Visiting Speaker and Events Policy

Note: This is an annex of the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and should be read in conjunction with the Code. The Code of Practice can be access from the University's Register of Policies and Procedures.

1.   Introduction

1.1   Through this Visiting Speaker and Events Policy the University of Worcester and Worcester Students' Union will demonstrate how is manages risks around visiting speakers and events within the University and at University of Worcester branded events taking place away from the University's premises. It will demonstrate how it seeks to secure freedom of speech and academic freedom.

2.   Purpose

2.1   The purpose of this policy is to set in place a governing framework for events with external speakers to ensure that the University and Student's Union remains a thriving environment for teaching, learning and research.

2.2   This policy aims to ensure that event organisers are aware of the framework the University operates within when facilitating visiting speakers and the measures that may be required to be put in place to support their event. It should be read in conjunction with the associated Visiting Speaker Risk Assessment Procedure and Guidelines for Visiting Speakers.

3.   Definitions

Visiting Speaker: a person external to the University who has been invited to address a group at an event or who would have been invited had there not been a restriction on this invitation.

Event: any gathering that is hosted on University premises, or hosted by or on behalf of the University, or Students' Union, on non-University premises, including events held online, that include a speaker addressing a group. This includes events held in a teaching, learning or research setting or in the context of co-curricular or extra-curricular activity and includes public lectures and other events open to the public.

4. Who and what is covered by this Policy?

4.1 This policy applies to all staff, students, governors, visiting and honorary appointments and visitors to the University, and staff and directors of its subsidiaries, student societies, clubs and groups. Every individual has a duty to ensure that freedom of speech and academic freedom are protected on University premises, including in lectures, tutorials, research and other activities.

4.2 This policy relates to all events that take place on University premises, either in person or virtual, or are organised away from University premises but are promoted and held in the University's or Student's Union's name.

5. Organising an event

5.1 The University's aim is for events to take place and to mitigate risks where appropriate to enable this. Therefore, event organisers should ensure they allow sufficient time to complete the approval process, taking into account the availability of others involved in the process. As a guide event organisers should normally look to undertake the local risk assessment at least 21 days ahead of when the event is planned to take place. This will allow time for informed decisions and for any conditions and/or requirements to be implemented.

5.2 Assessment of risk will include consideration of the safety of speaker(s) and attendees. A potentially high-risk event may include where the speaker(s) or topic of the event is political, religious or involves a high-profile speaker. Assessment of risk is holistic and includes consideration of potential risks to the speaker(s), attendees, organiser and the institution. For example, risks could be physical or related to security, general safety of attendees or the likelihood of unlawful conduct occurring during an event. The potential risks of the event not going ahead should also be considered.

5.3 Anyone organising an event that involves a visiting speaker or speakers to be hosted by the University must ensure that prior to any booking or publicity for the event:

- A local risk assessment is carried out in accordance with the Visiting Speaker Risk Assessment and Procedure and approved by the Head of Academic School/Institute or Professional Department ('the Head');

- For events held by the Students' Union or student societies, clubs or groups the risk assessment will be carried out by the Student Union Student Activities Manager or the Venue and Events Manager;

- If the risk assessment identifies any concerns the Head must escalate the matter to the Vice Chancellor (via the Head of the Vice Chancellor's Office) (Section 3 of the External Speaker Risk Assessment & Procedure).

5.4   The event organiser is responsible for ensuring that any conditions or requirements for the event to proceed identified by the University are implemented.

5.5   The University may monitor any event to ensure compliance with the Visiting Speaker and Event Policy and any conditions or restrictions imposed. The University may stop an event at any time if any conditions are not met or this policy is breached.

6.   Failure to comply

6.1   Failure to comply with this policy and the requirements of the Visiting Speakers Risk Assessment and Procedure may result in disciplinary action by the University, or the Students' Union, under the relevant disciplinary policy and procedures for the individual concerned

Visiting Speaker Risk Assessment and Procedure

1 Procedure to be followed by all event organisers

1.1 Anyone organising an event with a visiting speaker attending must follow this procedure and comply with the University's Visiting Speaker and Events Policy.

1.2 The event must not be advertised or promoted until it has been authorised under this procedure.

2 Criteria for local assessment of proposal external speaker or event

2.1 Prior to approval of any visiting speaker event, the event organiser is responsible for completing the appropriate Visiting Speaker Risk Assessment and assessing the speaker against the following set of questions:

Question 1: Has the visiting speaker(s) previously been prevented from speaking at the University of Worcester, or any other university or similar establishment?

