APPROVAL OF EVENTS PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

1. This document sets out the procedure for the approval and management of meetings, events, activities and protests (including demonstrations and marches) ('**events**'). This ensures safety, ethical and legal considerations are applied in the approval of events and freedom of speech, within the law, is protected.

2. The starting presumption is that an event should be **approved**. The University will only refuse to approve an event or impose conditions on an event where it is deemed necessary as a result of the event's subject matter and/or speakers, and not to deny or restrict an event on the grounds of lawful views or beliefs.

3. Any conditions imposed on holding an event shall be proportionate and kept to a minimum, as considered necessary to mitigate any risks or legal obligations identified.

SCOPE

4. Subject to paragraph 5, this procedure applies to all events which will be held on **University premises** or organised in the **name of the University** whether events take place on or off campus, or virtually (this includes events affiliated with, organised by, funded by or branded in, the University's name).

5. This procedure does **not** apply to:
   (a) events which fall under scope of the normal **academic curriculum**[1], **day to day business** (e.g., staff development activity), or, where the event is **purely commercial**. However, it is good practice to discuss with a relevant Manager or Head of School/Service to consider any relevant safety, ethical or legal implications, where this is applicable, and any mitigation needed to reduce/ remove such risks.
   (b) **lawful picketing** on days of strike action, by University staff, that has been arranged in support of official industrial action by the recognised trade unions.
   (c) Events organised by the **Leeds Beckett Students' Union** or one of their clubs or societies (where approval for the event must be obtained under the SU's approval process).

6. **External third parties** who wish to organise an event at Leeds Beckett University must obtain the University's permission to do so via a student or staff of the University who is prepared to take on the role of the Responsible Officer (see below). The University reserves the right to take action in these circumstances.

7. Expectations of conduct and specific responsibilities apply to all members of staff, students, governors, speakers, and the Responsible Officer is responsible for ensuring members of the public who are organising or approving a University event are made aware of the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and the Events Code of Conduct.

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[1] Examples of academic activity include, but are not limited to, activities which form part of the University's teaching, learning, research or other scholarly activity such as a lecture, seminar, group study session, conference, exhibition, performance, academic festival, University society meeting or examination.

EXTERNAL SPEAKERS

8. The University is required to have systems for assessing and mitigating risks around external speaker events pursuant to the [Prevent duty](#). In order to achieve this, the University has measures in place to risk assess external speaker events and is required to report on this to the Office for Students (**OfS**). The University will apply this same approach to internal speakers, though these are not reported to the OfS.

9. For our reporting purposes, an **external speaker** is defined as someone who is **not** a member of the University community (i.e. not staff or students) who is **invited** (including a person whose invitation has not been approved through the internal approval process) by the University to speak at a University event (whether in person or online) or on University premises, in order to **communicate their views, ideas or opinions on a topic**.

10. Where an external speaker has been invited, the University must protect their right to freedom of speech within the law and ensure compliance with the [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#).

11. This does **not** include a person who wanted or requested an invitation to speak but was not invited nor considered through this internal approval process. The University is not obliged to provide a platform because an individual or external organisation wishes to speak; rather, external speakers at the University speak by **invitation** from the University.

12. The following are **not** formally reported to the OfS (and will not be logged as an 'External Speaker' in the [Events Log via the Events Forum](#)) as they are **not** usually identified as external speakers:
    (a) Individuals invited to **perform music**, **compere events** or **deliver training**.
    (b) General day to day **business activity** of staff (e.g., staff development activity), individuals or companies undertaking marketing activity with the agreement of the University or the Students' Union or events which are **purely commercial**.
    (c) Meetings or events that form part of the **academic curriculum.**

PROCEDURES FOR ORGANISING AND APPROVING EVENTS

13. Designated roles (set out in table 1) within the University have responsibility for organising and approving events. The **Approving Officer** has delegated authority from the Registrar and Secretary to approve events.

14. Queries or concerns of the Responsible Officer or the Approving Officer should be escalated to the **Registrar & Secretary**.

Table 1: Responsible Officers and Approving Officers

Organisation/ originating area	Responsible Officer - responsible for obtaining approval for the event and the organisation and conduct of the event	First level Approving Officer[2] - review and approval of proposal	Highest-level Approving Officer
School or Service (staff) (incl. school-based research & enterprise events)	Relevant employee in the area (incl. Director of Research for school-based research & enterprise event)	Director, Dean or DVC within the relevant line management structure	Registrar & Secretary
Central research & enterprise	Relevant employee in the area	Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange Services	
Trade Union	Union Representative	Director of HR	
Athletics Union	Relevant sports society officer	Head of Beckett Sport	
Student	Student – submitted for approval through Course Tutor where related to course of study	Dean of School	
Staff member on behalf of external organisation	Staff member responsible for liaising with the relevant individual from the external organisation	Director, Dean or DVC within the relevant line management structure	
Protest organiser	Relevant staff / student	Director, Dean or DVC within the relevant line management structure	
Member of the Board of Governors	Governance Services on behalf of a governor	Governance Manager	

Requests by a Students' Union club or society should be referred for consideration under the SU's process.

