

## External Speakers & Events Policy

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External reference:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 Accessed online at: <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/16/enacted">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/16/enacted</a></li> <li>2. Information Commissioner's Office, Accessed online at: <a href="https://ico.org.uk/">https://ico.org.uk/</a></li> <li>3. UK Public General Acts, Data Protection Act 2018, Accessed online at: <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted</a></li> <li>4. UK Public General Acts, Terrorism Act 2000, Accessed online at: <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents</a></li> <li>5. UK Public General Acts, Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Accessed online at: <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/section/26">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/section/26</a></li> <li>6. GOV.UK Statutory Guidance, prevent duty guidance, Accessed online at: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance</a></li> <li>7. UK Public General Acts, The Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000, Accessed online at: <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2000/2699/contents/made">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2000/2699/contents/made</a></li> <li>8. GOV.UK, Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations, Accessed online at: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-ororganisations--2/proscribed-terrorist-groups-or-organisations-accessible-version">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-ororganisations--2/proscribed-terrorist-groups-or-organisations-accessible-version</a></li> </ol>
Audience:	All College Staff and Students

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# 1. Introduction

1.1 Oxford Business College (OBC) regularly hosts a variety of events, many featuring external speakers. It is OBC's duty to ensure the safety of all event attendees. OBC firmly believes that external speakers can offer valuable perspectives and knowledge, enhancing the experiences of staff and students. OBC supports stimulating discussions and debates by external speakers, provided they comply with existing laws and respect the rights and safety of the OBC community.

1.2 External speakers at OBC enable staff and students to engage with and challenge diverse ideas, beliefs, and opinions, a practice highly valued by the college. OBC commits to protecting lawful freedom of speech for its community and guest speakers. OBC expects its community to respect legal expressions of opinion and provides opportunities to responsibly counter views that may be considered objectionable. While freedom of speech is legally protected, this does not permit actions that contravene existing laws or jeopardise public safety.

1.3 Safety and welfare are crucial to OBC's policies and practices, and the freedom to express opinions may be balanced against the need to maintain a harm-free environment for staff, students, and visitors. OBC recognises the legal balance between freedom of speech and restrictions upon it. The college is responsible for maintaining this balance, ensuring freedom of speech and academic liberties while minimising risks of extremism or illegal activities on its campuses.

## 2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures for external speakers and events at Oxford Business College (OBC), ensuring alignment with OBC's Safeguarding (Prevent Duty) Policy and the UK Government's Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This policy should be read alongside OBC's Safeguarding Policy and the Academic Freedom Code of Practice, which can be accessed through the OBC website. This integrated approach ensures that all external speaker engagements and events at OBC are conducted in a safe, legally compliant, and responsible manner.

## 3. Legislation

3.1 This policy is informed by the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the UK Home Office's Prevent Duty Guidance (September 2015). It requires higher education institutions like OBC to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, while balancing this duty with commitments to freedom of speech and academic freedom.

3.2 Freedom of expression and academic freedom are legally protected rights. OBC adheres to various legal obligations, and external speakers must be aware that:

- OBC does not tolerate breaches of Criminal Law, including terrorism incitement, hate crimes, harassment, or breaches of peace. Events must comply with legislation regarding assemblies and public meetings.
- OBC upholds legal rights to Freedom of Speech and Equality but will not permit these freedoms to infringe on individual private rights, including protection from harassment and privacy rights under Data Protection laws.
- As an education provider and employer, OBC is bound by the Equality Act 2010, prohibiting unlawful discrimination. Gender or other forms of segregation at events are not permitted.

3.4 Exceptions to non-segregation might be made for events intended for collective religious worship, subject to prior approval through the referral process. This list is not exhaustive, and other rights and legislation may apply.

3.5 Ideas and opinions presented by external speakers at OBC should be open to academic debate. Attendees should have opportunities to express counter views, challenging speakers in a respectful manner. All events must comply with OBC's health and safety policies.

## 4. Scope

4.1 The Oxford Business College External Speakers and Events Policy, along with its associated procedures, applies to all OBC campuses. This policy is relevant regardless of who organises the events or speakers, the purpose of these events, and their anticipated outcomes.