Question 2: Has the visiting speaker(s) previously been known to express unlawful views, or been affiliated with a proscribed group or an organisation that expresses views, which may either be in breach of the University's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech or opposed to the fundamental values of our society?

Question 3: Does the proposed title or theme of the event present a potential risk that views/opinions expressed by the speaker(s) may be in breach of the University's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech?

Question 4: Is the proposed visiting speaker(s)/theme likely to attract attendance from individuals/groups that have previously been known to express views that may be in breach of the University's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech?

Question 5: Do you have any other concerns, or reasons to believe that the proposed visiting speaker(s)/theme may be in breach of, or cause concerns related to the University's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech (e.g. anything that might create risks to the safety of all persons, the maintenance of order, and the security of the premises controlled by the University.

2.2   The completed Risk Assessment should then be submitted to the Head of Academic School/Institute of Professional Department or the Students' Union Student Activities Manager or Venue and Events Manager ('the Head') for consideration.

2.3   **If the answer to all five questions is NO:** the Head will advise the event organiser that they can confirm the event and any visiting speaker and 'book' them to speak at their event or activity and promote this in the normal way.

2.4   **If the answer to any of the question is Unclear or YES:** the Head will consider with the event organiser whether conditions are necessary to mitigate risk. The Head, in consultation with the event organiser, will undertake a more detailed risk assessment of the visiting speaker and the event by checking both the visiting speaker and the topic on Google, looking at the first three pages of web results and accessing any relevant web addresses given.

2.5   The Head will then escalate the review of the Risk Assessment, along with their recommendation whether to proceed with the event, to the Vice Chancellor (via the Head of the Vice Chancellor's Office) for consideration. In the case of events being organised by the Students' Union the event should also be escalated to the Students' Union Chief Executive.

3   Referrals to the Vice Chancellor for approval

3.1   If an event is referred to the Vice Chancellor they shall convene a panel consisting of not less than 3 members of the University Leadership Group and where necessary the Students' Union Chief Executive (for events concerning the Students' Union) or their designated representative.

3.2   The panel will consider all relevant information in the context of the University's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech and either:

- Approve the event subject to conditions and/or reasonable requirements to ensure that any risks are being mitigated. Such conditions may include: provision of stewards, variation of location and/or time, whether the event is open to the public.
- Decide not to proceed with the event or visiting speaker(s). Where this is likely to be the outcome, the panel will consult with the police with a view to establishing whether serious disorder can be prevented.

3.3   The University may monitor any event to ensure compliance with the Visiting Speaker and Events Policy and any conditions or restrictions imposed. The University may stop an event at any time if any conditions are not met or the Policy is breached. This does not absolve the event organiser of their responsibility to ensure their event complies with the conditions and/or the Policy at all times.

4   Risk Assessment of academic conferences and other events which form part of normal course provision

4.1   Conferences, seminars and public lectures

Where an academic conference is hosted by an Academic School or Professional Department of the University it will be sufficient for the event organiser to complete a single local risk assessment for the event by answering the key questions at paragraph 2.1 of this procedure.

If the response to at least one of the key questions is 'Yes' or 'Unclear' then the event organiser must escalate the concern to their Head of School or Professional Service in accordance with paragraph 2.3 above who will follow paragraphs 2 and 3 of this procedure in the normal way.

4.2   Events that form part of normal course provision

In relation to events that involve a visiting speaker but form part of normal course provision and, as such, only have students registered on that course and relevant staff in attendance, the School should complete a local Visiting Speaker Risk Assessment. If the visiting speaker is likely to attend on more than one occasion it will be sufficient to complete one Visiting Speaker Risk Assessment.

If the response to at least one of the key questions is 'Yes' or 'Unclear' then the event organiser must escalate the concern to their Head of School or Professional Service who will follow paragraphs 2 and 3 of this procedure in the normal way.

5   Events organised by the Students' Union or a society affiliated with the Students' Union

5.1   The Students' Union will be responsible for ensuring that it, and any society, club, network affiliated to it, complies with the University's Policy on External Speakers and Events and this procedure.

5.2   If a referral to the Vice Chancellor (section 3) is required this will be undertaken by the Chief Executive of the Students' Union who will be responsible for making the submission with/on behalf of the Event Organiser.

