

Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech

1. In pursuance of its duties under Section 43 of the Education (No 2) Act 1986 the University of Lincoln issues the following Code in fulfilment of its obligation to ensure that it takes the steps which are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for students and staff of the University and for visiting speakers.
2. This Code applies equally to meetings, debates, speeches, talks, presentations or other activities ('events') organised by students or staff and branded as University events, regardless of whether they are held on University or external premises.
3. Insofar as it is reasonably practicable, freedom of speech within the law will be secured for students and staff of the University and for visiting speakers. As far as those groups are concerned, and subject to paragraph 4 below, approval for events will not be denied to any person or body of persons proposing to hold a lawful meeting on any ground connected with:
 - a. the beliefs or views of that individual or that body; or
 - b. the policy or objectives of that body.
4. The University is under no legal obligation to approve events which are open to the general public. If it does so, it must take account of its other legal obligations with regard to what is said at such events which might lead to incitement to violence, breach of the peace, incitement of racial or religious hatred, draw people into terrorism or extremist views linked to terrorism or which might otherwise transgress the bounds of lawful speech.
5. It is essential to the purpose of the University that opportunities for free and open discussion shall be safeguarded. Students and staff of the University, as well as all other persons attending approved events must refrain from acting in a manner likely to prevent or disrupt the purpose for which the event is held. This includes the use of threatening or offensive language which may lead to a breach of the peace.
6. A booking for an event requested by staff or students of the University and involving a visiting speaker (i.e. a person coming from outside the University) may be accepted if the invitation is made by:
 - a. A University-based club, society or project recognised by the University of Lincoln Students' Union; or
 - b. A partner or body otherwise recognised by the University or approved by the Registrar.
7. The University has discretion whether or not to accept a booking from an outside organisation. Where there is the possibility of an occurrence arising from such a booking which falls within the terms of paragraphs 4 or 5 above, the University must be alerted and the relevant terms of the Code of Practice applied. Any contract between the University and the organisation concerned will include reference to this requirement.
8. The University's External Speaker and room booking policy can be found at <http://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/abouttheuniversity/governance/regulationspolicies/>