



External Speaker Policy

Core Documentation Cover Page					
External Speaker Policy					
Version number	Dates produced and approved (include committee)	Reason for production/ revision	Author	Location(s)	Proposed next review date and approval required
V1.0	Nov 2016 SMT	To align with the Prevent Duty.	Head of Quality	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Nov 2018 or in line with legislative change
V2.0	Jul 2017 PRAG Chair	Administrative Amendments to update institution name change from British School of Osteopathy to University College of Osteopathy.	Head of Quality	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Nov 2018 or in line with legislative change
V3.0	May 2018 PRAG Chair	Administrative Amendments to reflect title changes (i.e. from Principal to Vice-Chancellor, etc.)	Head of Quality	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Nov 2018 or in line with legislative change
V.4.0	June 2019 SMT	Administrative Amendments to titles and responsibilities	Head of Student Services	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Website	June 2022 or in line with legislative change
V5.0	Dec 2023 SMT	Administrative Amendments to update role titles and committees and to align to amendments made to the Freedom of Speech Policy and Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023.	Head of Quality	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Website	June 2022 or in line with legislative change
Equality Impact					
Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)					
Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)					X
Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)					

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this policy, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

External Speaker Policy

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1. SCOPE

- 1.1 The External Speaker Policy states the University College of Osteopathy's policy and procedure for managing external speakers and events that take place on University College of Osteopathy (UCO) premises or at premises under the name of the UCO. This policy has been produced in response to the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which states that specified authorities (which include Higher Education Institutions) "must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"¹ and the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023² to uphold and promote freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law.
- 1.2 This policy also complies with the Prevent Duty Guidance³ which expects all further education institutions to have policies and procedures in place for the management of events held on their premises, clearly setting out the process for risk assessing, approving and managing external speakers and events in line with the above Acts and the UCO's Freedom of Speech Policy.
- 1.3 This policy is applicable to all External Speakers and organisers of events which include:
 - a) Speakers at events booked by UCO staff, including guest lecturers and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) tutors.
 - b) Speakers at events booked by the UCO's Students' Union.
 - c) Speakers at events booked by external individuals or organisations.

2. FREEDOM OF SPEECH

- 2.1 As an academic community, the UCO is committed to upholding freedom of speech, thought and expression. The expression of controversial views, provided they are not unlawful, does not constitute reasonable grounds for refusing facilities for an activity, particularly if it is evident that individuals aim to ensure that all aspects of controversy are presented. The UCO has a legal obligation to ensure that freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law is secured for its members, staff, students and visiting speakers.
- 2.2 The UCO operates a Freedom of Speech Policy which includes details on the UCO's commitment to freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law.

3. EXTERNAL SPEAKERS & EVENTS

- 3.1 External Speakers include individuals who are neither a paid employee nor a registered student of the UCO.
- 3.2 External Events include those held on UCO premises or at another venue in the name of the UCO.

¹ Section 26(1) of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/16/enacted>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

- 3.3 External Speakers and Events include those arranged by:
- UCO staff or students, within the normal teaching programme or otherwise;
 - The Students' Union or an affiliated club or society;
 - By any person or group, including clubs and societies not affiliated to the Students' Union but approved by the UCO; and
 - Any external individual or organisation not associated with the UCO using UCO premises for hire or otherwise.
- 3.4 This policy also covers all meetings, exhibitions, publications and leaflets produced or distributed on UCO premises.
- 3.5 In the procedures and instructions to organisers below, the word 'activity' includes all such manifestations.
- 3.6 This policy and the associated procedures are approved by the UCO's Board of Directors and are binding to all members, staff and students of the institution. Failure to observe them will result in disciplinary action under the appropriate regulations governing the conduct of students and staff.
- 3.7 This policy and the associated procedures are also binding to all external speakers. Failure to observe them correctly may result in their event request being refused.

4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR APPROVING EXTERNAL SPEAKERS

- 4.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for the External Speaker Policy and for authorising External Speaker requests whose contact details are:

Role Title	Name	Email	Phone
Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Steve Vogel	steven.vogel@uco.ac.uk	020 7089 5331

5. EXTERNAL SPEAKER REQUEST PROCEDURE

A) STAGE 1: EXTERNAL SPEAKER REQUEST SUBMISSION

- 5.1 All requests for External Speakers and Events, including Room Hire arrangements, must be made using the External Speaker Request Form (Appendix 1) which shall be published in Word format on the UCO's website alongside this policy here: <https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy>.
- 5.2 A Principal Event Organiser of the event taking place shall be identified on the External Speaker Request Form with whom the UCO shall liaise regarding the event.
- 5.3 All External Speaker Request Forms must be submitted to the Head of Student Services who will acknowledge receipt of requests by email and will be responsible for ensuring the form has been completed sufficiently.
- 5.4 External Speaker Request Forms must normally be received no less than 14 working days before the scheduled event date.

