



## **Policy and procedure for the booking of on-campus speakers**

### **1. The scope of this policy: in what circumstances does it apply?**

#### **1.1 This policy applies to all speaker meetings that:**

- are being organised for delivery on, **or off**, our campuses by staff, or students, to which staff, students, or members of the general public will be invited, and;
- form part of an event being hosted by a third party on our campuses, to which staff, students, or members of the general public will be invited.

#### **1.2 The policy does not apply to lectures, seminars and other activities that involve academic (teaching related) talks and lectures that are integrated into and form part of the curriculum being delivered under our academic framework regulations. This includes lectures and seminars conducted by guest lecturers to a discrete cohort of students as part of the scheduled learning experience for their programme.**

### **2. Important guidance for booking speakers on campus**

**2.1 Our University and the University of East London Students' Union (UELSU) is committed to academic Freedom and for all members of our University community to have the opportunity to engage with a wide range of thought-provoking opinions and perspectives. Our commitment to discussion and critical thinking is a fundamental principle of our institution. We regularly invite a wide range of speakers to our campuses and each year we run successful programmes of talks across our campuses.**

**2.2 This policy and procedure has been drawn up to assist staff, students and the UELSU when organising talks, seminars and lectures on campus, and to provide a checklist for successful planning. They also include important information to ensure that these events comply with our University's policy on freedom of speech, a copy of which can be found here: [policy on freedom of speech](#).**

### 3. Events planning checklist for lectures and talks

3.1 Individual members of staff and students across our University, as well as the UELSU, will from time-to-time be responsible for organising events involving visiting speakers. When planning for such events organisers will need to consider the following:

• Booking of speakers (please see the note on our University's policy on freedom of speech below)
• Subject of the talk/focus of the event
• Room bookings
• Date and time
• Equipment requirements
• Costs
• Audience
• Invitations
• Advertising (whether externally, internally, or via the use of social media)
• Special guests
• Risk assessment
• Security
• Publicity

3.2 It must be borne in mind that this policy extends to events taking place in venues other than University premises if the event is being organised by staff, or students, to which staff, students, or members of the general public will be invited.

### 4 Events guidance for event organisers

4.1 The Conferencing and Events Team can provide detailed advice a guidance to organisers to assist them in the planning and running of an event. Organisers can contact the Conferencing and Events Team via this e-mail address: [events@uel.ac.uk](mailto:events@uel.ac.uk) (or the UELSU via this e-mail address: [alex.roberts@uel.ac.uk](mailto:alex.roberts@uel.ac.uk)).

4.2 Our Conferencing and Events can assist organisers with advice on how to create their own documents, invitations and schedules. These include advice on invitations, reply cards, budget templates, event schedules and summary templates, event guest list templates, joining instructions and risk assessments: [events@uel.ac.uk](mailto:events@uel.ac.uk).

### 5 Events guidance for students

5.1 The UELSU's advice and guidance for students wishing to organise events is available here: <http://www.uelunion.org/societies/running/forms/>.

## 6 Our policy and procedure to secure freedom of speech within the law

- 6.1 When booking talks, organisers are required to assess whether the event that they are organising might require special consideration under our University's policy on freedom of speech: policy on freedom of speech.
- 6.2 Our University believes in free and open discussion. For this to be achieved, it requires all concerned to display tolerance and to avoid needlessly offensive, or provocative action and language.
- 6.3 Our aim is to make the process of compliance as straight forward as possible, to ensure that events can take place as planned. It is very rare that events cannot proceed. However, if insufficient notice is given of events that fall into the category of 'designated activities' under our policy on freedom of speech, there will be a strong likelihood that the event may have to be postponed, notwithstanding that this may entail additional costs to the organising School, or Service concerned.

## 7 Key questions to consider when organising speaker events

- 7.1 In planning any speaker event, organisers should consider the following key questions:
- is there any possibility of a situation arising in which people might experience harassment, intimidation, verbal abuse, or violence?
  - is the speaker likely to express controversial views/likely to express views that may attract protest?
  - is the speaker known to hold controversial views/known to hold views that may attract protest?
  - is the speaker from an area where the geo-political situation may attract protest/
  - is the subject matter relating to an area where the geo-political situation may attract protest?
  - is the subject matter, topic, or title controversial, or likely to evoke a strong emotive response if advertised to the general public?
- 7.2 If the answer is 'yes' to any of the above questions, the organiser of the event should follow the guidelines in our policy on freedom of speech and apply for the event to be classified as a 'designated activity.' Responsibility for overseeing 'designated activities' rests with the 'responsible officer\*,' or their nominee. The organiser should also consider what arrangements might need to be put in place to ensure the safety of participants and others in the general area, and to ensure that there is no threat to public order.

