GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY

PROTOCOL FOR MANAGING SPEAKERS AND EVENTS

Purpose

The University is committed to the principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech and expression and recognises that minority and/or controversial views are best countered by rational argument. The University must balance the right to freedom of speech with the need to safeguard the wellbeing of its staff and students and its duty to comply with the following key legislation relevant to this.

Under the terms of the Equality Act 2010 the public sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on public bodies to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

The following protocol is intended to provide guidance to staff involved in managing events and arranging external speakers which are held under the auspices of the University so that the University can fulfil its legal duties with regard to freedom of speech whilst maintaining a balance with its other legal responsibilities.

There may be other circumstances where individuals feel that a wider consideration of implications is needed and will find the protocol helpful.

The protocol is drawn from the 'Good Practice Guide for Scottish HE Institutions' and from Universities UK 'External speakers in HE Institutions' Guidelines.

The protocol should be read in conjunction with the University's terms and conditions for booking accommodation.

Protocol

In most circumstances, reviewing external speaker requests will be straightforward and will require no action at all and no reference to the protocols which follow. The vast majority of events, including academic seminars and guest lecturers will be seen as a normal part of the University's day to day activity.

All staff members who are involved in the organisation of events or speaker invitations should use the following guidance only where they think there might be cause for referral given the legal context outlined above. In the case of student led events or invitations on the Students' Association's premises, responsibility will lie with the Students' Association.

The protocol for managing speakers and events would then fall into four stages:

STAGE 1 - Submission of a speaker/event request

Any member of staff who believes there may be issues that might require additional consideration in the context of any potential breach of legal duties should discuss this with their Head of Department. Should there be any reason for concern additional information should be requested by the Head of Department from the event organisers:

- ➤ Details of the event/speaker, including time and venue
- ➤ Overview of the event, subject matter and ticketing arrangements
- ➤ Relevant information relating to the speaker
- ➤ Likely press or media interest
- ➤ Confirmation that the event/speaker will not be promoted or advertised until - or if - agreement is given to host on university premises

As with the initial guidance, it is expected that most cases that are reviewed at Stage One will not lead to a referral, and that the event or speaker can proceed as planned.

STAGE 2 – Review of speaker/event request

Should there be any concerns arising from Stage One, the matter should be raised with the University Secretary who should consider whether the topic or speaker is likely to breach the law or pose significant risk to the wellbeing of staff, students and visitors.

In assessing this, the following points should be considered:

- ➤ Does the proposed speaker have links to any organization with known extreme views which might run counter to the Equality Act 2010 or the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015? In the latter case is it a proscribed terror group or organisation as designated by the UK Government?
- ➤ What is the focus of the event and might the subject matter or title be controversial or cause distress? Will both sides of the argument be represented?
- ➤ Has the speaker any recent history of controversy in relation to extreme views, including terrorism, particularly at a HE institution?
- ➤ Has any information about the external speaker been shared through the Association of University Chief Security Officers?
- ➤ What security provisions are proposed, and are they considered to be sufficient?
- ➤ Will hosting the event pose a reputational risk for the university?

STAGE 3 – Referral to Steering Group

Should any of the above issues arise in the context of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 stages 1 and 2 of the protocol should be invoked. The University Secretary will

consult the Steering Group to obtain a rounded, balanced view to decide what practical steps should then be taken to: allow and securely manage; postpone; or cancel the event.

A range of mitigating actions may be offered. These might include:

➢ Varying the time and location of the event from the original plan
➢ Requiring a different person to chair the event
➢ Making the event all-ticket and requiring attendees to show ID
➢ Requesting an advance copy of any guest list
➢ Placing restrictions on numbers
➢ Enhancing security arrangements
➢ Imposing conditions on how the event is to be advertised
➢ Mandatory attendance of specified university representatives
➢ Restricting or refusing media attendance
➢ Imposing an alcohol ban
➢ Imposing conditions on how the event is run, for example in relation to requests for segregation of the audience
➢ Requesting a running order and script of what is likely to be said in advance and requiring an undertaking that these are adhered to
➢ Briefing the chair in advance to make clear their responsibilities under the law
➢ Restricting what materials are available at the event

STAGE 4 – Communication of a speaker/event decision

Decisions should be clearly communicated by the University Secretary to the organiser of the event, normally within two weeks of the submission of any request.

Should conditions be required, these should be clearly stated at that point along with a requirement for written agreement before the event will be allowed to take place on campus.

Central Timetabling Bookings

In addition to the above protocols Central Timetabling will continue to consider requests to host non-teaching events in the normal manner through the online booking form. As with the protocols above, should there be any cause for concern this should be communicated to the University Secretary.