- 5.5 Requests submitted outside of this agreed timeframe may not normally be authorised to take place on UCO premises.
- 5.6 Principal Event Organisers of events are expected to highlight at the earliest opportunity any grounds for believing that a speaker will be controversial or will potentially commit a criminal offence and should do so by emailing Head of Student Services directly.
- 5.7 It is acknowledged that details of events may be subject to change after requests have been approved. Should this happen principal organisers of events must notify Head of Student Services if an approved speaker is replaced or other material changes occur to the proposed event.
- 5.8 The UCO reserves the right to review an external speaker decision if further information emerges about or changes are made to the proposed event.

B) STAGE 2: REVIEW OF THE EXTERNAL SPEAKER REQUEST – IDENTIFYING & MITIGATING POSSIBLE RISKS

- 5.9 When reviewing the request form the Head of Student Services shall consider the full legal context that applies to External Speakers, including:
 - a) The duty to secure freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law
 - b) Human rights law
 - c) Equality law
 - d) Criminal law (including anti-terrorism laws)
 - e) The duty of care to staff, students and visitors
 - f) Civil law claims relating to spoken words
 - g) Data sharing
 - h) Charity law
 - i) Law relating to security staff
 - j) Students' Unions
 - k) Third party bookings of UCO/Students' union premises
- 5.10 In addition, the Head of Student Services shall make appropriate investigations to verify the information provided in the request form and may consult others within and external to the UCO to review particularly controversial or difficult requests and discuss particular external speaker requests including:
 - a) The Event Organiser
 - b) The Vice Chancellor's Group
 - c) The local police
 - d) The Students' Union President
 - e) The People & Culture Committee
 - f) Regional Prevent coordinators

- g) The proposed speaker (to get a clearer idea of what they intend to say; this may include obtaining an advance copy of their speech or presentation)
 - h) Community groups
 - i) Local authority
 - j) Information already held by the UCO about the speaker or event organisers
 - k) Higher education institutions known to have hosted or refused the speaker previously
 - l) Individuals with relevant legal expertise
 - m) Internal working groups formed to assist with particularly controversial or difficult requests
- 5.11 The Head of Student Services shall record their risk assessment of the request using the External Speaker Request Checklist (Appendix 2).
- 5.12 If risks are identified the UCO shall consider mitigating actions that will enable the external speaker event to go ahead within the law. These may include amongst others:
- a) Issuing instructions to the organisers of the activity on its conduct, including the conduct of the chair of the event and the audience.
 - b) Request submission of the speaker's speech / presentation prior to the event.
 - c) Control over entry to the event.
 - d) Limit the number of delegates permitted to attend the event.
 - e) Specific security measures for the event, e.g. stewarding arrangements to be put in place during the activity and Security of UCO property and premises.
 - f) Declare the event 'public', thus permitting a police presence.
 - g) Arrangements for audio-visual aids.
 - h) The introduction of articles or objects from outside.
 - i) The condition of the premises following the activity.
 - j) Lines of communication with and admission of the media.
 - k) The payment of fees for hire of the facility and for security.
 - l) Require that the event be deferred until such instruction can be complied with, or additional security measures can be put in place.
 - m) Other special mitigating actions as may be deemed necessary.
- 5.13 Following the review of the External Speaker request the UCO shall make one of the following decisions:
- a) Approve the request and grant permission for the activity to proceed.
 - b) Approve the request and grant permission for the activity to proceed subject to specific mitigating actions, as outlined above;
 - c) Refuse permission for the activity to take place if it appears that it could give rise to, or incite those attending to commit, a criminal act.

C) STAGE 3: COMMUNICATING THE EXTERNAL SPEAKER REQUEST DECISION

- 5.14 The decision of External Speaker requests shall normally be provided to the Event Organiser within 5 working days of the request by email. This shall include any conditions that apply to the event and grounds for refusing the request.
- 5.15 Any costs incurred by the UCO in complying with these actions may be passed on to the Event Organiser. Event organisers shall be consulted on any conditions or modifications in advance of the event taking place and will be responsible for informing the External Speaker of the outcome.
- 5.16 Event Organisers and External Speakers have the right to appeal a refusal decision by following the External Speaker's Request Decision Appeal Process below.
- 5.17 A copy of the following shall be circulated to the Event Organiser who will be responsible for forwarding these on to the External Speaker to sign to confirm in writing that they will abide by UCO policies:
- a) The UCO's Freedom of Speech Policy
 - b) The UCO's Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Policy
 - c) An Expected Behaviours Contract as indicated on Appendix 1: External Speaker Request Form

D) STAGE 4: REVIEWING EXTERNAL SPEAKER REQUESTS ON THE BASIS OF NEW INFORMATION

- 5.18 The UCO may review External Speaker Requests on the basis of new information such as:
- a) A change in External Speaker;
 - b) Increased risk of disorder;
 - c) Information from the community or police.
- 5.19 Such new information may determine whether further mitigating actions are required to address the new risks or whether the event is cancelled. Subsequently Event Organisers have a duty to inform the UCO of a material change to the booking so that the request can be reviewed as appropriate.
- 5.20 The Head of Student Services shall undertake a review of the External Speaker Request in line with Stage 2 of this policy.