In conjunction with the OBC Safeguarding (Prevent Duty) Policy, this policy applies to:

- All full-time, part-time, and temporary staff employed by or working on behalf of OBC.
- All students studying at OBC.
- Contractors and consultants engaged by OBC.
- Any other individuals or groups, including visitors, who use OBC facilities, such as prayer rooms.
- Third party hire of our campuses for events.
- All speakers and events organised beyond the normal curriculum-related activities.

4.2 OBC define an 'event' as any planned gathering, meeting, lecture, seminar, workshop, or similar activity, involving external speakers, that is hosted on OBC premises or under the OBC banner. This includes events organised by any OBC department, student group, or external entity in partnership with OBC. It encompasses both curricular and extracurricular activities, regardless of the size of the audience or the formality of the occasion. The policy applies to events held physically on-campus, off-campus, or virtually.

## 5. Aims and Objectives

5.1 The Aims and Objectives for the Oxford Business College External Speakers and Events Policy:

- **Promote Inclusive Dialogue:** Facilitate a platform for diverse perspectives, enhancing the educational experience through inclusive and varied dialogues.
- **Ensure Safety and Compliance:** Uphold a secure environment for all event participants, ensuring compliance with legal and institutional policies, particularly regarding safeguarding and anti-terrorism measures.
- **Balance Freedom of Speech:** Maintain a balance between the right to freedom of speech and the need to prevent harmful or extremist discourse, in alignment with academic freedoms and legal obligations.
- **Foster Academic Integrity:** Encourage robust academic debates, supporting the college's commitment to academic integrity and intellectual exploration.
- **Engage Community Responsibly:** Involve OBC's community in events that are ethically and socially responsible, contributing positively to student and staff development.

## 6. Responsibilities

8.1 It is the responsibility of all staff at Oxford Business College to be familiar with the OBC External Speaker and Events Policy and related documents. Staff will receive training and

regular updates to ensure awareness and understanding of these procedures. It is important that all staff members are acquainted with the protocols and procedures for approving external speakers, to maintain compliance with OBC's policy and safeguarding standards.

- 8.2 Any breach of the OBC External Speakers and Events Policy will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the OBC Disciplinary & Staff Grievance Policy and the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy, as applicable. Failure to comply with this policy may lead to actions ranging from formal warnings to more severe penalties, depending on the nature and severity of the non-compliance. The appropriate policy will be applied based on the status of the individual (staff or student) involved in the breach.

## 7. Approval Procedure for External Speaker/Event Request

7.1 Initial Assessment: Most requests are assessed and approved by the OBC Campus Prevent and Safeguarding Officer. An External Speaker / Event Approval Form, (Appendix A) must be completed and submitted to the relevant OBC Campus Prevent and Safeguarding Officer.

7.2 Criteria for Speaker Assessment: Before approval, the organiser must assess the speaker(s) against specific criteria related to previous disallowances, risk potential in event themes, and audience considerations.

7.3 Approval Process:

If criteria responses are 'No', the organiser, with the Campus Prevent and Safeguarding Officer, can approve the speaker, ensuring adherence:

- OBC policies and UK law.
- The speaker must not incite illegal activities or spread intolerance.

7.4 If responses are unclear, the organiser should consult the Head of Operations, the designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead at OBC, for further review. If any criteria response is 'Yes', a referral form must be submitted to the Prevent Lead, following the procedure outlined below (Section 9).

## 8. Suitability of Speakers

8.1 To ensure the appropriateness of speakers, OBC will apply the following non-exhaustive guidelines:

- Individuals or groups listed on the UK Government's proscribed terror organisations list.
- Talks by groups widely recognised as extremist<sup>1</sup>.
- Speakers previously causing fear or intimidation in academic settings.
- Individuals acknowledged in mainstream media as highly controversial.
- Connections to any entity involved in significant controversies.
- Speakers with a high profile that might lead to crowd management and health and safety concerns.
- Political party representatives during electoral purdah periods.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2/proscribedterrorist-groups-or-organisations-accessible-version>

## 9. Referral Process

9.1 If a referral is required, the event organiser will complete all sections of the External Speaker Policy Referral Form (Appendix B). The then must submit the completed form to the OBC Head of Operations, who acts as the OBC Prevent Lead.

