



## **External Speakers and Events Policy**

**PURPOSE:** To inform staff and students of CATCH and external/guest speakers of our policy on organising events involving external speakers. To provide staff with the appropriate pro-forma.

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to all staff organising events and/or external/guest speakers

**RESPONSIBILITY:** The Director is responsible for this policy. The Quality Manager is responsible for the monitoring of the policy.

**LEGAL CONTEXT:** the Prevent Duty contained within Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.



## **POLICY FOR ORGANISING EVENTS WITH EXTERNAL SPEAKERS**

### **1. Introduction**

HCF CATCH Ltd is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where diversity is valued. This policy outlines the procedures relating to events involving the use of external speakers regardless of who is organising these events.

It also details our approach to ensuring that we are protecting both staff and students and the reputation of HCF CATCH Ltd whilst following the legislation that we are responsible for upholding. This policy is written with reference to the Prevent Duty contained within Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Duty states that specified authorities including Further Education Colleges, in the exercise of their functions, must have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

### **2. Objectives**

- To provide an environment where freedom of expression and speech are protected whilst balanced with the need to ensure that our community is free from harm and that incitement to hatred is never acceptable.
- To provide a supportive, inclusive and safe space for students
- To provide clearly defined and effective procedures to ensure that the law is upheld.
- To collaborate with others to reach sound, evidenced judgments about proposed external speakers ensuring that HCF CATCH Ltd can meet their legal obligations.
- To encourage and provide a balance of opinion at any academic discussion or debate.
- To communicate to all members, volunteers, staff and visitors, that it is our mutual responsibility to comply with equality and safeguarding policy and that both HCF CATCH Ltd and the individual can be held liable if they contravene the law.
- To provide clear instructions for organising an event with external contribution



### **3. Freedom of speech and expression**

- 3.1. Freedom of expression and speech are basic human rights that are protected by law. Freedom of speech and freedom of expression are not absolute freedoms but freedoms within the law. Educational environments have a history of being open to debate and ideas, with students actively involved in pushing the limits of freedom of expression. 'Academic freedom' is a term used to describe the law that allows for open and honest debate in an academic context.
- 3.2. However, we have a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of our staff, students and communities. The freedom to express views needs to be balanced with the need to secure freedom from harm for students and communities. We want all of our events, activities and initiatives to be safe, without risk to SCUC, and within the law.
- 3.3. If an external speaker or their topic of discussion has the potential to go against our conditions for a safe event, we are committed to working together with event organisers and in some cases, external speakers themselves, to make sure that we reach a judgement that is reasonable, informed and within the law.

### **4. External speakers and their responsibilities**

- 4.1. An external speaker, guest speaker or visitor is used to describe any individual or organisation who is not a student or staff member of HCF CATCH Ltd and who has been invited to speak to students and/or staff.
- 4.2. An event is any event, presentation, visit, activity or initiative organised by a student group/society, individual or staff member where HCF CATCH Ltd is being represented. It includes events where external speakers are streamed live into an event or a pre-recorded film is shown.
- 4.3. All speakers or visitors should be made aware by the person or group arranging the event that they have a responsibility to abide by the law and HCF CATCH Ltd policies including that they:
  - Must not advocate or incite hatred, violence or call for the breaking of the law
  - Are not permitted to encourage, glorify or promote any acts of terrorism including individuals, groups or organisations that support such acts
  - Must not spread hatred and intolerance in the community and thus aid in disrupting social and community harmony
  - Must be mindful of the risk of causing offence to or seek to avoid insulting other faiths or groups, within a framework of positive debate and challenge
  - Are not permitted to raise or gather funds for any external organisation or cause without express permission of HCF CATCH Ltd (available from Director or Quality Manager).

### **5. Guidance for HCF CATCH Ltd staff and students organising an event with an external speaker**

- 5.1. Any events that involve external speakers through this procedure must be agreed in advance by Director and/or Quality Manager. No event involving any external speakers may be publicised or considered confirmed until the speaker has been cleared through



the procedure detailed in this policy. This includes advertisement through any social media platform.