6. GROUNDS FOR REFUSING EXTERNAL SPEAKER REQUESTS

- 6.1 In circumstances where identified risks associated with an External Speaker of Event cannot reasonably be mitigated the request for the speaker / event may be refused. Such circumstances include:
- a) That the External Speaker Request Procedure has not been duly followed.
 - b) That the speaker professes to belong to a proscribed organisation, or (following appropriate information gathering, and potentially seeking express assurances

from the speaker/organisers if appropriate) it is believed the speaker is intending to invite support for such an organisation or its activities.

- c) That having obtained and considered input as appropriate (e.g. from the UCO's estates department and/or police/other emergency services) it is believed to be in the interests of public safety, the prevention of disorder or crime or the protection of those persons lawfully on UCO premises that the event does not take place.
- d) That following appropriate input from relevant bodies and consideration of available evidence the UCO has concluded:
 - i. that reasonable steps cannot be taken to prevent the speaker from expressing views that are contrary to the law;
 - ii. that reasonable steps cannot be taken to prevent the speaker from encouraging, assisting or committing criminal acts;
 - iii. that reasonable steps cannot be taken to prevent the speaker from putting forward views or ideas that unlawfully infringe the rights of others or unlawfully breach the institution's equality duties.
- e) Controversial, offensive or distasteful views which are not unlawful per se would not normally constitute reasonable grounds for refusing an external speaker request.

7. EXTERNAL SPEAKER REQUEST DECISION APPEAL / COMPLAINT PROCESS

- 7.1 Appeals against an External Speaker Request refusal decision or a complaint about free speech regarding an External Speaker may be made in writing to the UCO's Vice-Chancellor.
- 7.2 The UCO's Vice-Chancellor (or authorised deputy) will give their decision in writing within five working days of receipt of the appeal.
- 7.3 The UCO's Vice-Chancellor's decision is final.
- 7.4 Details of any such decisions will be notified to the Board of Directors at its next meeting.

8. INSTRUCTIONS TO EVENT ORGANISERS

- 8.1 Organisers of any event or activity where there is likelihood that a speaker may be unable to enter or leave the premises safely and/or deliver his or her speech must ensure that a single person is appointed as the Event Organiser of the event.
- 8.2 The Event Organiser will ensure that all those concerned with the event comply with all the conditions laid down by the UCO, should permission for the event be granted.
- 8.3 The UCO may supply a public address or relay system to an additional hall if there is reasonable cause to consider such provision necessary to enable the meeting to go ahead within the adequate hearing of the speaker. The cost of such provision will be borne by the organisers of the event.
- 8.4 The Event Organiser has a duty to see that nothing in the preparations for, or conduct of, an event infringes the law (for example by conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace or incitement to an illegal act).

- 8.5 The chair of a meeting has a duty to ensure that both the speaker and the audience act in accordance with the law during the meeting. In the case of unlawful conduct, the chair must give appropriate warnings and, if lawlessness continues, require the removal of those concerned by the security staff.
- 8.6 Premises used for meetings must be left in a clean and tidy condition. Organisers may be charged for any additional cleaning and repairs which may be required. Payment in advance, or evidence of ability to pay such costs, may be required.
- 8.7 Permission to use UCO premises may be granted subject to any conditions which the UCO considers necessary to secure the UCO's statutory responsibilities to ensure freedom of speech within the law. These may include conditions concerning admission or exclusion of the press and media personnel.

9. MANAGEMENT OF EXTERNAL SPEAKER EVENTS

- 9.1 Although the UCO will take pre-emptive steps to ensure that External Speaker events take place within the law, it is acknowledged that events may not go according to plan, such as attempts to disrupt the event, unexpected guests appearing, inappropriate material being made available at the event, or views expressed by the speaker or an audience member falling outside of the law.
- 9.2 If an event does not go according to plan, the UCO may take any of the following actions as appropriate:
- a) Delay the start of the event.
 - b) Move the event to a different location.
 - c) Issue clear verbal warnings to individuals attempting to disrupt the event (normally through the event Chair).
 - d) Request that individuals leave the event or instructing security (or the police if necessary) to remove them from the event.
 - e) Warn individuals that sanctions apply to those impeding freedom of speech within the law.
 - f) Postpone the event and rearranging it under different circumstances and conditions.
 - g) Stop the event part-way through.
 - h) Cancel the event.
 - i) Notify the relevant staff and the UCO's Vice-Chancellor of any developments that may attract media attention so they can prepare for this.
 - j) Call on the police to attend and assist in the maintenance of law and order, and may in extreme cases ask them to take charge of the activity.
- 9.3 Where it considers there is a legitimate reason to do so, the UCO may share information on the External Speakers it has hosted, and/or those it deems to be a risk, with other relevant agencies, including the Police and other higher education providers.

- 9.4 The UCO may perform spot checks on events being hosted on UCO premises or at external venues. If there are breaches of policies at any event the matter may be referred for disciplinary or legal action.
- 9.5 Should any individual or external organisation fail to abide by this or the above policies and contracts, they may be barred from speaking and /or booking the UCO's facilities in the future.