15. A proposal form (via the Events Forum) must be completed by the **Responsible Officer** and submitted to the **first level Approving Officer** at least 10 working days in advance of the relevant event to provide brief information on the event and speaker, to enable a risk assessment to be undertaken. The University may consider later submissions, but where a request is submitted less than 10 workings days in advance, there may not be sufficient time for an informed decision to be made and the request may therefore be refused on procedural grounds. The **Responsible Officer** must log all requests for approval (whether or not approved) of an event on the Events Log via the Events Forum.

16. Where the **first level Approving Officer** does not feel able to approve the event or considers that conditions should be attached to the event, they will escalate the approval decision to the **Registrar and Secretary**. The **Approving Officer** will review the proposal form and inform the **Responsible Officer** of their decision about the event no later than 5 working days prior to the scheduled date of the event.

17. If the event is approved, the **Responsible Officer** has responsibility for ensuring any conditions are fully complied with and that all speakers are made aware of the Events Code of Conduct. Rooms should be requested through the Timetabling Office or Events Team, who will seek confirmation of approval of any speakers before booking the necessary space, and a health and safety risk assessment may be required depending on the type of event.

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[2] The Authorising Officer may appoint a nominee to undertake detailed work on applications for events, and may seek advice and guidance from others, noting that the decision regarding events is made by the Authorising Officer.

Decisions

18. It is anticipated that the majority of events will be approved without conditions.

19. In exceptional circumstances, the University may consider that the holding of a meeting or event may require:
    (a) controls to enable it to go ahead: or
    (b) may reasonably be refused on specific grounds, as set out below.

    In both of these circumstances, the request for approval of any event will be escalated by the first level Approving Officer to the **Registrar & Secretary**, with a statement of concerns for consideration.

20. The **Registrar & Secretary** will use their judgement to balance the promotion and protection of lawful free speech with other legal duties, having liaised with relevant members of the University Executive Team and may seek external advice where appropriate. Only the **Registrar & Secretary** may approve conditions to enable an event to go ahead or refuse permission.

Mitigations / conditions

21. The University may impose such mitigation and conditions, as approved by the **Registrar & Secretary,** as are reasonably proportionate and necessary, ensuring that these go no further than is necessary to address the risks identified.

22. Examples of mitigation and conditions that may be appropriate include:
    (a) Varying the proposed time and location of the event
    (b) Restrict event to internal audience (students and staff)
    (c) Requesting a copy of the proposed guest list in advance
    (d) Opening the event up to a wider audience
    (e) Restrict event access through use of ticketing ('closed' event)
    (f) Requirement for the appointment of a named independent chair
    (g) Refusing admission to the media/press
    (h) Additional security – including a specified number of stewards; request for police assistance
    (i) Restricting the display of banners or placards at the event
    (j) Restricting the sale of alcohol linked to the event
    (k) Restrictions on how the event is publicised
    (l) Requesting sight of the speaker's outline or script in advance
    (m) Additional speaker to be invited to ensure a balance of views
    (n) Filming / recording an event to deter the use of unlawful speech
    (o) Responsible Officer must attend event and be prepared to terminate the event with support from security if the [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#) or the [Events Code of Conduct](#) is breached
    (p) Postponing the event if necessary to enable one or more of the steps above to be taken

Costs of security

23. The University will only pass on the costs of security for using the premises to those arranging the relevant event in exceptional circumstances where the University's security team is not able to provide the security services required for the event. For example, it may be necessary to pass on the cost of additional external security costs because the number of attendees at the event is expected to be large, it is a condition of approving the event that additional security is needed due to the subject matter of the event, or where the external speaker could reasonably be expected to have their own security because of the political or state office they hold. Any request to an external event organiser to pay security costs will be in writing and will explain those costs and any appeal mechanism. Any request to pay security costs will not be influenced by the ideas or opinions of any individual involved in organising the event, or by the policy or objectives of, or the views of any of the members of, anybody involved in organising the event.

Reasons for refusing consent

24. Permission for events will only be refused in exceptional circumstances, when there are risks which cannot be mitigated, or the Responsible Officer refuses or is not able to meet any conditions imposed;

25. The lawful expression of controversial, offensive or unpopular views will **not** in itself constitute reasonable grounds for withholding permission for a University event. The use of University premises, funds and/or resources will **not** be denied on grounds of lawful beliefs or views.