9.2 OBC reserves the right to deny an external speaker from speaking at or attending an event, refuse permission for an event, or halt an event at any time if it is reasonably believed that there may be a breach of the OBC External Speaker and Events Policy.

9.3 In case of a referral, one of the following decisions will be made with the approval of the OBC Head of Operations, in consultation with the Executive Principal:

- Allow the event and speaker(s) to proceed as planned.
- Prohibit the event with the external speaker(s).
- Allow the event but disallow the attendance of specific external speaker(s).
- Permit the event with the speaker(s) under regulatory steps to mitigate risk, including observation, independent recording, and providing opportunities for debate or challenge.
- Make a direct referral to the Channel initiative within the local constabulary.

## 10. Complaints

10.1 In instances where an individual alleges a breach of the OBC External Speaker and Events Policy, they have the right to file a formal complaint using the OBC Complaints Policy and Procedure. Possible grounds for such complaints may include, but are not limited to:

- Prevention of an OBC student or staff member from organising, speaking at, or attending an event with an external speaker.
- Violation of freedom of speech rights.
- Claims that an external speaker has violated the OBC External Speaker and Events Policy or acted contrary to UK law or OBC policies.

## 11. Monitoring and Review

11.1 This policy may be amended by OBC at any time and will be reviewed annually to ensure it is fit for purpose. Any revisions will be reported to the Compliance Committee for approval and noted by OBC's Senior Management Team Committee.

## 12. Appendix A External Speak Request Form.

*This form should be completed by the organiser of an event at any Oxford Business College (OBC) campus or externally in OBC's name, involving external speakers. After completing the form, it must be submitted to the OBC Campus Prevent and Safeguarding Officer for approval. The event and its external speakers are only authorised to proceed once the OBC Campus Prevent and Safeguarding Officer has approved by completing, signing, and dating Part 4 of the form. Approval is not required for part-time teachers or guest speakers delivering curriculum aspects of an approved higher education programme at OBC. If uncertain, consult with the OBC Campus Prevent and Safeguarding Officer, or in their absence, another appropriate officer.*

Organiser Details – Part 1			
<b>Event</b>		e.g. visitor coming as a guest speaker, conference	
<b>Date of Event</b>		<b>Person Completing the Form</b>	
<b>People Involved</b>		e.g. One guest speaker	
Event & Speaker Details – Part 2			
<b>Summary of Planned Event</b>		e.g. A guest speaker will come and speak to 50 students about a small business	
<b>Target Audience</b>		<p>(i) <i>Please provide details of the event profile, expected number of attendees and any other relevant information.</i></p> <p>(ii) <i>Please indicate and give details if you think the event might attract any groups or individuals that have previously been known to express views that may be in breach of OBC External Speaker and Events Policy.</i></p>	
<b>Proposed external speaker(s)</b>		<i>For each external speaker please provide a summary of biographical information.</i>	
<p><i>Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Oxford Business College is legally required to monitor events with external speakers on and off campus. These events must be risk-assessed to ensure the safety of students, staff, and the wider college community. The college, as the Data Controller, collects information through this electronic form to fulfil its legal</i></p>			

*obligations. The data is retained for up to one year post-event and is solely used for the stated purposes.*

**Speaker Declaration**

I hereby declare that:

(i) I have thoroughly read and understood the expectations and requirements detailed in the Freedom of Speech Code of Practice and OBC External Speaker and Events Policy.

(ii) I have not been barred from participating in events at OBC or at any other higher education institution or organisation (whether in the public or private sector), nor do I have a history of inappropriate or illegal activities. Should there be any relevant details, I will provide them accordingly.

Name	Signed	Date
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**Assessment of the proposed external speaker(s)/event – Part 3**

Has the speaker(s) previously been barred from speaking at OBC or other institutions due to their views or known breaches of UK law or OBC policies?

Yes/No\*

Does the proposed event's title or theme pose a risk of speakers expressing views in violation of UK legislation or OBC policies?

Yes/No\*

Is it likely that the speaker or event theme will attract individuals or groups known for views contrary to UK law or OBC policies?

Yes/No\*

Do you have any additional concerns regarding the proposed speaker(s) or event?

