Hertford College external speakers and events policy

The college is legally required as an educational institution to comply with the PREVENT Duty, under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015). In fulfillment of this duty, the Prevent Lead’s permission is required for any events to which external speakers are invited by students. This includes external speakers and events on site as well as institution-branded, funded or affiliated events taking place off site. Our policy reflects our institutional duty to ensure freedom of speech (within the law) in College (including in any institution-branded, funded or affiliated events taking place off-site) as well as our arrangements to protect the importance of academic freedom. Thus, this policy ensures strict implementation of Hertford College’s policy to secure the primacy of the right to free expression within the College, and for external speakers, consistent with the Education (No 2) Act 1986. The College’s PREVENT policy document and our Freedom of Speech policy set at

In particular:

- Only criminal speech is proscribed
- Speakers and audience alike should be reminded of their responsibilities to observe the relevant College’s policies on harassment and to conduct civil academic discussions at all times.
- Where the context and apparent subject of an event leads us to judge that some due diligence is required, it would be proportionate and appropriate to carry out some open-source research. In such cases where risks associated with an external event were identified, College would call on the University Security Services and the Proctors for advice on how to assess and mitigate high risk events in order to ensure a safe and well-managed event.
- If an event seems likely to cause security concerns, the Head of House reserves the right to take steps to address such concerns, such as relocating that event to premises where the safety of all participants can be properly provided for.

Junior Members of College may book certain rooms for meetings and events. Please read ‘Booking of Public Rooms by Junior Members’ in Information for Members, or in the room booking section of the website, which gives details of the rooms available, the rules attached to their use and on-line booking forms. Please note that any bookings which will involve external speakers or the attendance of members of the public (i.e. non-members of the University) must be discussed with, and authorised by, the Prevent Lead, normally at least one month in advance, in writing.

Fellows and lecturers may book rooms directly online (password and username available from IT) or via the lodge. Members of academic staff are responsible for risk-assessing their own events and may consult with Dr Katherine Lunn-Rockliffe if they are in any doubt about how to go about this. Any other member of staff, including Development Office staff and those organising conferences and summer schools, who wishes to book a room for an external speaker or event will first discuss this with the Bursar who will complete any appropriate risk assessment.

Those risk assessing events in order to comply with the PREVENT duty should be aware of their responsibilities to consider the College’s duties under the PREVENT duty strictly within the context of pre-existing rights, including under the Human Rights Act, the Education (No 2) Act and the Equality Act.

AW 10/6/2016, revised 3/4/17 and 29/10/18