26. Depending on the circumstances, the University may however refuse permission for an event where it reasonably believes (from the nature of the speakers or from similar activities in the past whether held at the University or otherwise) that the event should not proceed for reasons relating to health and safety, procedural matters, reasons related to Prevent risks or other matters, for example:
    (a) the views likely to be expressed by any speaker are contrary to the law;
    (b) the speaker is likely to incite breaches of the law or to intend breaches of the peace to occur;
    (c) the event will not permit contrary or opposing viewpoints to be held or expressed;
    (d) the speaker and/or the organisation they represent advocates or engages in violence in the furtherance of their political, religious, philosophical or other beliefs;
    (e) the views likely to be expressed by any speaker relate to the risk of radicalisation, and/or are for the support or promotion of any illegal organisation or purpose, including organisations listed on the government's list of proscribed terrorist groups or organisations;
    (f) it is in the interest of public safety (for example, the event will create a risk of accident or injury), the prevention of disorder or crime, the proper functioning of the University or the protection of those persons lawfully on University premises, that the event does not take place; or
    (g) the request for approval of the event does not adhere to this procedure (for example was made too late to give sufficient time for an informed decision to be made).

Appeals

27. Appeals against the Approving Officer's decision (to refuse an event or apply conditions) may be made to the **Vice Chancellor**, whose decision shall be final.

Record-keeping

28. The University shall keep appropriate records of all decisions. Decisions and event information will be kept locally within the **School/Service** and logged by the **Approving Officer** on the e Events Log via the Events Forum, which informs the regulatory return to the OfS as well as other processes at the University. The **Registrar & Secretary** shall keep records of decisions taken at the highest level.

CONDUCT AT EVENTS

29. All attendees and speakers (including external speakers) at events must comply with the Events Code of Conduct.

30. The Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and the Events Code of Conduct must be provided to all speakers in advance of the event, who must confirm prior to the event that they have read, understood and will comply with the requirements of these documents.

31. In order to ensure the safety of all participants and ensure the right to freedom of speech within the law is upheld, University Security/contracted external security provider and the University Registrar and Secretary or their delegate may be in attendance at events. The University reserves the right to:
    (a) halt an event at any time if it reasonably believes that it cannot guarantee the safety of those present, to allow the event to continue would cause a breach of the law, would disrupt the continued operation of University teaching and operations or would otherwise be in breach of the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech, the Events Code of Conduct or any conditions required by the Approving Officer in relation to the event.
    (b) Require individuals at the event who are not complying with the Events Code of Conduct to leave University premises/the online event space.
    (c) Liaise with relevant external authorities if appropriate.

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Developed in consultation with	Freedom of Speech Coordination Group
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Appendix 1 - EVENTS CODE OF CONDUCT

1. All speakers (including external speakers) and attendees at a Leeds Beckett University branded, hosted or run event, whether on University premises, elsewhere or online, must act in accordance with this Code of Conduct.

2. The University's [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#) and this Code of Conduct must be provided to all invited **speakers** in advance of events, who must confirm prior to the event that they have read, understood and will comply with the requirements of these documents.

Speakers and attendees must NOT:
*   Incite or spread hatred, intolerance, violence or call for the breaking of the law.
*   Discriminate against or harass any person or group on the basis of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
*   Encourage, support, glorify or promote any acts of terrorism, including any individual, groups or [proscribed (banned) organisations](#) that support such actions.
*   Seek to raise or collect funds for any external organisation or cause without express permission of the University.
*   Attach posters or banners to University property without permission.
*   Seek to disrupt events taking place on University premises by preventing speakers from talking, people from attending, or doing anything that is designed to prevent the event taking place successfully.
*   Disrupt any work, study, events or other University functions.
*   Occupy University buildings or block entrances, egress or prevent free movement around the campus.
*   Use intimidating, discriminatory, abusive, or threatening language via any communications (this includes, but is not limited to, handouts, placards, banners, posters etc.).
*   Damage any University property or other property at the event.
*   Use loudhailers, loudspeakers, or other noise-making devices.
*   Obstruct the ability of others to exercise their lawful freedom of speech.

Speakers and attendees must:
*   ✓ Ensure all activities and speech is lawful.
*   ✓ Allow and encourage constructive and peaceful challenge and debate on lawful opinions and ideas and allowing all parties to express their views safely and effectively and being tolerant of of differing opinions. This may include, on occasion, inviting a **counter-speaker/protest** from those who hold an alternative point of view.
*   ✓ Comply with all conditions and guidance which the University has stated apply to the holding of the event.
*   ✓ Immediately comply with all instructions of health and safety and security personnel.
*   ✓ Respect the property of the University and others.
*   ✓ Clear away litter after the event.
*   ✓ Comply with the University's [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#) and this Code of Conduct.
*   ✓ Comply with the University's [Equality and Diversity Policy](#).
*   ✓ Comply with University's [Safety, Health and Wellbeing Policy](#).