8 Procedure for adhering to the policy on freedom of speech and to this policy and procedure

- check that you have read and understand the provisions of our policy on freedom of speech: [policy on freedom of speech](#);
- consider whether your event should be classed as a 'designated activity' under our policy on freedom of speech. If you are in any doubt, you should submit the form for assessment. You may be asked to provide information as to how your assessment was reached. Having your event classified as a 'designated activity' will not necessarily mean that it will become more complicated;
- Designate a 'principal organiser,' will be the person responsible for ensuring that the organisers comply with the policy on freedom of speech. Unless otherwise advised, it will be assumed that the principal organiser of an event will be the individual making the room booking;
- make a request to the 'responsible officer' for consideration of a 'designated activity' by completing this form; [booking form](#).
- submit a signed copy of the completed form to the Conferencing and Events Team, University of East London, 4-6 University Way, London, E16 2RD, or, in the case of student events, to Alex Roberts, University of East London Students' Union, 4-6 University Way, London, E16 2RD. Signed copies of the form in 'pdf' format may also be e-mailed to [events@uel.ac.uk](mailto:events@uel.ac.uk), or [alex.roberts@uel.ac.uk](mailto:alex.roberts@uel.ac.uk). Forms must be submitted as far as possible in advance of the event, but in no circumstances any later than 15 working days prior to the date that the event is scheduled to take place;
- the principal organiser should provide the information listed in the policy on freedom of speech about the speaker and the nature of the activity, the venue and the preparations for the event. Completion of the request form will address these questions, and;
- the responsible officer may ask for further arrangements to be made by the organising team to ensure compliance with our policy on freedom of speech and the law. As an example, these could include one or more of the following arrangements:
  - a) briefing our University's Security staff;
  - b) ensuring that additional security staff are on duty;
  - c) booking an alternative, more appropriate room;
  - d) changing the date, time and length of the activity;
  - e) appointing a chair and/or requiring that a debate takes place with speakers holding opposing views;
  - f) the event being ticketed, or invitation only;
  - g) ensuring that an adequate number of stewards are available, in addition to any of our University's Security staff that might be required to maintain safety and order, and;

- h) briefing our University's Corporate Communications Team, so that they are aware in advance of any possible press interest.

## 9 Timescales

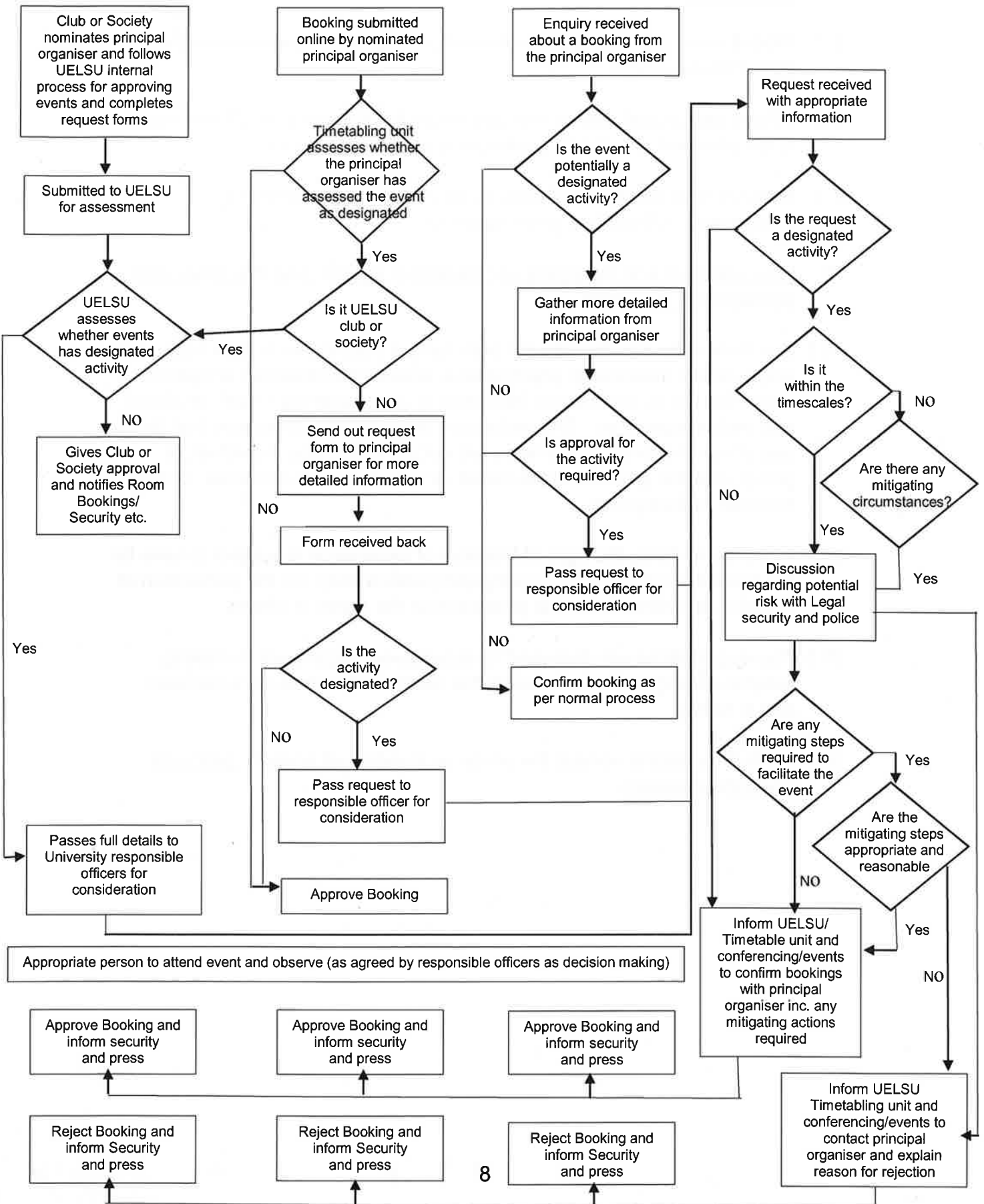
- 9.1 Please ensure that you brief relevant colleague as soon as possible about future events.
- 9.2 Where designated events are concerned the Responsible Officer needs to be informed at least 15 working days before the event.
- 9.3 Security staff should be alerted as soon as possible after the Responsible Officer has given approval.