Appendix C

Visiting Speaker Risk Assessment – University Events

Event Organiser

Name:
Job Title:
Academic School/Professional Department:
Email address:

Speaker/Event

Speaker Name:
Company/Organisation representing:
Email:
Mobile No:

1. Speaker Topic and Details

2.Is this event part of a larger event and/or is it part of normal course provision?   Yes/No

2a If Yes please provide details

Is the speaker being paid by the University? Yes/No   If Yes, how much - £

Speaker reputation   Please provide any information you have gathered as part of your background research which is relevant to the key questions below and consideration of whether the event can proceed

Other information   Please provide any other information that may be relevant

Date and time of the event:

Where will the event be held:

Will the event be open to the public or a closed event:

How many people are likely to attend: Please break down into staff and students

Key Questions

Please read the following questions carefully and choose either No, Don't Know or Yes for each one

1	Has the visiting speaker(s) previously been prevented from speaking at the University of Worcester, or any other university or similar establishment?	No/ Don't Know/ Yes
2	Has the visiting speaker(s) previously been known to express views, or been affiliated with a proscribed group or an organisation that expresses views, which may either be in breach of the University's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech or opposed to the fundamental values of our society?	No/ Don't Know/ Yes
3	Does the proposed title or theme of the event present a potential risk that views/opinions expressed by the visiting speaker(s) may be in breach of the University's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech?	No/ Don't Know/ Yes
4	Is the proposed visiting speaker(s)/theme likely to attract attendance from individuals/groups that have previously been known to express views that may be in breach of the University's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech?	No/ Don't Know/ Yes
5	Do you have any other concerns, or reasons to believe that the proposed visiting speaker(s)/theme may be in breach of, or cause concerns related to the University's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech (e.g. significant media interest, large attendance)?	No/ Don't Know/ Yes

If the answer to all 5 key questions is <u>No</u> then the event may proceed subject to final approval by your Head of Academic School/Department or Professional Department. The risk assessment should be retained locally for a period of 18 months, data from the risk assessment may be required for the University's annual Prevent return.

If the answer to any of the 5 key questions is <u>Yes or Unclear</u> then the Head and event organiser should undertake a further review as set out at para 2.4 of Visiting Speaker Risk Assessment Procedure. Once completed the request must be referred to the Vice Chancellor (via the Head of the Vice Chancellor's Office) for consideration.

Head of School/Institute or Professional Department Comments:

(to include information from further review)

Name:
Date:

Upon completion the Head of School/Institute or Professional Department should refer the request to unisec@worc.ac.uk

Visiting Speaker Risk Assessment – Students' Union Events

Event details – to be completed by the student group:
Name of student group:
Name of speaker (s):
Speaker(s) topic and brief details of the talk/event:
What is the purpose of the event?:
Date, time and location of event:
How many people are likely to attend?:
Will there be non-students at the event?   Yes/No If Yes , how many do you anticipate attending?
Is the speaker being paid by the student group?   Yes/No If Yes, how much?: £
Key Questions – to be completed by a Union Manager
Have you needed to seek advice from the Vice Chancellor (via the Head of the Vice Chancellor's Office) on this event for any reason?: Yes/No If so, for what reason?

Has the speaker previously been prevented from speaking at the Students' Union or University or any other similar establishment e.g. another Union or University? Yes/No/Don't know
Has the speaker (s) ever been known to (i) express views that could be considered to be illegal or likely to encourage terrorism or support for terrorism or (ii) been affiliated with a proscribed group which holds extreme, views, either of which may be in breach of the joint University and Students' Union Code of Practice for Freedom of Speech? Yes/No/Don't know If Yes, please give further details (or write N/A): If Yes, will the event likely to attract attendance from people who may sympathise with those views?
Do the proposed title or theme of the talk/event present a potential risk that views expressed may be in breach of the joint University and Students' Union Code of Practice for Freedom of Speech? Yes/No/Don't know If yes, please give further details and what action you have taken as a result:
Do you have any other concerns about the proposed speaker (s) /event?

If the answer to all Key Questions is 'No', the event may proceed. This risk assessment should be retained within the Students' Union for a period of 18 months and details therein may be required for the University's Prevent return.
If the answer to any of the Key Questions is Yes or Don't know, the Chief Executive of the Union must be notified, as well as the Vice Chancellor (via the Head of the Vice Chancellor's Office), for a further review.

