



Version Control Statement

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External Speaker Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct exists to ensure that all speakers taking part in an event at Futureworks act in accordance with all applicable legal obligations and the Futureworks *External Speaker & Events Code of Practice*.

It is the responsibility of the event or activity organiser to ensure that:

- this Code of Conduct is communicated to all external speakers (once approved and confirmed via the appropriate process);
- all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the requirements within it are upheld during the running of the event or activity.

Freedom of speech

Providing an environment, where intellectual and scholarly freedom can thrive is essential to the teaching and experience offered to students at Futureworks. As such, it is important that Futureworks ensures the foundations of freedom of speech (*Education (No 2) Act 1986*) and academic freedom (*Education Reform Act 1988*), enabling new ideas to be advanced and encouraging open and free debate.

However, whilst the law promotes and protects freedom of speech, it also places limits on those freedoms in order to maintain public order and safety and to ensure that there is no breach of the law. Futureworks recognises that, in this context, a conflict exists between the laws which promote freedom of speech and those which restrict it and consequently acknowledges that it has a legal responsibility to create a balance between minimising the possibility that extremism or unlawful conduct will arise on campus and ensuring that it meets its legal obligations in relation to securing freedom of speech.

Legal Context

Higher education providers operate in a complex legal environment and so it is vital that all individuals involved in the external speaker process, including the speakers themselves, understand the legal framework and context that governs this area. Examples of some of the relevant areas of law are inter alia:

- **Safeguarding Laws:** people are entitled to protection from harassment, defamation and unlawful breach of their human rights, as well as from unfair treatment under equality law. Health and safety law, data protection and contract law may also be relevant in this context.



- **Criminal Law:** hate crimes, harassment, breach of the peace and terrorism all come under criminal law. There is also legislation around public meetings, public processions/assemblies and public order which may be of relevance.
- **Public law:** freedom of speech and some duties under the Equality Act (2010) and Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 are captured under public law.

Conduct

Futureworks expects external speakers to act in accordance with the law and not to breach the lawful rights of others.

Set out below are some examples of Futureworks' expectations. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of unacceptable conduct by external speakers. Futureworks reserves the right to reject an external speaker request and/or halt an event at any time if it reasonably considers there may be a breach of the Futureworks *External Speaker & Event Code of Practice* and/or any applicable legal obligation.

During the course of the event, no speaker shall:

- Act in breach of the criminal law.
- Incite hatred or violence or any breach of the criminal law.
- Encourage or promote any acts of terrorism or promote individuals, groups or organisations that support terrorism (a current list of proscribed terrorist groups or organisations is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2>).
- Spread hatred and intolerance.
- Discriminate against or harass any person or group on the grounds of their sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, disability, religious or other similar belief, sexual orientation or age.
- Defame any person or organisation.
- Raise or gather funds for any external organisation or cause without the express permission of Futureworks.

During the course of the event, all speakers shall:

- Comply with Futureworks' *Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Policy*.
- Comply with Futureworks' *External Speaker & Events Code of Practice*.
- Present ideas and opinions, in particular those that may be contentious or potentially offensive, in the spirit of academic debate, being open to challenge and question.
- Follow Futureworks' requirements and instructions relating to health and safety.

.Complaints Handling:

- Staff and visiting speakers may raise concerns through the OfS Free Speech Complaints Scheme.
- Students may submit complaints through the institution's complaints procedure or the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).