# Approval procedure for external speakers

**Rationale**

Leeds Trinity University is committed to freedom of expression within the law. This is fully articulated in the University’s Code of Practice of Freedom of Speech and Expression as required by the Education Act 1986. Section 4 of that Code sets out the general internal requirements regarding external speakers, aimed at protecting the practice of inviting external speakers.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the statutory Prevent duty have placed requirements on universities to ensure that people are not drawn into extremism and have particular regard to the risks posed by external speakers. When such a risk exists, universities are required to carry out due diligence on the speaker and, among other things, ensure that views can and will be contested freely. Relevant procedures have to be submitted to HEFCE.

Leeds Trinity is mindful of these obligations but also of the potential inhibition of invitation to external speakers. Common sense is required. Accordingly, this approval procedure is intended to facilitate as much delegated oversight as possible whilst ensuring prompt upward referral in cases of doubt.

**Procedure**

Speaker approval will be authorised on the basis of subsidiarity and context. All requests for speaker approval should be submitted no later than 30 days before the proposed date of event.

## Simple approval

Heads of School may approve:

Guest lecturers speaking as part of the curriculum (eg as a session in a module) and speakers on uncontroversial topics at subject-discipline conferences, seminars and colloquia.

The Chief Operating Officer may approve:

Speakers at events outside the curriculum or discipline.

The President of the Students’ Union may approve:

Union-sponsored, including society, speakers, where not falling into the due diligence category.

In these cases, the organiser should complete Part A of the approval request form and submit it to their Head of School or COO (or PSU) as appropriate.

The organiser (including any student organiser) should pay due regard to the Internal Events Booking Policy with regard to rooms, facilities and catering, etc. That policy requires eight weeks’ notice for facilities.

## Due diligence approval

If there is any question of any speaker event falling into the category in which the Prevent duty requires due diligence, then the organiser should complete Part B of the approval form as much as possible and submit it to the Chief Operating Officer.

The COO and Head of School (or President of the Students’ Union) will seek to discuss due diligence requirements, including:

* Internet searches about previous events and expressed opinions
* Contact with institutions who have previously permitted the speaker to speak, with particular regard to conditions set and conduct of the event (eg attendance of formal groups, societies, etc)
* Contact with local institutions to gather any feedback including possible denials
* Contact with local Channel and police with regard to potential safeguarding risk of radicalisation

The discussion will also consider conditions to be set for the event, including requirements that alternative contesting views are structured into the event.

# Speaker Approval Part A – Simple Approval

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Proposed Date of Function**    |  |
| **Leeds Trinity Organiser (Club/Soc & LTSU Staff)**   |  |
| **Start time**    |  |
| **Finish time**    |  |
| **Room**    |  |
| **Speaker(s) Full Name**    |  |
| **Topic**   |  |

Authorised by: ……………………………………………....... Date: …………………………… Print Name: …………………………………………………...

# Part B – Due Diligence Approval

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Proposed Date of Function**    |  |
| **Leeds Trinity Organiser**    |  |
| **Start time**    |  |
| **Finish time**    |  |
| **Room**    |  |
| **Speaker(s) Full Name**    |  |
| **Full details of the**  **meeting/talk/speech and question/discussion session**   |  |
| **Speaker(s) religious / political / other affiliation?**   |  |
| **Details of any past controversy**  |  |
| **Details of previous speaking engagements**  |  |
| **Website link and/or information on the speaker(s)**   |  |
| **Details of any co-host, partner agency or sponsor**  |  |
| **Details of promotion / audience invited**  |  |
| **Assessment of conditions regarding alternative / contesting expression.**   |  |
| **Assessment of media interest**   |  |
| **Assessment of security presence needed**   |  |

Authorised by: …............................................................ Date: ….......................................

Print Name: .........................................................