

## Loughborough University External Speaker Policy

### Document Version Control

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### Change History

<b>Change Date</b>	<b>Changed by</b>	<b>Changes</b>
18/01/16	Manuel Alonso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4.1 amended to state '14 days' notice'</li> <li>• Appendix 1 added.</li> </ul>
19/01/16	Manuel Alonso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small textual amendments to 1.1, 2.3, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.6, 4.11 &amp; 5.1.</li> <li>• Addition of paragraph 4.2</li> <li>• Addition of guidance frameworks to section 7.</li> </ul>
20/01/16	Manuel Alonso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amendment of Section 4 and addition of Appendix 3 to show slightly varied procedure for London.</li> </ul>
28/01/16	Manuel Alonso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insertion of 'or civil' in paragraph 3.5.</li> </ul>
18/02/16	Manuel Alonso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insertion of 'or association' in paragraph 2.1.</li> <li>• Typographical amendment to paragraph 3.4.</li> <li>• Amendment to paragraph 3.5 to read 'including (but not limited to) the following examples'.</li> <li>• Insertion of 'or their nominee' in paragraph 4.1.</li> </ul>
02/03/16	Manuel Alonso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amendments to paragraph 2.3 and insertion of paragraph 3.10 in light of comments from Senate on 02/03/16.</li> </ul>
28/06/16	Manuel Alonso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small typographical and branding changes to Appendix 1.</li> <li>• Minor typographical change to paragraph 5.1.</li> <li>• Addition of Appendix 4; Standards for External Speakers.</li> </ul>

01/12/23	Samuel McGinty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduced reference to Freedom of Expression Code of Practice in 1.1</li> <li>• Update to registered name of Imago in 2.2</li> <li>• Minor typographical change in 4.6</li> <li>• Minor typographical change in 4.10</li> </ul>
05/07/24	Samuel McGinty	<p>Following approval at Council in June 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delete word “normally” from para 1.3</li> <li>• Delete word “wellbeing” from para 3.4(a)</li> <li>• Additional sentence at the end of 2.1</li> <li>• Insert HE (FOS) Act 2023 in the list of relevant legal and guidance frameworks</li> </ul>

## External Speaker Policy

### 1. Introduction and Context

- 1.1. Loughborough University is committed to protecting freedom of speech and academic freedom. This is enshrined in our [Code of Practice on Freedom of Expression](#) and [Statute XXI](#), paragraph 2 (i) which notes that 'staff, while engaged in the provision of learning, teaching or research in accordance with their terms and conditions of service, have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions.'
- 1.2. Loughborough University also acknowledges its obligation under Section 43(1) of the Education Act 1986 which requires universities to 'take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students and employees of the establishment and for visiting speakers'.
- 1.3. External Speakers will be accorded the same freedom of expression as University staff and students. However, freedom of speech is not open-ended or absolute and Loughborough University is also committed to ensuring that proper account is taken of its obligation to ensure relevant legislation is adhered to.
- 1.4. This policy sets out the legal framework and considerations within which external speakers will be permitted to speak on University premises and at University-branded events, and details the procedure which will be used to arrive at such judgements.

### 2. Scope of this Policy

- 2.1. This policy applies to any situation in which an external speaker (defined as any individual who is not a member of Loughborough University, whether staff member or student, or Loughborough Students Union) is invited to speak on University premises or at a University-branded event at any location by a student society or association or by an external visitor using University premises. References to external speakers includes visiting speakers and the terms may be used interchangeably.
- 2.2. For the sake of clarity this includes premises operated by Imago @ Loughborough Limited as well as University premises at Loughborough and at the Loughborough University campus in London.
- 2.3. Staff organising such events are referred to paragraph 4.2 of this policy, which outlines their responsibilities.

### 3. Principles

- 3.1. As set out in 1.1 and 1.2 above, Loughborough University is committed to protecting freedom of speech and will therefore support the diverse range of societies and organisations at Loughborough who wish to invite external speakers.

