

# EXTERNAL SPEAKER POLICY 2019 - 2020



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## Our Mission Statement

Aim to deliver an engaging, positive learning experience every time.

## Our Values

Our values encompass the achievement of all of our learners. Our values are HONESTY, INTEGRITY, SUPPORT, ETHICAL BUSINESS AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL. We support PREVENT, SAFEGUARDING, BRITISH VALUES, EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION and this policy is at the heart of and supports these core values in aiming to safeguard staff and learners.

## Our Vision

To be the provider of choice for apprentices and clients, creating bespoke education and training that maximizes opportunity and investment, both for now and in the future.

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## 1 - Introduction and Overview

At our centre, we welcome visitors and external speakers to add to the breadth and depth of learning opportunities for our students.

The purpose of this policy is to set in place a governing framework for visiting speakers to ensure that students and speakers are kept safe and suitable messages are sent out to our students.

Our centre is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where diversity is valued. This policy outlines the procedures relating to events involving the use of external speakers.

## 2 - Rationale and Scope

The policy covers all external speakers who are visiting the centre and are not directly employed by the centre or associated organisations.

This policy maintains the responsibility to comply with the Human Rights Act (1998) and the Education (No.2) Act (1986) allowing staff and learners their freedom of speech and expression, particularly in the context of academic freedom to question and put forward new ideas including controversial or unpopular opinions, Education Reform Act (1988). This must co-exist paying due regard to the Prevent Duty contained within Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Duty states that specified authorities including Further Education Centres, in the exercise of their functions, must have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

## 3 - Roles and responsibilities

Our SMT (senior management team) take overall responsibility for the provision of all policies within the centre. The directors, Mark Webber and Peter Carey, take overall responsibility for this policy, its application and sharing of appropriate information.

## 4 - How this Policy will be Communicated

- Our SMT will review policies and update as required
- Our policy will be made available on our website if applicable
- Our policy documents will form part of the induction for all staff to the centre
- When suitable, policies will be uploaded to OneFile resources for access by all appropriate users
- We may email policy updates to staff as required or use OneFile system announcements
- Staff should also review the employee handbook in relation to staff behaviour.

## 5 - Complaints

Any complaints in relation to this policy or relating to this policy or conflicts of interest should be made to the SMT or the Directors, who can be contacted via our Head Office on 08452235020 or email [info@apprenticeship-centre.co.uk](mailto:info@apprenticeship-centre.co.uk).

## 6 – What is an External Speaker?

The term external speaker is used to describe any individual or organisation who is not employed by our centre, staff member or centre partner who has been invited to speak to learners and/or staff. It also includes the main contact from any external venue hire client who is paying to use centre facilities.

An external speaker could be any of the following;

- Visiting lecturers
- Experts brought in by the centre to add value to learning as part of an apprenticeship or NVQ or to add to the holistic development of students, such as Prevent training
- Any speaker who attends the centre to relate to students or staff on any topic

## 7 – Freedom of Expression and Safeguarding

Freedom of expression and speech are basic human rights that are protected by law. Freedom of speech and freedom of expression are not absolute freedoms but freedoms within the law.

Further training institutions have a history of being open to debate and ideas with learners at the forefront of pushing the limits of freedom of expression. Academic freedom is a term used to describe the law that allows for open and honest debate in an academic context.

Our centre has a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of our staff, learners and communities. The freedom to express views needs to be balanced with the need to secure freedom from harm for learners and communities. We want all of our events, activities and initiatives to be safe, without risk to the reputation of the centre, and within the law.

## 8 – Responsibilities of Speakers & Staff Responsible

All speakers have a responsibility to abide by the law and the centre's policies including that they:

- Must not advocate or incite hatred, violence or call for the breaking of the law
- Are not permitted to encourage, glorify or promote any acts of terrorism including individuals, groups or organisations that support such acts
- Must not spread hatred and intolerance in the community and thus aid in disrupting social and community harmony
- Must be mindful of the risk of causing offence to or seek to avoid insulting other faiths or groups, within a framework of positive debate and challenge
- Are not permitted to raise or gather funds for any external organisation or cause without express permission of the centre

Sometimes an external speaker or their topic of discussion has the potential to be controversial or cause offence. The centre is committed to working together with event organisers and in some cases, external speakers themselves, to make sure that we reach a judgement that is reasonable, informed and within the law.

It is the responsibility of the individual staff member who is coordinating the external speaker to ensure that they are aware of these responsibilities.

**A copy of this policy should be provided to all external speakers in advance of them speaking with learners.**

Staff member(s) must accompany the external speaker at all times whilst on site and ensure they sign in and out at reception in accordance with the requirements of all visitors. Staff member(s) must also stop any speaker should their content or delivery cause distress or offence to any learners.

Should an individual staff member wish to bring in an external speaker who may be considered controversial by some sections of the society, or by members of the learner body then approval must be sought from SMT at least two weeks prior to the proposed speaker visiting the Centre.

## 9 – Prevent

In order to ensure that the centre's responsibilities under the Prevent Duty are carried out in a manner which is compatible with its principles its policy is to:

- To provide an environment where freedom of expression and speech are protected balanced with the need to ensure that the community is free from harm and that incitement to hatred is never acceptable.
- To provide a supportive, inclusive and safe space for learners
- To provide clearly defined and effective procedures to ensure that the law is upheld.
- To collaborate with others to reach sound, evidenced judgments about proposed external speakers ensuring that the Centre can meet their legal obligations
- To encourage and provide a balance of opinion at any academic discussion or debate
- To communicate to all members, volunteers, staff and visitors, that it is our mutual responsibility to comply with equality and safeguarding and that both the centre and the individual can be held liable if they contravene the law.
- To provide clear instructions for organising an event with external contribution

## 10 – Use of Centre Premises

When, on vary rare occasions, external agents enquire about hiring the use of centre premises, all such requests are vetted by the SMT.

The SMT will consider the appropriateness of the request and the external agent. If considered necessary, further checks will be made into the agent and their request. Where there are concerns about the appropriateness of the request use of premises will be denied.

## 11 – Monitoring and Review

All policies are reviewed by the SMT and updated annually.