

**ORGANISING EVENTS WITH EXTERNAL SPEAKERS
POLICY / PROCEDURE****1. Aim**

- 1.1 Shrewsbury Colleges Group 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. **Visiting Speakers are defined as visitors who are delivering information to students or staff (this can be in a group or 1:1 setting)**
- 1.2 It also details our approach to ensuring that we are protecting both staff and students and the reputation of Shrewsbury Colleges Group 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”.

2. Objectives

2.1 The objectives of this policy are:

- 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 judgments about proposed external speakers ensuring that the College can meet their legal obligations
- To encourage and provide a balance of opinion at any academic discussion or debate
- To communicate to all students, volunteers, staff and visitors, that it is our mutual responsibility to comply with equality and safeguarding and that both Shrewsbury Colleges Group and the individual can be held liable if they contravene the law.
- To provide clear instructions for organising an event with an external contribution e.g. a speaker or representatives, and guidance for researching an external speaker.

3. Freedom of Speech and Expression

- 3.1 Freedom of speech and expression 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 Colleges have a history of being open to

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debate and ideas with students 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.

- 3.2 However, we have a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of our staff, students and community. The freedom to express views needs to be balanced with the need to secure freedom from harm for our students and community. We want all of our events, activities and initiatives to be safe; without risk to the reputation of the College; and within the law.
- 3.3 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, in some cases, external speakers themselves to make sure that we reach a judgement that is reasonable, informed and within the law.

4. External Speaker and their Responsibilities

- 4.1 An external speaker is used to describe any individual or organisation who is not a student or staff member of Shrewsbury Colleges Group, or one of its contracted partners, and who has been invited to speak to students and/or staff. This includes any individual who is a student or staff member from another institution. It also includes the main contact from any external facilities hire client who is paying to use College facilities.
- 4.2 An event is any presentation, visit, activity or initiative organised by a student group/society, individual or staff member that is being held on the Shrewsbury Colleges Group premises or that is organised by Shrewsbury Colleges Group representatives off campus. It also includes events where external speakers are streamed live into an event or a pre-recorded film is shown at an event. It also includes activities being held on Shrewsbury College premises but organized by external facilities hire clients.
- 4.3 All speakers or visitors should be made aware by the person or group arranging the event (by referring them to this policy) that they have a responsibility to abide by the law and the College's 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.

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- Are not permitted to raise or gather funds for any external organisation or cause without express permission of the College (available from the Group Vice Principal –Curriculum Support and Business Development or the Commercial Manager).

5. Guidance for Shrewsbury Colleges Group Staff and Students Organising an Event with an External Speaker or Facilities Hire Client

- 5.1 The relevant Curriculum/Programme Leader or Support Manager/Team Leader is responsible for ensuring this procedure is followed for any activity taking place within their area of responsibility. No event involving any external speakers may be considered confirmed until the speaker has been cleared through the procedure detailed in this policy.
- 5.2 Shrewsbury Colleges Group 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.
- 5.3 Any room booking or event organisation with an external speaker involved must be made no later than 14 days before the date of the event. This is to allow for the organiser to have made adequate safeguarding checks as well as allowing time for alterations to the event if necessary. Any request made outside of this timeframe will be rejected unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- 5.4 The individual or group organising an external speaker should conduct brief research into the proposed speaker. If in doubt as to the suitability of a speaker, they should refer the decision to the relevant Curriculum/Programme Leader or Support Manager/Team Leader.

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 generally 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 students 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
- 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 an election purdah (the time between the announcement of a General Election and the results of the election being

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announced).

- 5.5 In the event of referral, one of the following decisions will be made:
- 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)
 - 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.
- 5.6 In making recommendations, the relevant Curriculum/Programme Leader or Support Manager/Team Leader, may consult on a wider basis with the Commercial Manager, Student Services Team Leader, Events Co-ordinator or Safeguarding Leads, as appropriate and risk will be assessed on the following basis:
1. The potential for any decision to limit freedom of speech
 2. The potential for the event going ahead to cause reputation risk to the College
 3. The potential for the speaker's presence on site to cause fear or alarm to students or members of staff and/or to give rise to breach of peace
- 5.7 The External speaker consent form (Appendix 1) should be completed and forwarded to the relevant Curriculum/ Programme Leader or Support Manager/Team Leader no later than 14 days before the planned event.
- 5.8 When the speaker is working with students unsupervised they must have gone through the process to be recognised and recorded as an Associate of the college. A letter should be provided on headed paper from a manager in the organisation they represent that should include their DBS certificate number, date and confirmation that there are no disclosures. The speaker will then be issued with an Associate pass and lanyard. If the DBS certificate shows disclosures the case should be referred to the Group Vice Principal –Curriculum Support and Business Development for a decision to be made on whether the speaker is approved and lanyard issued.
- 5.9 All visiting speakers or representatives must be signed in at reception as visitors.
- 5.10 If they approve the event or speaker the Curriculum/ Programme Leader or Support Manager/Team Leader should submit the form to the Curriculum Support

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Administrator along, where appropriate, with a completed risk assessment (Appendix 2) prior to the event taking place.

In cases where a speaker attends an existing classroom space or similar in normal contact time and speaks to students and/ or staff a risk assessment (Appendix 2) is not required. However, if the speaker delivers at in an 'event' that uses a public college space or the use of special equipment then a risk assessment (Appendix 2) must be submitted.

