy:

- 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 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 its legal obligations.
- To encourage and provide a balance of opinion at any academic discussion or debate.

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- To communicate to all members, volunteers, staff, and visitors, that it is our mutual responsibility to comply with anti-discrimination, anti-bullying or anti-harassment legislation and that College and the individual can be held liable if they contravene the law.
- To challenge behaviour and change practice that directly or indirectly result in discrimination. This includes actions taken while on our site as well as inappropriate speech.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

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. 'Academic freedom' is a term used to describe the law that allows for open and honest debate in an academic context. The College has a legal duty (Education Act (no. 2) 1986 sec 43) to secure the development of students' ideas and understanding in the form of academic freedom.

Student safety and welfare is at the heart of West Suffolk Policies and practices. The freedom to express views needs to be balanced with the need to secure freedom from harm for students and communities. We want all our students, staff, and external speakers to be:

- safe (complying with our Diversity Policy and our Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding Procedures)

[01.04.01 Equality and Diversity Policy](#)

[01.07.01 Safeguarding Policy and Procedure](#)

- without risk to the reputation of the College

PROCEDURE FOR DUE DILIGENCE

Lecturers are responsible for checking any websites, social media, and media publications of external speakers ahead of any College talks to check for radicalised views.

This check of due diligence must be documented. This is recorded via our external visitors booking system, where the member of staff making the booking is asked to confirm that due diligence has been carried out. There is a list of Prescribed terrorist groups or organisations. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2/proscribed-terrorist-groups-or-organisations-accessible-version> We also recognise our duty to inform the Home Office Prevent Co-Ordinator should we be approached by Extinction Rebellion.

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