

# EXTERNAL SPEAKER POLICY & PROCEDURE



## PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

Yeovil College values the opportunities presented by external speakers and organisations to enrich the experience of students, staff and the community. This is seen as an essential part of both personal and academic development. Furthermore, these external speakers and organisations present students with the opportunity to experience diverse opinion and to enter into healthy debate and discussion. However, a policy and process is required to capture the benefits that visiting speakers and organisations might bring, and to meet the requirements of the Prevent Duty Guidance for Further Education Institutions in England and Wales, published in July 2015. This is to ensure that any risk of extremism or attempted radicalisation is considered when inviting speakers and organisations to the College or responding to requests from speakers.

Yeovil College values the tradition of academic freedom and holds that no subject or belief should be excluded from reasonable, constructive discussion and debate. The College values freedom of opinion and speech but recognises that, in the interests of the whole learning community, this must exist within formal guidelines and particularly not to cause unavoidable offence to any group within our community. The College recognises and supports the moral and legal frameworks of the society and community within which it works.

The College will not accept the use of language by external speakers that offends and is considered to be intolerant. Specifically, this means offensive slang, misogynistic, misanthropic, sexual or racist language irrespective of context. Direct attacks on any religions or beliefs are not permitted. The College will not tolerate any person who intentionally demeans individuals and groups defined by the Protected Characteristics of the Equality Act lawful working practices and which give rise to an environment in which people will experience, or could reasonably, fear harassment, intimidation or violence.

**The aim of this policy is to ensure that the student and staff experience at Yeovil College is enriched by input from external speakers and organisations, and that any benefits and risks are considered appropriately in advance of a speaker event.**

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff who host and organise visiting speakers and organisations, and to students (for example the Student Union) who do the same on or off College premises under the auspices of Yeovil College. This policy refers to a person or group of people who attend the college for the purpose of speaking about a particular topic or area that has wider social relevance and is likely to be promoting a particular ideology or belief. It also refers to events that promote or encourage debate and discussion around topics considered to have political or religious underpinnings (e.g. election hustings). This policy also applies to invited guests who are visiting Yeovil College for the purposes of demonstrating skills, instructing or leading workshops directly with students as part of a planned curriculum programme and where the host curriculum area ensures the College staff remain in attendance throughout the workshop/demonstration or instruction session as part of a planned programme.

## RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

Extract from **Prevent Duty Guidance for Further Education Institutions in England and Wales**:

*'Section 26(1) of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 imposes a duty on 'specific authorities', when exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. There is an important role for further education institutions in helping prevent people being drawn into terrorism, which includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. It is a condition of funding that all further education institutions must comply with relevant legislation and any statutory responsibilities associated with the delivery of education and safeguarding of learners.*

*To comply with the duty, we would expect further education institutions to be delivering in the following ways. External Speakers and Events:*

- *In order to comply with the duty all further education institutions should have policies and procedures in place for the management of events held on their premises. The policies should apply to all staff, students and visitors and clearly set out what is required for any event to proceed.*
- *Every institution clearly needs to balance its legal duties in terms of both ensuring freedom of speech and also protecting student and staff welfare.*
- *Encouragement of terrorism and inviting support for a proscribed terrorist organisation are both criminal offences. Institutions should not provide a platform for these offences to be committed.*
- *Furthermore, when deciding whether or not to host a particular speaker, institutions should consider carefully whether the views being expressed, or likely to be expressed, constitute extremist views that risk drawing people into terrorism or are shared by terrorist groups. In these circumstances the event should not be allowed to proceed except where institutions are entirely convinced that such risk can be fully mitigated without cancellation of the event. This includes ensuring that, where any event is being allowed to proceed, speakers with extremist views that could draw people into terrorism are challenged with opposing views as part of that same event, rather than in a separate forum. Where institutions are in any doubt that the risk cannot be fully mitigated, they should exercise caution and not allow the event to proceed.*
- *We would expect institutions to put in place a system for assessing and rating risks associated with any planned events, which provides evidence to suggest whether an event should proceed, be cancelled or whether action is required to mitigate any risk. There should also be a mechanism in place for assessing the risks associated with any events which are college affiliated, funded or branded but which take place off their premises and for taking swift and appropriate action as outlined in the paragraph above.*
- *Institutions should also demonstrate that staff involved in the physical security of the estate have an awareness of the Prevent duty. Where appropriate and legal to do so, an institution should also have procedures in place for the sharing of information about speakers with other institutions and partners.'*