- 3.2. In determining whether an external speaker should be allowed to speak on University premises or at University-branded events, the University will balance the right of freedom of speech and academic freedom and its obligations under the relevant legislative and guidance frameworks. A list of the relevant frameworks in this context is included at the end of this policy.
- 3.3. Decisions made about external speaker requests will be evidence-based, will be taken on the basis of an assessment of risk and will be timely.
- 3.4. The presumption will be to permit external speakers to speak on University premises or at University-branded events with appropriate mitigation or safeguards in place where necessary, except for situations in which:
  - a) the University determines that the presence of a speaker presents an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of its community, or;
  - b) the presence of a speaker is likely to result in criminal or civil law being broken, or;
  - c) the presence of a speaker is likely to leave the university in breach of its statutory obligations.
- 3.5. In broad terms, Loughborough University will not provide a platform for external speakers in the following instances (though the final decision will be subject to the procedure outlined in Section 4 below):
  - a) Where it is likely that criminal or civil law will be broken, including (but not limited to) the following examples:
    - the use or threat of violence;
    - incitement to violence;
    - incitement to hatred or harassment on the basis of any protected characteristic as specified in the Equality Act 2010;
    - support for, or encouragement of support for, a proscribed organisation (including providing money or other property for a proscribed organisation) as specified in the government's list of [Proscribed Terrorist Organisations](#);
  - b) Where it is likely that the views expressed by the speaker present a risk of members of the University (students or staff) being drawn into terrorism and where this risk cannot be adequately mitigated by any of the steps outlined in Section 4.6 below.
- 3.6. A record will be kept of all decisions taken in relation to external speaker requests and will be held securely in accordance with the University's [Data Protection Policy](#).
- 3.7. Loughborough University will not permit gender segregation except for the purposes of religious observance.
- 3.8. Loughborough University will share information on external speakers, within appropriate legal boundaries, with other Higher and Further Education institutions in accordance with the provisions of the statutory [Prevent Duty Guidance](#).

- 3.9. All external speakers will be given clear information outlining the standards and principles to which they are expected to adhere at Loughborough University. A copy of this information is included as [Appendix 4](#).
- 3.10. Any threats or attempts from third parties or other members of the University to disrupt events or intimidate external speakers will be dealt with through University Health and Safety policy or, where appropriate, University disciplinary policy.

#### 4. Procedure

- 4.1. Student organisers of events at which an external speaker will be present will be required to give the University Security Manager and the President of Loughborough Students Union (or their nominee) at least 14 days' notice of the event. (In the case of Loughborough University London, requests should be sent to the Operations Director, London and the LSU President. The London-specific process is outlined in Appendix 3.)
- 4.2. Staff organisers of events will be expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and will be expected to escalate any concerns about speakers as per the procedure set out in 4.6 below.
- 4.3. Details of the event and the external speaker should be provided on the form shown in [Appendix 1](#) below.
- 4.4. Organisers should not publicise the details of the meeting until 7 days have elapsed following the sending of the form.
- 4.5. The University will determine, on the basis of information obtained directly or through partner organisations, whether the external speaker is likely to present any of the risks outlined in section 3.5 above.
- 4.6. Where there are such concerns, the Chief Operating Officer may require that one or several of the following conditions are met in order to allow the external speaker to proceed:
  - That the event be filmed by the University for monitoring and evidential purposes.
  - That the talk and any accompanying literature, including promotional materials, must be in English.
  - That the event be attended by specified members of University staff.
  - That the text of the speech delivered is submitted to the University in advance.
  - That the speaker accepts questions from the audience on the subject of the talk for a specified time.
  - That the talk is reorganised so that the speaker is required to speak as part of a panel.
  - That the time or location of the event be varied.
  - That the University is provided with an advance copy of the guest list.
  - That admission to the event is by means of tickets issued in advance.

