



**University of
Nottingham**

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

Free Speech and Academic Freedom

Code of Practice

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Free Speech & Academic Freedom Code of Practice (Code of Practice) is to set out the University of Nottingham's (University's) approach to protecting and promoting free speech and academic freedom.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

.1. Definitions

- .1.1. **Freedom of speech** means the freedom to impart ideas, opinions or information¹ by means of speech, writing or images (including in electronic form); and
 - .1.2. **Academic freedom** means, in relation to the academic staff of the University, their freedom within the law to (a) question and test received wisdom and (b) put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without placing themselves at risk of losing their jobs or privileges at the University or the likelihood of their securing promotion or different jobs at the University being reduced.
- .2. Universities are bound by legislation that impose duties on them in relation to free speech and academic freedom, including:
- .2.1. the Education (No.2) Act 1986, section 43 – this requires universities to take reasonably practicable steps to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for staff, students and visiting speakers;
 - .2.2. the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023; and
 - .2.3. the Human Rights Act 1998 (which gives effect in English law to the European Convention on Human Rights) – this states that freedom of expression is a fundamental, but qualified, right.
- .3. The University's regulator, the Office for Students (OfS), requires the University to comply with a number of public interest governance principles, including that freedom of speech and academic freedom for academic staff are secured within the University.
- .4. All speech is lawful unless it is specifically restricted by law.
- .5. Universities have other duties that must be considered in the context of freedom of speech and academic freedom, including those set out in:
- .5.1. the Equality Act 2010 – this imposes, amongst other things, requirements on universities not to discriminate, harass or victimise individuals with protected characteristics² and to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which directs universities to have due regard to the need to (i) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; (ii) advance equal opportunities; and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
 - .5.2. the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 – this contains the Prevent duty which requires universities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This also provides that when carrying out the Prevent duty, universities must have particular regard to the duty to ensure freedom of speech and the importance of academic freedom; and
 - .5.3. the Public Order Acts of 1986 and 2023 – these relate to the maintenance of public order.
- .6. In practice, in protecting and promoting freedom of speech and academic freedom, the University needs to balance various (and sometimes competing) obligations and duties.

¹ As referred to in Article 10(1) of the European Convention on Human Rights as it has effect for the purposes of the Human Rights Act 1998.

² The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- .7. The University's adoption of any external definitions has to be understood consistently with its obligations relating to free speech and academic freedom.

COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING AND PROMOTING FREE SPEECH AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

- .1. Freedom of speech and the free exchange of ideas are central to the University of Nottingham's mission of advancing truth, knowledge, and understanding. To achieve this, the University supports free and open enquiry within the law, including the airing of ideas or perspectives which may be unpopular or cause offence. The University is committed to protecting and promoting free speech within the law for all staff, students and visiting speakers and academic freedom for academic staff.
- .2. This commitment reflects the University's core values of inclusivity, ambition, openness, fairness and respect.
- .3. The University's Statutes confirm that academic staff have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves a risk of losing their jobs or privileges or the likelihood of their securing promotion or different jobs at the University being reduced.
- .4. The University acknowledges that some views will not stand up to academic scrutiny and considers that, whenever possible, all ideas should be open to questioning and open to being challenged by rational argument, supported by relevant evidence.
- .5. The University applies a rebuttable presumption that students being exposed to any of the following is unlikely to amount to harassment:
 - .5.1. the content of higher education course materials, including but not limited to books, videos, sound recordings and pictures; and
 - .5.2. statements made and views expressed by a person as part of teaching, research or discussions about any subject matter which is connected with the content of a higher education course, unless it is otherwise demonstrated that these matters do in fact amount to harassment.

SCOPE

- .1. This Code of Practice applies to:
 - .1.1. all members of the University community, including staff³ and students⁴ who are working at, studying at, living on, on placement at or visiting the UK campuses;
 - .1.2. all visiting speakers;
 - .1.3. all meetings, events and activities that relate to academic life (including protests), whether those events, meetings and activities take place online or in person or on or off University premises; and
 - .1.4. meetings, events and activities organised by or on behalf of the University of Nottingham Students' Union, whether those events, meetings and activities take place online or in person or on or off University premises.