**Prevent** is the Government's strategy to stop people becoming involved in violent extremism or supporting terrorism, in all its forms. Prevent works within the non-criminal space, using early engagement to encourage individuals and communities to challenge violent extremist ideologies and behaviours.

**Extremism** is defined by the UK government as 'Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values and calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

## **RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, DOCUMENTS, DEFINITIONS**

Safeguarding Policy  
Equality and Diversity Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Student Code of Conduct

Prevent Duty Guidance for Further Education  
Institutions in England and Wales March 2015  
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020

**PROCEDURE**

Organisers of an event that includes visiting speaker(s) or organisation(s) should, in advance of the event, seek permission from their line manager. The College manager will make the decision as to whether a risk assessment is required, based on the specific circumstances of the visit. Consideration should be given to the Prevent Guidance (extract above) as well as to the Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity Policies.

If deemed appropriate (or if there are any concerns at all about the suitability of the visitor), the organiser should complete a risk assessment which includes consideration of the speaker(s) and content of any presentation, and the potential audience to whom it is intended to be delivered. The Risk Assessment form is available in Appendix 2.

The Risk Assessment should be discussed with the Yeovil College organiser's line manager prior to confirmation of the visiting speaker or organisation (at least 10 working days prior to the planned event). If the line manager has concerns about the speaker(s), content or any other aspect of the event, s/he should discuss concerns with the College's Single Point of Contact for the Prevent Duty (the Head of Student Experience), or with the Vice Principal Quality of Education. Either of these senior managers are able to veto the visiting speaker or organisation or suggest additional controls (and update the Risk Assessment) to allow the event to go ahead.

Details of all visiting speakers (speaking direct to students) should be logged with the Quality team, together with a copy of the risk assessment if applicable.

**REMOTE DELIVERY**

This procedure also applies in circumstances where visitors are interacting with students online. The visit should still be risk assessed and logged as above. Additionally, recordings or meeting links/ invites should be owned by the College host and not the visitor/visiting organisation.

Risk Assessment – External Speaker or Organisation

Appendix 2

<b>Department/Area</b>			<b>Date Assessed</b>						
<b>Person Conducting Assessment</b>			<b>Date Reviewed</b>						
<b>Business Unit / Speciality</b>			<b>Date Reviewed</b>						
<b>Managers Name</b>			<b>Date Reviewed</b>						
<b>Detail the source of the risk</b> , the background information, description of the Event /Task/Service									
<b>Identify Hazards?</b> (Identify the Potential for Harm, i.e. Harmful substance/noise/sharps/losses/impact/ physical violence/abusive behaviour/Financial loss)	<b>Describe the Risk?</b> (Who might be harmed, how this affects staff/learners safety or experience, impacts on the service, including staff and learners/others)	<b>Describe what Controls / Mitigating actions are being taken to reduce the risk</b> (including identifying gaps) Include controls from Organisation (i.e. Policies/Procedures)/Speciality-level controls/Professional - Team level controls/Technical-Controls/Individual controls	<b>Actual Risk level</b> (After controls have been assessed)			<b>Are further actions necessary to reduce the risk below a Moderate Risk</b> (6 and under) - Risks scoring 10+ these should be communicated with the Line Manager and may be raised to the College Risk Register. Detail actions below	<b>Residual Risk level</b> (After proposed actions are taken)		
			L	C	R		L	C	R
1									
2									
3									
4									

<b>Take serial number from Risk Assessment</b>	<b>Transfer Key Actions Required for Risks</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Target date/ by when?</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Completed Date</b>