- 5.2. HCF CATCH LTD reserves the right to cancel, prohibit or delay any event with an external speaker if the policy is not followed or if health, safety and security criteria cannot be met.
- 5.3. Any event booking with an external speaker involved must be made no later than 14 days before the date of the event. This is to allow for the organiser to have made adequate safeguarding checks as well as allowing time for alterations to the event if necessary. Any request made outside of this timeframe will be rejected unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- 5.4. The individual/group organising an external speaker should conduct brief research into the proposed speaker. If in doubt as to the suitability of a speaker, they should refer the decision to the Director or Quality Manager. Reasons for doubt could be (but are not restricted to) the following: - any person or group on/or linked to the UK Government list of proscribed terror organisations <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2> ; talks by organisations generally considered to be extremist; a speaker who is known to have spoken previously at another institution on a topic that has caused fear or intimidation of students or staff; a speaker accepted in mainstream as being highly controversial; a link or links to any person or group that has been connected with any controversy of a negative or positive nature; a speaker who has significant profile and attracts a following that could create crowd control and health and safety issues; a speaker from a political party during an election purdah.
- 5.5. In the event of referral, one of the following decisions will be made:-
  - To not permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead
  - To not permit the external speaker to attend the event (if it is a wider event)
  - To fully permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead unrestricted
  - To permit the event with the external speaker to go ahead on the basis of regulatory steps designed to reduce risk. These may include observation; independent filming; the inclusion of opportunities to debate or challenge the view being held.
- 5.6. In making recommendations, the Director may consult on a wider basis with HCF CATCH LTD Safeguarding leads and risk will be assessed on the following basis:
  1. The potential for any decision to limit freedom of speech
  2. The potential for the event going ahead to cause reputation risk to HCF CATCH LTD
  3. The potential for the speaker's presence to cause fear or alarm to students, staff and other attendees **and/or** to give rise to breach of peace
- 5.7. The Request for Prior Approval for an External/ Guest Speaker (Appendix 1) should be completed and forwarded to the relevant Manager no later than 14 days before the planned event. The completed form should be forwarded to the Quality Manager for logging on the Central Record.
- 5.8. Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff team and students are aware of and support the policy.



<b>Linked Policies:</b>	• Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
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**Appendix 1**

**REQUEST FOR PRIOR APPROVAL FOR EXTERNAL SPEAKER**

The organising tutor, coordinator or manager requesting participation of an external/ guest speaker must complete this form and submit it to the Director and/or Quality Manager at least **14 days** prior to the visit by the external speaker.

Tutor/ Manager/ Coordinator/ Client:	
Date of Request:	
Course(s)/ Event:	
Scheduled Date for Speaker:	Time(s):
Name(s) of Speaker(s):	
Organisation Represented (where applicable):	
Topic of Speaker:	
Qualification of Speaker to address this topic:	
How does this topic specifically support your curriculum/ event?	
Is there any known or likely media interest in the proposed event? YES/NO	
Have adequate checks been carried out? Yes/No. If yes, please give detail	
<b>Prior Approval Granted</b>	<b>Yes/no</b>
<b>Prior Approval Denied</b>	<b>Yes/no</b>
<b>Approving Manager Name</b>	
<b>Approving Manager Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	



## Appendix 2

### EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL/ GUEST SPEAKERS

Thank you for agreeing to be a guest speaker on behalf of HCF CATCH Ltd, and offering to speak to our staff and/or our students. Security and safeguarding are paramount and, as a guest, we will ensure that when you follow any required Safeguarding, security and/or Health and Safety processes required on the premises.

In accordance with our policies and procedures, we also ask that in the event that a HCF CATCH Ltd student contacts you following your presentation, that you notify HCF CATCH Ltd (Katy Sidell, Safeguarding Lead). Our students are aware that they are not permitted to give guest speakers their names, addresses or home numbers, and to do so would be a breach of HCF CATCH Ltd policies.

In order to comply with our policies and procedure, any materials and presentations given to our students must not seek to discriminate against any culture, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, or religion, and must be appropriate to the age and maturity level of the student audience. In addition, external/ guest speakers:

- Must not advocate or incite hatred, violence or call for the breaking of the law
- Are not permitted to encourage, glorify or promote any acts of terrorism including individuals, groups or organisations that support such acts
- Must not spread hatred and intolerance in the community and thus aid in disrupting social and community harmony
- Must be mindful of the risk of causing offence to or seek to avoid insulting other faiths or groups, within a framework of positive debate and challenge

If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact (Katy Sidell, Safeguarding Lead), who will be more than happy to answer your queries and/or any concerns that you may have.



Please complete the following details:

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The Expectations and Guidelines for External/ Guest Speakers were presented to

\_\_\_\_\_ (External/ Guest Speaker) on \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

by \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (External/ Guest Speaker), have read, understood and agree to all of the conditions above:

External/ Guest Speaker Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

External/ Guest Speaker Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Talbot".

David Talbot  
CEO  
25/01/24