



UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN

External Speaker Policy

This document includes:

- External Speaker Policy
- External Speaker Code of Conduct
- External Speaker Referral Form

The University of Lincoln has a rich history as an academic institution that has regularly welcomed visiting speakers from around the world to its campuses. Such speakers have brought and continue to bring great diversity of experience, insight and opinion, enriching our events and activities and sparking discussion and debate among our students, staff and visitors alike.

The purpose of this policy is to set in place a governing framework for visiting speakers to ensure that this proud heritage, where debate, challenge and dissent are not only permitted but expected, can continue for current and future generations.

Booking an External Speaker

Anyone organising an event as described above must follow the External Speaker Booking Process detailed below before booking the speaker(s). Most external speaker requests will be straightforward and can be handled entirely at a local (departmental) level. In these cases, following the steps outlined in the "Local assessment of proposed external speaker(s)" section below will suffice. However, some requests may be complex and may require referral for further consideration. The referral process will only apply in a minority of circumstances – to events or speakers deemed to be higher-risk.

Local Assessment of Proposed External Speakers

Prior to the confirmation of any external speaker, the event organiser will be responsible for assessing the speaker against the following set of questions:

- Question 1: Has the speaker previously been prevented from speaking at Lincoln or another university or similar establishment, or previously been known to express views that may be in breach of the External Speaker Code of Conduct?
- Question 2: Does the proposed title or theme of the event present a potential risk that views/opinions expressed by speaker(s) may be in breach of the External Speaker Code of Conduct?
- Question 3: Is the proposed speaker/theme likely to attract attendance from individuals/groups that have previously been known to express views that may be in breach of the External Speaker Code of Conduct?

If the answer to all three questions is **NO**:

The event organiser can confirm the external speaker and 'book' them to speak at their event or activity in the normal way. It is required that the external speaker be sent a copy of the External Speaker Code of Conduct.

If the answer to any of the questions is **UNCLEAR**:

The event organiser must seek guidance from their line manager or Head of School or Department, whose responsibility it will be to further review the speaker(s) against the questions above.

Ultimately, if the answer to any of the questions is **YES**:

It is the responsibility of the event organiser to submit a referral to the Academic Registrar. NO speaker(s) can be confirmed (booked) prior to the event organiser receiving authorisation from the Academic Registrar or nominee.

The Referral Process

To make a speaker referral submission:

1. Access the External Speaker Policy Referral Form
2. Complete all sections of the form with as much detail as possible.
3. Send the form as an attachment to externalspeaker@lincoln.ac.uk.

Please note:

ULSU will be responsible for enacting the external speaker booking process and ensuring compliance with the External Speaker Policy for all events managed by them.

ULSU will be responsible for implementing a system to support all student events with proposed external speakers. They will undertake the local assessment with/on behalf of individual students, clubs, or societies. In the event that a referral is required, ULSU will be responsible for making the submission with/on behalf of the student coordinator.

The External Speaker Policy and approval process will be continually reviewed and updated in response to legislative changes and other factors. It is the responsibility of those organising events to ensure that they are acting in accordance with the most recent version of the Policy, which will be published by the University on its website.

The External Speaker Policy and approval process sits alongside, but is currently separate from the University's Events and Room Booking Policies, which event organisers need to comply with separately and as required by the Timetabling Team or the Events and Conferencing Office.

University of Lincoln External Speaker Code of Conduct

Guidance and Legal Obligations Relating to External Speakers at the University of Lincoln

This code of conduct exists to ensure that all speakers taking part in a University of Lincoln hosted or run event or activity, on campus or elsewhere, act in accordance with the University's External Speaker Policy. It is the responsibility of the event or activity organiser (the individual from within the University of Lincoln e.g., member of staff or student, named in the External Speaker submission) to ensure that:

- This Code of Conduct is communicated to all external speakers (once approved and confirmed via the External Speaker Booking Process)
- That all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the requirements within it are upheld during the running of the event or activity.