- That the meeting is declared public, allowing the presence of police and members of the public.
  - That the organisers cover the costs of additional security arrangements.
  - Any other condition which the Chief Operating Officer deems necessary and proportionate in line with this policy.
- 4.7. Where the University deems that the steps outlined above will not provide sufficient mitigation of the risks presented by the external speaker, the Chief Operating Officer may deny permission for the event to proceed.
- 4.8. Decisions will be communicated to the event organiser with as much notice as possible. This communication will indicate:
- Whether the event is permitted to proceed;
  - Whether any conditions (see 4.6 above) are to be imposed on the event to allow it to proceed;
  - Wherever possible, the basis on which this decision has been reached.
- 4.9. Failure to provide the University and Students Union with sufficient notice of the event may in itself be grounds for refusal of an external speaker request.
- 4.10. The organiser or chair of the event has a duty to ensure that the speaker adheres to the standards and principles outlined in this policy. In the case of conduct which breaches these standards and principles, the organiser or chair should issue appropriate warnings, and if the unacceptable conduct continues, should halt the event or require the speaker to leave.
- 4.11. A record will be kept by Security of all decisions regarding external speakers in line with the University's [Data Protection Policy](#).

## 5. Right of Appeal

- 5.1. Appeals against the decision of the Chief Operating Officer must be made in writing to the Vice-Chancellor within 3 working days of the decision being communicated to the event organiser.
- 5.2. The appeal should state clearly the grounds on which the appeal is being made.
- 5.3. The case will be considered by the Vice Chancellor and a decision will be shared with the event organiser within 3 working days.

## 6. Oversight and Governance of this Policy

- 6.1. Oversight and governance of this policy rests with University Council.
- 6.2. The policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis or sooner if there is a change to any relevant legislation.

## 7. Relevant Legal and Guidance Frameworks

Education Act (1986)

Equality Act (2010)

Counterterrorism and Security Act (2015) and the accompanying [Prevent Duty Guidance for Higher Education Institutions in England and Wales](#).

[Universities UK guidance on External Speakers in Higher Education Institutions](#).

[Equality and Human Rights Commission Guidance on Gender Segregation at Events and Meetings](#).

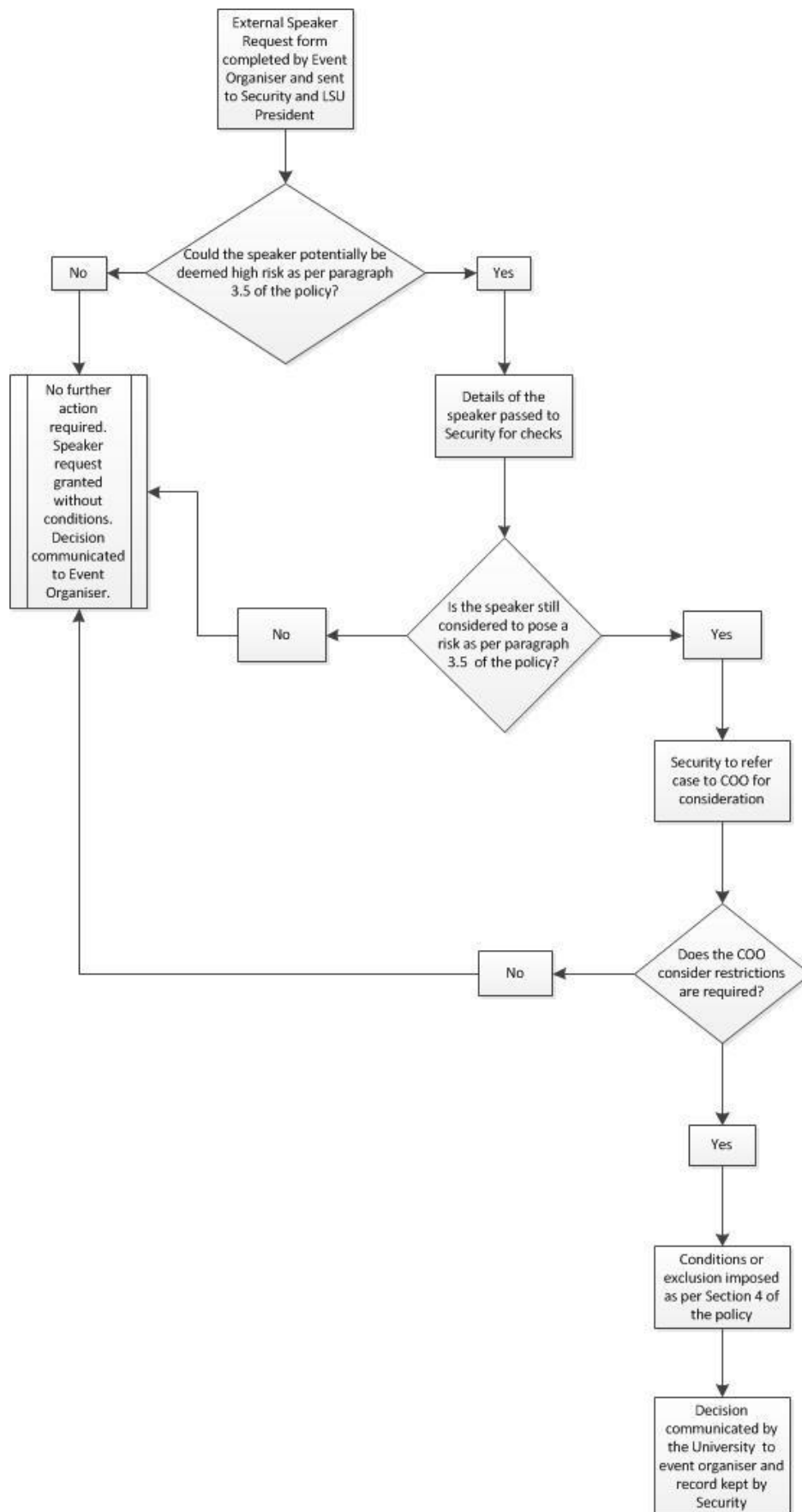
Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023