## 10 Why adherence to the policy on freedom of speech and this policy and procedure is important

- 10.1 Our University and the UELSU both have a duty in law to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members of our University's staff, students and visiting speakers. This includes a responsibility to ensure that the use of our University's premises are not denied to any individual, or group, on the grounds of the belief, or views, of that individual, or any member of that group.
- 10.2 At the same time, the right of freedom of expression is subject to laws for the protection of national security and public safety, for the prevention of disorder, or crime, or for the protection of the rights of others.
- 10.3 These guidelines are designed to assist event organisers in making suitable arrangements to ensure that events take place as scheduled and in safety.
- 10.4 For further details consult the policy on freedom of speech: policy on freedom of speech.

**Process for the approval of speaker meetings**

UELSU	Timetabling Unit	Conferencing and Events	Responsible Officer (Final approval)
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**Request for consideration of an activity under the University of East London  
policy on freedom of speech**

The University of East London and all members of its community are expected by law to ensure that freedom of speech is secured for anyone who works on, or visits our campuses. To support this requirement, our University has an established policy on freedom of speech [enter link] with which all members, students and employees of our University, visiting speakers, hirers of University premises and organisers of meetings held on University premises must comply. The policy seeks to secure freedom of speech for all while also respecting individuals' rights within equality and human rights.

**If in your view as the event's Principal Organiser, this event is a designated activity\*** as defined our policy on freedom of speech within the law, **please complete all sections** of this form with as much detail as possible and return it to [enter name and address] as soon as possible but by no later than 15 working days prior to your event. We reserve the right to reject your request if it is received less than 15 working days prior to the event due to there being insufficient time available to assess it.

Please note that the event may not be advertised without prior approval. You will be advised of the decision as soon as reasonably possible.

<b>Name of group organising the event:</b> (for example. student society/School, or Service Group/Organisation)	Group:
<b>Principal Organiser for the event:</b>	Name:  Contact phone number:  Contact email address:  Position in group:
<b>Nature of the event:</b> (for example. debate, lecture, seminar, workshop, social etc.)	Nature:
<b>Proposed time and venue of event:</b>	Date & Time:  Venue:  External speaker/organisation scheduled time:
<b>External Speaker's name and the organisation they represent in this context:</b>	Name:  Organisation:
<b>Please provide relevant information:</b>  (E.g. Previous security required at other locations, previous press interest, any ticketing requirements for the event, sensitive nature of subject e.g. animal rights, faith and/or segregation, politics etc.)	

The Principal Organiser hereby confirms that he/she will ensure observance of the University's Fire, Health and Safety and any other relevant rules and regulations in relation to the conduct of the event.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*A designated activity is an activity where Freedom of Speech within the law may be compromised unless remedial action is taken and may include but is not limited to visits by public figures especially where their views have aroused controversy in the past or where the subject matter of the

activity is likely to be regarded as controversial or objectionable by at least some of the participants and/or University community. In cases of doubt you should complete this form.

<b>For Responsible Officer's use only:</b>	
<b>Request approved</b>	Yes – Not Designated Activity, no further requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Yes – Designated Activity, no further requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Yes – Designated Activity, actions required below <input type="checkbox"/> No – Designated Activity, reasons given below <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Approved activity - action required:</b>	Method of Access/Egress of participants and visiting speakers: Stewarding arrangements: Admission arrangements: Security and Policing staff in attendance & informed: Comms informed and briefed: Additional Costs identified and approved: Communicated to Principal Organiser & room bookings/conferencing/UELSU: Any other agreed measures to be implemented? Date:
<b>Activity not approved:</b>	Reason for rejection: Communicated to Principal Organiser/Comms & Security Date:
<b>*Responsible person signature:</b>	Signature: Name: Position:
<b>Date request closed and passed to Governance and Legal Services for recording purposes:</b>	Date:

\*'Responsible person': the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer (or designated nominee).