Freedom of Speech

Freedom of speech is fundamental to a university. The Education Act (No 2) 1986 requires the University to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for its employees, students, and visiting speakers. The Board of Governors of the University therefore requires all employees and students of the University to tolerate and protect the expression of opinions within the law whether or not these opinions are repugnant to them; this obligation is set out in the University's Freedom of Speech: Code of Practice.

However, whilst the law promotes and protects freedom of speech, it also places limits on those freedoms in order to maintain public order and safety and to ensure that there is no breach of the law. The University recognises that in this context a conflict exists between the laws which promote freedom of speech and those which restrict it and consequently acknowledges that it has a legal responsibility to create a balance between minimising the possibility that extremism or unlawful conduct will arise on campus and ensuring that it meets its legal obligations in relation to securing freedom of speech.

Legal Context

Universities operate in a complex legal environment and so it is vital that all individuals involved in the external speaker process, including the speakers themselves, understand the legal framework and context that governs this area. Examples of some of the relevant areas of law include:

- Private Rights: People are entitled to protection from harassment, defamation, and unlawful breach of their human rights, as well as from unfair treatment under equality law. Health and safety law, data protection, and contract law may also be relevant in this context.
- Criminal Law: Hate crimes, harassment, breach of the peace, and terrorism all come under criminal law. There is also legislation around public meetings, public processions/assemblies, and public order which may be of relevance.
- Public Law: Freedom of speech and some duties under the Equality Act are captured under public law.

Conduct

The University expects external speakers to act in accordance with the law and not to breach the lawful rights of others. Set out below are some examples of the University's expectations. Please note that this is not intended to be an exhaustive list of unacceptable conduct by external speakers. The University reserves the right to not permit an external speaker to speak at or attend an event, to refuse to permit an event, and/or to halt an event at any time if it reasonably considers there may be a breach of the External Speaker Policy or of any legal obligation. During the course of the event, no speaker shall:

- Act in breach of the criminal law.
- Incite hatred or violence or any breach of the criminal law.
- Encourage or promote any acts of terrorism or promote individuals, groups, or organisations that support terrorism.
- Spread hatred and intolerance.
- Discriminate against or harass any person or group on the grounds of their sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, disability, religious, or other similar belief, sexual orientation, or age.
- Defame any person or organisation.
- Raise or gather funds for any external organisation or cause without express permission of the University.

During the course of the event at which he or she participates, all speakers shall:

- Comply with the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech.
- Comply with the University's External Speaker Policy.
- Present ideas and opinions, in particular those that may be contentious or potentially offensive, in the spirit of academic debate, being open to challenge and question.
- Follow the University's policy on and instructions relating to health and safety.

Segregation

Universities have duties under the Equality Act 2010 as education providers, employers, and service providers; thus, they must not unlawfully discriminate against students, employees, and other individuals to whom services are provided. Segregation by sex is not permitted in any academic meetings or at events, lectures, or meetings provided for students, or at events attended by members of the public or employees of the University or the Students' Union. Segregation is therefore not permissible for any event covered by the External Speaker Policy and this Code of Conduct. The only exception to this is events that are for the purpose of collective religious worship

External Speaker Referral Submission Form

1. Personal Details

Name:

School/Department:

Mobile Telephone:

Email Address:

2. Proposed Event Details

Event Title:

Event Date: / /

Proposed/Booked Venue:

Event Description: (max 50 words)

3. Target Audience (profile and size)

Please indicate and give details if you believe the event will attract any groups or individuals that have previously been known to express views that may be in breach of the External Speaker Code of Conduct?

4. Proposed External Speaker(s)

Please provide details, including links to biographical information; and clearly explain your concerns, including if you believe that any of your proposed speaker(s) have previously been prevented from taking part in an event at the University of Lincoln or an event/activity at another University or similar establishment. (Please add attachments with details where available).

When complete, please save and submit as an email attachment to **externalspeaker@lincoln.ac.uk**.