<b>External speaker request form</b>	
<p><i>Please ensure you have read Loughborough University's External Speaker Policy in advance of completing this form.</i></p> <p>This form is for all societies, groups or external organisations who have an external speaker speaking at their event on University premises or at a University-branded event. It should be returned to the societies or event coordinator <b>at least 14 days in advance of the event</b>. An external speaker is defined as a guest speaker who is not a student or member of staff at Loughborough University or Loughborough Students Union.</p>	
Society or Group organising event:	
Contact Email:	
Event Details:	
Name of organiser:	
Contact Telephone number:	
Venue/Location of event:	
Title of event:	
Date of event:	
Expected number of attendees:	
Will the event be...?	<input type="checkbox"/> member only <input type="checkbox"/> invitation/ticket only event <input type="checkbox"/> open to the general public
Please provide a short description of the event:	
<b>About the speaker(s)</b> This should include name, and organisation they're related to, the subject they will be speaking about and any other information you think we need to be aware of. Confirm any external speakers' affiliations (specifically where they are religious or political).	
Declaration of any knowledge of controversy attracted by the speaker or topic in the past.	

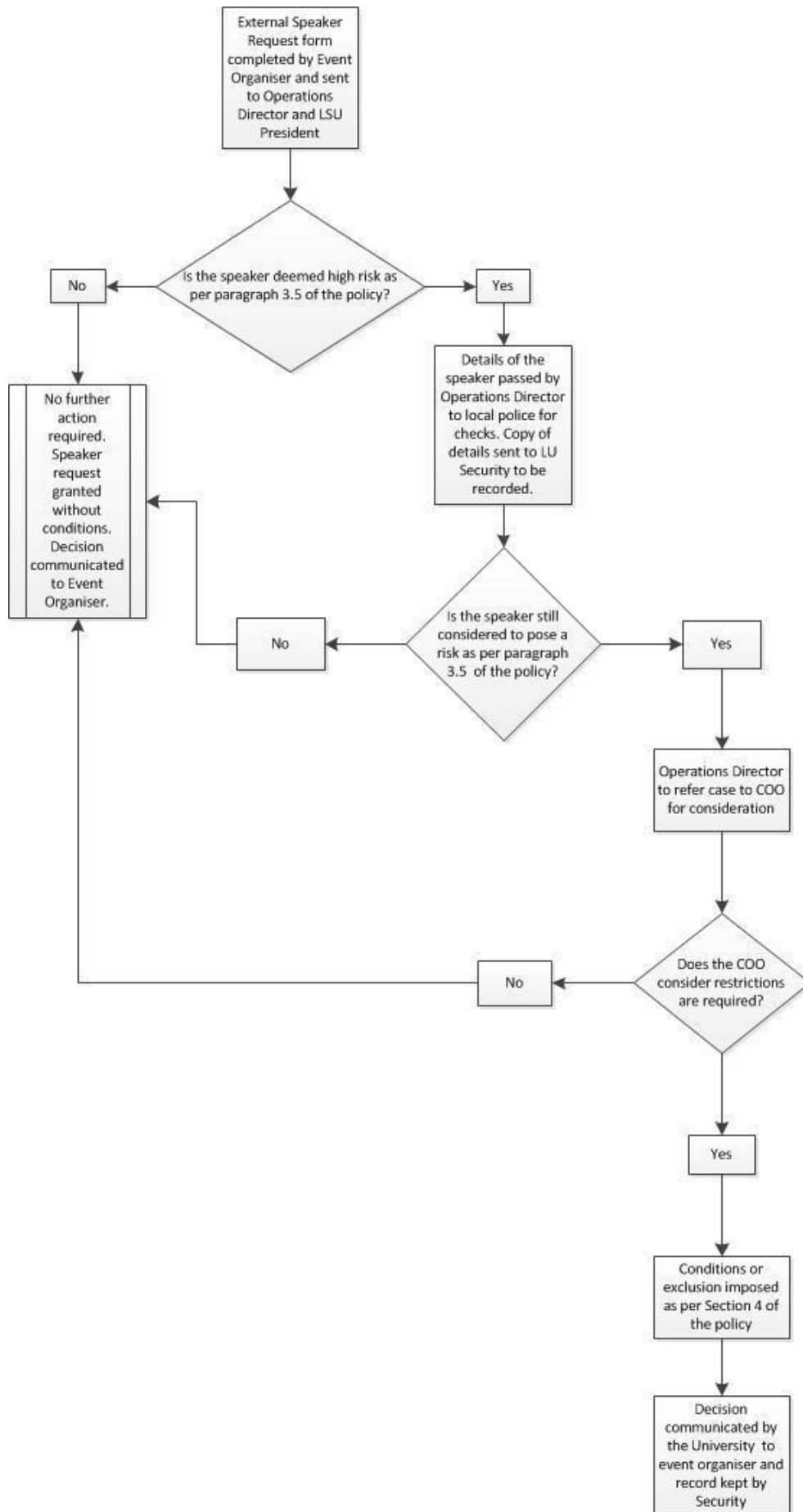


Confirmation of website details (where relevant) providing further information on the speaker	
Is the event and speaker are likely to attract media interest – if so why?	

## Appendix 2: External Speaker Decision Flowchart



# Appendix 3: Loughborough University London External Speaker Decision Flowchart



## **Standards for External Speakers at Loughborough University and Loughborough Students' Union**

Loughborough University is committed to protecting freedom of speech and academic freedom. We also acknowledge our statutory obligation to 'take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students and employees of the establishment and for visiting speakers'.