Yes/No\*

**Approval  
(To be completed by OBC Campus Prevent and Safeguarding Officer\*\*) - Part 4:**

Name of the OBC Campus Prevent and Safeguarding Officer:

Campus Location:

Date of Request Received:

Risk Rating      Low       Medium       High

Comments about the proposed speakers/event:

Sign Off  
I the above named OBC Campus Prevent and Safeguarding Officer approve/do not approve\*



the proposed event detailed in this OBC External Speaker Approval Form	
Signed:	
Dated:	

*\*Delete as appropriate*

**\*\* The OBC Campus Prevent and Safeguarding Officer is required to keep a copy of the signed External Speaker Approval Form and provide the original signed version to the event organiser for their records.**

If any of the questions in part 3 have been answered yes or the risk rating is medium or High a referral must be made. Please additionally complete the referral form Appendix B.

## 13. Appendix B- External Speaker Referral Form

Before completing this form, the individual intending to make a referral should familiarise themselves with OBC's Safeguarding (Prevent Duty) Policy and the External Speaker and Events Policy. Referring an external speaker is a significant decision, and these policies should be reviewed to confirm the appropriateness of the referral. Parts 1 and 2 of this form must be filled out and submitted to the OBC Safeguarding and Prevent Officer. This referral form is applicable when responses to key questions from the external speaker request form – part 3 are 'Yes' or other concerns exist. These questions assess the speaker's compatibility with OBC and UK legal standards.

Organiser Details – Part 1			
<b>Event</b>		e.g. visitor coming as a guest speaker, conference	
<b>Date of Event</b>		<b>Person Completing the Form</b>	
<b>People Involved</b>		e.g. One guest speaker	

Event & Speaker Details – Part 2	
<b>Summary of Planned Event</b>	e.g. A guest speaker will come and speak to 50 students about a small business
<b>Target Audience</b>	<p>(i) Please provide details of the event profile, expected number of attendees and any other relevant information.</p> <p>(ii) Please indicate and give details if you think the event might attract any groups or individuals that have previously been known to express views that may be in breach of OBC External Speaker and Events Policy.</p>
<b>Proposed external speaker(s)</b>	For each external speaker please provide a summary of biographical information.

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Oxford Business College is legally required to monitor events with external speakers on and off campus. These events must be risk-assessed to ensure the safety of students, staff, and the wider college community. The college, as the Data

*Controller, collects information through this electronic form to fulfil its legal obligations. The data is retained for up to one year post-event and is solely used for the stated purposes.*

**Speaker Declaration**

I hereby declare that:

(i) I have thoroughly read and understood the expectations and requirements detailed in the Freedom of Speech Code of Practice and OBC External Speaker and Events Policy.

(ii) I have not been barred from participating in events at OBC or at any other higher education institution or organisation (whether in the public or private sector), nor do I have a history of inappropriate or illegal activities. Should there be any relevant details, I will provide them accordingly.

Name	Signed	Date
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**Assessment of the proposed external speaker(s)/event – Part 3**

Has the speaker(s) previously been barred from speaking at OBC or other institutions due to their views or known breaches of UK law or OBC policies?

Yes/No\*

Does the proposed event's title or theme pose a risk of speakers expressing views in violation of UK legislation or OBC policies?

Yes/No\*

Is it likely that the speaker or event theme will attract individuals or groups known for views contrary to UK law or OBC policies?

Yes/No\*

Do you have any additional concerns regarding the proposed speaker(s) or event?

Yes/No\*

<b>Referral Justification:</b>	<i>Why does this speaker require further assessment?</i>
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**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Approval**

**(To be completed by OBC Prevent Lead\*\*) - Part 4:**

Name of the OBC Prevent Lead		
Campus Location:		
Date of Request Received:		
Risk Rating	Medium <input type="checkbox"/>	High <input type="checkbox"/>
Mitigations that have been		

considered to allow the vent to proceed:	
Sign Off  As the appointed Prevent Lead, I confirm that the proposed mitigations will* / will not* sufficiently align with OBC's policy and its Prevent duty, thereby allowing the event to proceed.	
Signed:  Prevent Lead	
Dated:	
Signed:  Executive Principal	
Dated:	