

Visiting Speakers and Events Policy

POLICY DETAILS	
Policy Category	Governance
Version Number	2026-27/1.0
Approving Authority	Results Consortium Executive Team
Approval Date	October 2026
Date Reviewed	October 2026
Date of next review	October 2027
Author	Quality Manager
Owner (if different from above)	Principal
Version Changes	1. Policy renamed the Visiting Speakers and Events Policy, using the term in HERA Part A1 and the Code. 2. The policy now covers practical arrangements only. Decisions on referred events, conditions, security costs and complaints follow the Freedom of Speech Code of Practice. 3. Refusal on grounds of reputation, and the requirement for an opposing speaker, removed as incompatible with HERA Part A1 and OfS Regulatory Advice 24. 4. Initial check questions rewritten to focus on unlawful speech and safety, not on a speaker's views. 5. Registration period aligned with the Code (15 working days); late requests not refused solely for lateness. 6. Complaints section updated to follow section 12 of the Code. 7. Visiting Speaker Booking Form added as Appendix 1.
Related Policies / Procedures	Freedom of Speech Code of Practice Prevent Policy Safeguarding Policy Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures Student Complaints Policy Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Effective Date	October 2026

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out how Results Consortium ('the College') manages events involving visiting speakers. It supports the College's Freedom of Speech Code of Practice ('the Code') and helps the College meet its duties under Part A1 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA) and its Prevent duty, while protecting the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors.
- 1.2 The Code takes precedence over this policy. Decisions on referred events, conditions, security costs and complaints are made under the Code.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy covers all events involving visiting speakers held on College premises, online in the College's name or at external venues where the College is the host or co-host.
- 2.2 It includes:
 - Public lectures
 - Guest speaker sessions, including in teaching
 - Seminars and conferences
 - Student-led events
 - Debates and panels
 - Any other co- or extra-curricular activity involving a visiting speaker
- 2.3 Any member of staff or student organising an event that involves a visiting speaker must follow this policy.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 The College secures freedom of speech within the law and protects academic freedom. Events go ahead unless there are clear legal or safety risks, and restricting an event is a last resort. Speakers must not break the law, incite hatred or violence or infringe the rights of others. Any conditions or refusal are decided under section 9 of the Code.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 Visiting Speaker: anyone not employed or enrolled by the College who is invited to speak at a College event.
- 4.2 Event: any gathering, in person or online, where a visiting speaker addresses a group, including in a teaching, learning or research setting (class, conference, seminar) or in extracurricular activity.
- 4.3 Referred Event: an event referred to the Principal under 6.4 because of a possible risk to safety or to the College's legal duties.
- 4.4 Mitigation: measures that allow an event to go ahead safely, such as stewarding or a change of room.
- 4.5 Freedom of speech and academic freedom have the meanings given in the Code.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Principal	Receives event registrations, decides referred events under section 9 of the Code and records decisions.
Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead	Advises the Principal on safeguarding and Prevent risks for referred events.
Event Organiser	Registers the event, carries out the initial check, gives the speaker this policy and the Code, briefs the speaker on site and safety arrangements and arranges any approved fee.
Line Manager	Supports organisers where the initial check is unclear.

Visiting Speaker	Must follow this policy and the conduct requirements in section 8 of the Code.
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6. Procedures for Organising an Event

- 6.1 The organiser must:
- Register the event with the Principal at least 15 working days before the date, using the Visiting Speaker Booking Form in Appendix 1.
 - Carry out the initial check in 6.3 and, if there are any concerns, refer the event as set out in 6.4.
 - Give the speaker a copy of this policy and the Code.
- 6.2 Late requests are considered and are not refused solely because they are late.
- 6.3 Most events need only this initial check. Before confirming a speaker, the organiser must answer the following questions:
- Question 1: Is there a real risk that the speaker will say or do something unlawful, such as inciting violence or hatred, supporting a proscribed organisation or unlawfully harassing others?
 - Question 2: Is there a real risk to the safety of those attending, for example from protest or disorder?
 - Question 3: Does the event need security, stewarding or other arrangements beyond the College's usual arrangements?
- 6.4 The outcome of the check is as follows:
- If the answer to all three questions is no, the organiser confirms the speaker in the normal way.
 - If the answer to any question is unclear, the organiser must ask their line manager or the Principal, who reviews the event against the questions.
 - If the answer to any question is yes, the organiser must refer the event to the Principal with the booking form. The Principal takes advice from the Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead and decides under section 9 of the Code.
- 6.5 The Principal refuses a referred event only as a last resort, where the speech is likely to be unlawful or a risk to safety cannot be managed by mitigation. A speaker is never refused because of their views.
- 6.6 Every registered event is recorded in the Visiting Speaker and Event Log.

7. Managing Visiting Speakers

- 7.1 Visiting speakers must comply with this policy and the conduct requirements in section 8 of the Code. The organiser must make sure the speaker receives both.
- 7.2 The organiser must ensure the speaker follows the College's visitor sign-in and identification procedures and is told about parking and other site arrangements.
- 7.3 Visiting speakers must be made aware of health and safety, fire and emergency evacuation procedures.
- 7.4 Any speaker fee must be approved in advance and paid promptly after the visit.

8. Mitigation Measures

- 8.1 Where the Principal decides that mitigation is needed for a referred event to go ahead, the College uses the least restrictive measure that is effective.
- 8.2 Examples include:
- Changing the time or location of the event
 - Setting requirements for how the event is chaired
 - Making the event ticketed, with ID checked on entry
 - Providing stewarding or security staff

- Any other condition set by the Principal under section 9 of the Code

9. Breach of this Policy

- 9.1 Failure by a member of staff or student to follow this policy is dealt with under the staff or student disciplinary procedures. No one is disciplined for the lawful expression of a view.

10. Complaints

- 10.1 Complaints about an event, or about a decision under this policy, are handled under section 12 of the Code.

11. Review

- 11.1 This policy is reviewed annually alongside the Code. The Results Consortium Executive Team approves updates.

Appendix 1: Visiting Speaker Booking Form

The organiser completes Sections A to D and sends the form to the Principal at least 15 working days before the event. The Principal completes Section E.

SECTION A: EVENT	
Event title	
Date, start and finish time	
Venue or online platform	
Organiser name, role and contact details	
Expected audience and numbers	
Open to the public	Yes ☐ No ☐
SECTION B: VISITING SPEAKER	
Name	
Organisation or affiliation	
Topic	
Fee (if any) and who approved it	
SECTION C: INITIAL CHECK (SEE 6.3)	
Question 1: risk of unlawful speech	Yes ☐ No ☐ Unclear ☐
Question 2: risk to safety	Yes ☐ No ☐ Unclear ☐
Question 3: arrangements beyond the usual	Yes ☐ No ☐ Unclear ☐
SECTION D: ORGANISER DECLARATION	
I have given the speaker this policy and the Code and briefed them on sign-in, health and safety and fire procedures.	
Signature and date	
SECTION E: FOR THE PRINCIPAL	
Date registered	
Referred under 6.4	Yes ☐ No ☐
Decision	Approved ☐ Approved with conditions ☐ Refused ☐
Conditions and reasons	
Written decision sent (date)	
Recorded in the Visiting Speaker and Event Log	Yes ☐ No ☐