Signed – member of student group completing form:
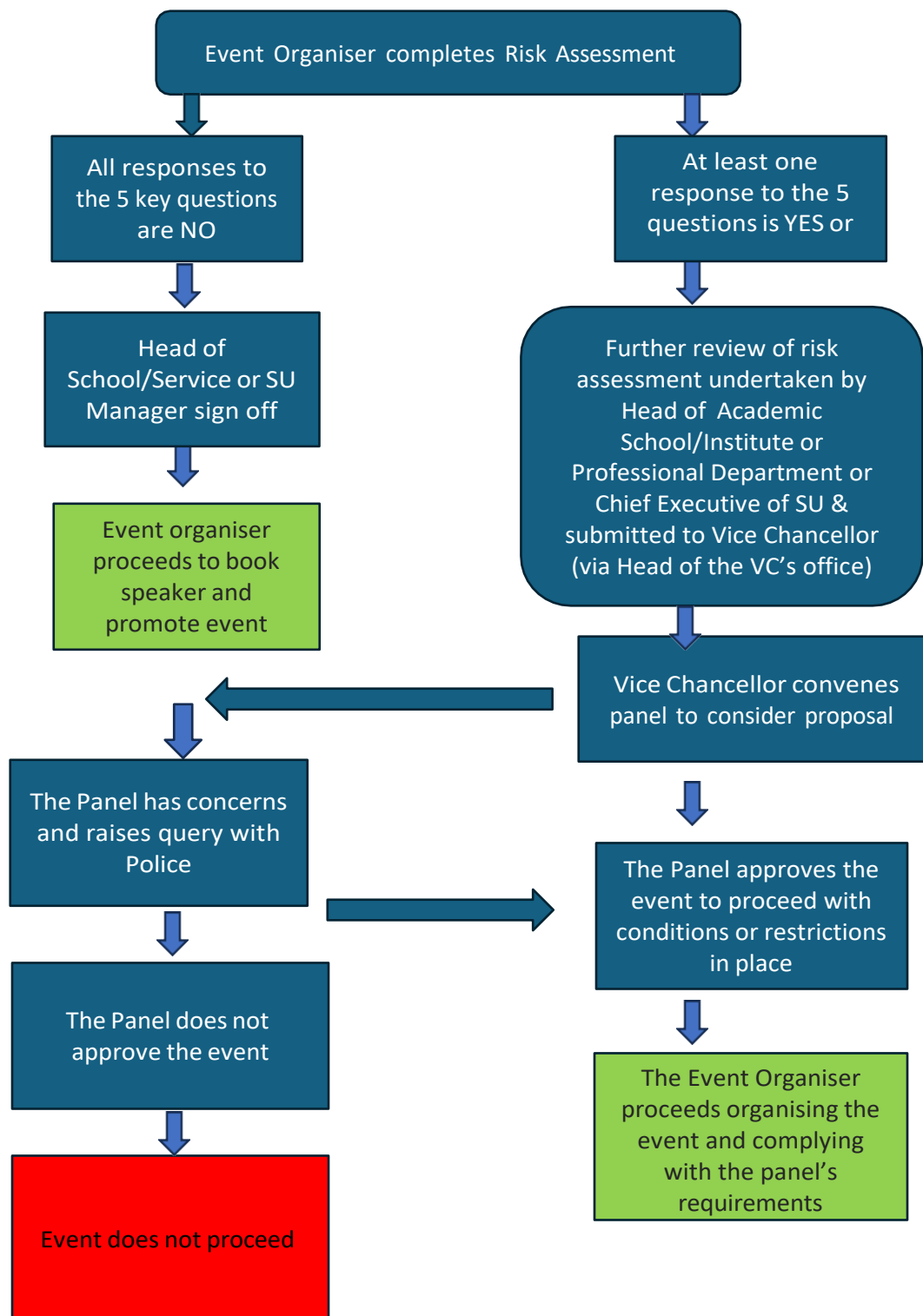**Date:**

Signed – Union Manager completing this form:
Name and job title:
Date :

If relevant, date referred to the Union's Chief Executive and Vice Chancellor:
By whom:

UNIVERSITY of WORCESTER

Flowchart for approval of External Speakers/Events

Event Organiser completes Risk Assessment

All responses to the 5 key questions are NO

At least one response to the 5 questions is YES or

Head of School/Service or SU Manager sign off

Further review of risk assessment undertaken by Head of Academic School/Institute or Professional Department or Chief Executive of SU & submitted to Vice Chancellor (via Head of the VC's office)

Event organiser proceeds to book speaker and promote event

Vice Chancellor convenes panel to consider proposal

The Panel has concerns and raises query with Police

The Panel approves the event to proceed with conditions or restrictions in place

The Panel does not approve the event

The Event Organiser proceeds organising the event and complying with the panel's requirements

Event does not proceed

Owner	Vice Chancellor
Approved by	Board of Governors
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