



TITLE			VERSION
External Speaker Procedure			1.0
DEPARTMENT	Group Student Support - Safeguarding		
DATE	07/11/2023	REVIEW DATE	07/11/2026

EXTERNAL SPEAKER PROCEDURE

Procedure Statement

Activate Learning promotes a diverse and inclusive learning environment, encouraging the exchange of ideas and viewpoints through external speakers and providing a safe space for staff and students to engage with a variety of issues and hear and debate different perspectives.

We are committed to ensuring that invited speakers adhere to statutory requirements outlined in the Home Office Prevent Duty and Department for Education Keeping Children Safe in Education guidelines.

This procedure balances the essential principles of freedom of speech with the prevention of extremism.

Scope

This procedure applies to all Activate Learning staff and students involved in organising external speaker events, either in person or online.

It extends to extra-curricular activities which are organised on behalf of Activate Learning or on its premises. It includes individuals or organisations using Activate Learning premises outside of college hours.

Definitions

External speaker: An individual or organisation invited to speak at or on behalf of Activate Learning, who is not an employee or student.

Sponsor: The person(s) responsible for organising the external speaker event e.g., faculty member, student leadership team, Student Union, marketing team, etc.

Procedure

When hosting an external speaker, the sponsor must:

- Research the event's topic and purpose.
- Assess the speaker's suitability for the intended audience.
- Ensure topic, resources and materials are up to date and appropriate.
- Ensure content, resources and materials are agreed in advance and complements the curriculum / educational experiences of those involved.
- Be satisfied that any speakers will not undermine the duty to promote community cohesion and align with Activate Learning's values.
- Consider the speakers reputation and who may be prompted to attend.
- Carry out searches on the speaker / organisation using internet search engines and social media.
- Only permit premises use to those in line with Activate Learning's ethos.

Concerns

Whilst not exhaustive, the sponsor should consider the below questions when conducting due diligence:

- Has the speaker previously been refused a platform to speak at Activate Learning or other similar organisations?
- Whether the content or subject is likely to:
 - Infringe the rights of others,
 - Discriminate against others on the grounds of protected characteristics,
 - Share views which are criminal, threatening, or abusive,
 - Incite hatred, violence or encourage breaking the law,
 - Constitute extremist views that encourage, glorify, or promote acts of terrorism or that are shared by a proscribed terrorist group,
 - Defame any person or organisation,
 - Raise or gather funds for any external organisation without express permission.

Where the sponsor has any concerns regarding the above, they must submit a [‘Visiting Speakers and Organisations’ form](#) via SharePoint, 14 days in advance of the visit.

This form will be reviewed by members of the Safeguarding Team, who may seek the views of Police and Local Authority Prevent co-ordinators before approving the event. The event must not take place until this form has been approved.

The Group Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies have the authority to veto an event, on advice from external professionals.

Support

The relevant Property & Estates team and Advice & Admissions centre must be informed of any events taking place which invite external visitors onto Activate Learning premises or may cause disruption to the organisation.

For on-site events, external speakers must report to Reception to register as a visitor and must always be supervised by an Activate Learning staff member. They must always wear a visitor's lanyard and the sponsor must ensure they sign out at Reception upon leaving. For online events, the sponsor should consider the DfE ‘Safeguarding and Remote Education’ Guidance.

In the unlikely event the external speaker’s content or delivery of a session becomes a concern during the presentation, the sponsor should give a break to student’s and use the time to discuss the concerns with the speaker. This may result in delivery of the topic being shared between the speaker and sponsor; some or all the materials not being used or distributed; or the event being curtailed. The sponsor should seek support from their line manager if felt needed.

If at any time any staff believe the content presents a risk to the wellbeing or safeguarding of students, or if the views expressed are considered discriminatory or extreme, then the Safeguarding Team should be informed via one of the below methods:

- Email: safe@activatelearning.ac.uk
- Telephone: 01865 550401
- Form: [Record of Concern Form](#)

If security concerns arise on-site, such as unauthorised people attending e.g., to protest the event, the Duty Director and Group Director of Campus and Faculty should be informed. If felt necessary, Police may be called to prevent significant impact to people or serious disruption to the organisation.

Compliance

Staff must ensure that in making any decisions about whether to host an external speaker, they comply with the Equality Duty and do not discriminate against any protected characteristics.

Review

This procedure will be reviewed every three years, or when relevant legislation or guidance is revised.

References

Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education

Home Office, Prevent Duty Guidance

Home Office, Political Impartiality in Schools Guidance

Educate Against Hate, Hosting Speakers on School Premises Guidance

Ofsted, Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook

Department for Education, Safeguarding and Remote Education