As such External Speakers will normally be accorded the same freedom of expression as University staff and students. However, freedom of speech is not open-ended or absolute and Loughborough University is also committed to ensuring that proper account is taken of its obligation to ensure relevant legislation is adhered to. Speakers are advised to familiarise themselves with the University Policy on External Speakers available at

[www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/ar/policy/externalspeakers/ExternalSpeakerPolicy\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/ar/policy/externalspeakers/ExternalSpeakerPolicy_FINAL.pdf).

In line with this policy external speakers are required to adhere to the following standards while speaking on Loughborough University premises or at Loughborough University branded events.

- Speakers are expected to co-operate with University, Students Union or Imago staff in providing any information requested in a timely and transparent manner. Failure to do so may result in an event not being permitted.
- The University will not provide a platform for speakers who:
  - Use or threaten violence;
  - Incite others to violence;
  - Incite others to hatred or harassment on the basis of any protected characteristic as specified in the Equality Act 2010;
  - Provide or encourage support for a proscribed organisation as specified in the government's list of Proscribed Terrorist Organisations.
- The University may place conditions on an external speaker on the basis of a risk assessment and in line with its policy. Speakers are expected to adhere to any such conditions.
- Speakers are expected to adhere to instructions given by the chair of an event or any other University or Loughborough Students' Union officer who is present.

Where a speaker does not adhere to the standards set out above they may be asked to leave the premises and may also be prevented from speaking at future events.