5.12 Where costs are involved, a purchase order should be raised before the event takes place, in accordance with the College's Financial Regulations.

5.13 Curriculum/ Programme Leaders, Managers and Team Leaders are responsible for ensuring that their staff and students are aware of and support the policy.

6. Additional Guidance for Facilities Hire Clients Organising an Event with External Speakers

6.1 The Commercial Manager will make external facilities hire clients aware of this policy and request details of any external speakers, presentations etc that they are bringing in. This information should be provided no later than 12 days before the booking goes ahead. A shorter version of this policy for Facilities Hire Clients is available and they will also be signposted to this version.

6.2 Shrewsbury Colleges Group reserves the right to cancel, prohibit or delay any venue hire booking with external speakers if this policy is not followed, requested information not produced or if health, safety and security criteria cannot be met.

6.3 If in doubt as to the suitability of speakers, the Commercial Manager should refer the decision to the Group Vice Principal – Curriculum Support and Business Development. Reasons may be as outlined in section 5.4 of this guidance

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

- 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)
- 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.

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APPENDIX 1 – APPROVAL FORM

Approval Form for the use of External Speakers

Staff member making request :			
Department / Curriculum area:			
Date and time of proposed event:			
Location of proposed event:			
Topic:			
Name and title of external speaker:		Organisation they represent:	
Address of Organisation:			
Postcode:			
Telephone number of external speaker:			
Telephone number of organisation:			
Does the external speaker go by any other names			
List other names:			
Is the speaker affiliated to any other organisation?			
Name of the other organisations:			
Has the speaker spoken at any other establishment and if so have there been any incidents of protest, public order issues, illegal activities, significant media interest or has the speaker been refused?			

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Has the speaker spoken in Shrewsbury College's Group before?		Yes/No
Names of other visitors accompanying the external speaker		
If the proposed speaker is unable to attend who will be his / her deputy:		
Name and title of deputy:		
Contact number of deputy:		
Is this a registered charity?		
Please give registered charity number		
Is there any known or likely media interest in the proposed event?		
Have adequate background checks been completed? Eg DBS certificate, proof of ID and if seeing students unsupervised an Associate badge issued		
Are there any matters that require further investigation/action?		

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Approved Declined (delete as appropriate)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

APPENDIX 2 – RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

Shrewsbury Colleges Group Risk Assessment Form

Location:		Activity:		Date:		Name:	
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Please use Key below for Risk Ratings.

A - <u>Severity</u>	Risk Rating	B - <u>Likelihood</u>	Risk Rating
Fatality	10	Probability – High Risk Activity	10
Major injury requiring hospital treatment	8	Possibility – If instructions given are not followed	8
Moderate injury requiring first aid treatment	4	Occasional – If instructions given are not followed	4
Minimal Injury	2	Improbable	2

SEVERITY (**A**) **multiplied** by LIKELIHOOD (**B**) gives a Risk Rating between 4 and 100 for each identified risk

- Risk Rating up to 40 need attention (**Low**)
- Risk Rating between 40 and 70 will require action, with urgency dependent upon where in the range they fall (**Medium**)
- Risk Rating above 70 will require urgent attention. The activity must stop until the risks are reduced to an acceptable level (**High**)

POLICY AND/OR PROCEDURE

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Step 1 What are the hazards? <i>Identify anything that can cause harm.</i>	Step 2 Who might be harmed and how?	Step 3 What action are you already taking? <i>Control measures.</i>	Risk rating	What further action is needed? <i>What else needs to be introduced to eliminate or reduce the risk?</i>	Risk rating	Step 4 How will you put the assessment into action?					
Spot hazards by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking around your workplace; Asking your employees what they think; Contacting the Health and Safety Officer Visiting the <i>Your Industry</i> areas of the HSE website. Adviceline or visiting their website; Checking manufacturer's instructions; <i>Don't forget long-term health hazards.</i> 	Identify groups of people. Remember: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some personnel have particular needs; People who may not be in the workplace all the time; Members of the Public; If you share your workplace think about how your work affects others present. Say how the hazard could cause harm	Detail what is already in place to reduce the likelihood of harm or make any harm less serious.	Low/Medium/High	Detail what additional control measure are to be introduced to reduce the risk to an acceptable level	Low/Medium/High	Remember to prioritise. Deal with those hazards that are high-risk and have serious consequences first.					
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Action by whom</th> <th style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">Action by when</th> <th style="width: 30%; text-align: center;">Date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="height: 100px;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						Action by whom	Action by when	Date			
Action by whom	Action by when	Date									
					Low/Medium/Hi						

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The above assessment is valid as at the date below. Should the activity/ environment change substantially, a further assessment will be required. Compliance with the control measures and precautions should be monitored at all times.

Should an accident/injury/incident occur the appropriate Accident / Near Miss form must be completed and forwarded to the H&S Officer (HSO) within twenty four hours.

ASSESSOR (Name).....

Date.....

ACCEPTED (Health and Safety Officer).....

Date.....

Step 5 – Review date:

- Review your assessment to make sure you are still improving or at least not sliding back.
- If there is a significant change in your workplace, remember to check your risk assessment and where necessary, amend it.