

## Preparation for and Conduct of Meetings

1. The Organisers (the Organisers") of any event shall ensure that a single person from among their number is appointed as Principal Organiser. For student societies affiliated to the Guild of Students, this will be the Guild President or their nominee.
2. It is the responsibility of the Principal Organiser to ensure that the chair of an event is fully aware of the requirements of this Code of Practice.
3. Early on in the organisation of an event, the Principal Organiser will be expected to discuss any potentially controversial invitations to Outside Speakers with the Head of Budget Centre (for example the Head of School) or equivalent, or, where the invitation is to be issued by the Guild or its related bodies, with the President or Chief Executive of the Guild of Students and with any other relevant members of University staff as may be appropriate.
4. Organisers of events have a duty to ensure that the law is not infringed in the preparations for or conduct of an event, for example the commission or incitement of racist or religious crime, or in relation to the duty to have regard to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.
5. Application for permission to invite an Outside Speaker: the Principal Organiser of an event shall ensure that, at least fifteen working days before the date proposed for the event, a pro forma Speaker Request Form ("the Form") (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/has/Freedom-of-Speech/Inviting-an-outside-speaker-onto-University-premises.aspx>) is completed and submitted to the Authorising Officer. The Form will require details of the name of the speaker, the proposed venue, and the time of arrival and departure of the speaker together with the proposed topic or title and a brief synopsis of the address. The Form will also require a counter signatory from the Principal Organiser's Head of Budget Centre (e.g. Head of School) in the instances where the Principal Organiser and the Head of Budget Centre is not the same person.
6. On receipt of the Form, the Authorising Officer (or nominee) will review the proposal. The Authorising Officer may require further information from the Principal Organiser which must be provided promptly. The University reserves the right to request a list of intended attendees for the Meeting, and a copy of any publicity material for distribution prior to the event. All publicity material must comply with the Policy on Advertising and Displays on University Property (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/estates/index.aspx>).
7. The Authorising Officer will consider the application, taking into account the University's statutory and other legal obligations, and in particular will consider whether the event poses any risks to staff, students, visitors or the University.
8. Where risks are identified, the Authorising Officer will assess those risks and consider whether the Principal Organiser has proposed measures which would adequately address those risks.
9. The Authorising Officer may consult others as they consider appropriate, including with the Police or any other third parties or organisations as is appropriate in the circumstances. If the Authorising Officer considers that the risks associated with the application are high or the views being expressed or likely to be expressed might constitute extremist views that risk drawing people into terrorism or are shared by terrorist groups, they should consult with other University officers as appropriate to determine whether the University is convinced that such risk can be mitigated and the event appropriately managed without the cancellation of the event.
10. If the Authorising Officer is satisfied that:
  - there are no risks associated with the event; or
  - risks associated with the Outside Speaker can be adequately or fully mitigated (as appropriate)

the Authorising Officer shall, normally within 5 working days of receipt of the completed Form, provide the Principal Organiser with a written statement granting permission for the event.

11. Permission to invite the Outside Speaker may be granted subject to such conditions as the Authorising Officer considers reasonably necessary to secure fulfilment of the University's statutory responsibilities, and to ensure as far as possible that the identified Outside Speaker or speakers may enter and leave University premises and have the confidence of a safe environment. These may include conditions:

- concerning the admission or exclusion of external media and communications personnel;
- that tickets be issued for events which are open to the public;
- that an adequate number of stewards is made available. The suitability of the nominated stewards must be to the satisfaction of the Authorising Officer, who may decide that University security staff should be additionally present at the event; or
- concerning the relocation of the meeting to a specified venue;
- that the event be declared a public meeting;
- that provisions be made for checking the identity of persons attending the event;
- that University security staff be responsible for all security arrangements connected with the event;
- that a member of security staff be appointed as "Controlling Officer" for the event, to whose authority and jurisdiction the chairperson or leader of the event shall defer;
- relating to the use of public address systems during an event including constraints to be placed on their use;
- relating to the number of speakers, so as to ensure a balanced debate.

This is not an exhaustive list, and the Authorising Officer may impose such conditions as are considered reasonable and appropriate.

12. Where any event includes speakers with extremist views that, in the opinion of the Authorising Officer, raise issues in relation to the University's legal responsibilities, a specific condition can be imposed that those speakers are challenged with opposing views as part of that same event, rather than in a separate forum.
13. The Authorising Officer may consider and review any associated application relating to the event, for example, an application to hold it outdoors on University property or as part of the University online room booking system, and the Authorising Officer may decide that the associated application should be refused, withdrawn or be subject to such conditions as are considered reasonable and appropriate.
14. If the Authorising Officer is not satisfied that adequate arrangements can be or are being made to manage any risks associated with the Outside Speaker, or the event, permission will be refused or withdrawn.
15. All Organisers concerned with the organisation of an event for which written permission has been given shall be required to comply with any and every condition laid down by the Authorising Officer under the provisions of this Code. In addition, all Organisers must ensure that any the terms and conditions applicable as part of the room booking are complied with.

#### **Appeals**

16. Appeals against the decisions of the Authorising Officer should be made within seven working days and in writing to the Vice-Chancellor or authorised nominee, whose decision shall be final.

#### **Conduct of the Meeting**

17. The Chair and Principal Organiser of an event have a duty to ensure as far as possible that both the audience and the speaker act in accordance with the law during the course of the event.
18. In case of unlawful or unreasonably disruptive conduct by members of the audience, the Chair or Principal Organiser is required to give appropriate warnings and, in case of continuing unlawfulness or disruption, to require the withdrawal or removal of persons concerned by stewards or security staff. Such persons, if students, employees or other Members of the University, may be liable to disciplinary proceedings under University regulations.

19. If the speaker infringes the law (such as, for example, sexually harasses an attendee, or uses racial abuse, or does not have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism, or threatens physical violence) the Chair or Principal Organiser shall be at liberty to curtail or end the event.
20. The Chair or Principal Organiser is also responsible for calling for Police assistance to prevent serious disorder.

**External Bodies or Organisations**

21. Any licences or permissions granted to bodies outside the University to hold events on University premises shall be subject to the same full disclosure of information as set out above. A guarantee may be required by the Authorising Officer from the Licensee that satisfactory arrangements will be put in place by the Licensee in relation to matters such as security and indemnity for recovery of costs and/or damages, and such other matters as may be required by the Authorising Officer.

**Advice**

22. If in doubt about whether this Code applies to an event or speaker, University staff, students and other Members of the University, advice should be sought from the Authorising Officer (Paddy Jackman on [p.jackman.1@bham.ac.uk](mailto:p.jackman.1@bham.ac.uk) or 0121 414 6228), their nominee (Malene Stanley on [m.stanley.2@bham.ac.uk](mailto:m.stanley.2@bham.ac.uk) or 0121 414 8389) and the Director of Legal Services (Carolyn Pike on [c.m.pike@bham.ac.uk](mailto:c.m.pike@bham.ac.uk) or 0121 414 3916).