³ The term "staff" encompasses University employees and individuals engaged as workers by the University

⁴ The term "student" encompasses all students from the point at which their place at the University of Nottingham is confirmed. It includes students at all levels of study (e.g. undergraduate, postgraduate, on apprenticeship programmes or studying with the University of Nottingham Online), whether they are studying full time, part time or as a distance learner and if they are registered as a University of Nottingham student but studying elsewhere (e.g. Lincoln Medical School). It also covers Students' Union (SU) Sabbatical Officers during their period of office. It encompasses students who have interrupted their studies, or who have been temporarily suspended, or excluded, or have their thesis pending or are in some other way still members of the University community.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

General

- .1. Set out below are the roles and responsibilities relevant to the implementation of this Code of Practice.
- .2. The roles and responsibilities of those involved in relevant events, meetings and activities are set out in Appendix 2.

Roles and responsibilities

- .3. **University Council** is the accountable body for free speech and academic freedom at the University.
- .4. **University Executive Board** has responsibility for ensuring the Code of Practice is approved, published, reviewed and updated and that the supporting processes and training packages are in place and refreshed as required.
- .5. **Senate** will be consulted on any subsequent developments of the University's statement on free speech and academic freedom and for any subsequent review and development of the Code of Practice.
- .6. **The Chief Operating Officer** is accountable for the development, review and implementation of the Code of Practice. They are supported in this role by the **Chief People Officer** who is responsible for the development, review and implementation of the Code of Practice as it relates to University staff and the **Academic Registrar** who is responsible for the development, review and implementation of the Code of Practice as it relates to students.
- .7. **Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Heads of School / Departments and Directors of Professional Service Departments** are responsible for implementation of the Code of Practice within their areas and maintaining a register of events, meetings and activities planned under the procedures referred to at Section 6.
- .8. **Human Resources (HR)** are responsible for ensuring agreed training on freedom of speech and academic freedom is included within the University's approach to training and personal development; and ensuring this Code of Practice is brought to the attention of staff in their induction and on an annual basis as set out at Section 9. HR are also responsible for managing complaints from staff in relation to free speech and academic freedom via the Grievance Procedure.
- .9. **The Student and Campus Life Division (SCL)** is responsible for ensuring agreed information, training and communications for students about freedom of speech are available and promoted, when they first register with the University and on an annual basis as set out at Section 9.
- .10. **Registry & Academic Affairs (RAA)** is responsible for managing complaints from students in relation to free speech in accordance with the Student Complaints Code of Practice.
- .11. **The Security Department** is responsible for managing the safety and security of campus-based events, meetings and activities, including contributing to assessment of risk and decision making.
- .12. **All staff** are responsible for reading this Code of Practice, upholding the University's responsibilities in relation to protecting and promoting free speech and academic freedom and undertaking training appropriate to their role.
- .13. **All students** are responsible for reading this Code of Practice and adhering to the principles and ways of working set out in it.

- .14. **The University of Nottingham Students' Union (UoNSU)** is responsible for implementation of the Code of Practice within its domain and maintaining a register of events, meetings and activities planned under the procedures referred to at Section 6.

PROCEDURES

General

- .1. This Code of Practice applies to the procedures regarding, and those followed by UoNSU when organising, any events, meetings or activities that relate to academic life.
- .2. In making any decision or adopting any policy that could directly or indirectly (and positively or negatively) affect freedom of speech and/or academic freedom, the University will act compatibly with its legal duties in relation to free speech and academic freedom.
- .3. As far as is reasonably practicable, the University will not deny the use of its premises to any individual or body solely on the basis of:
 - .3.1. in the case of an individual, their ideas or opinions; and
 - .3.2. in the case of a body, its policy or objectives or the ideas or opinions of any of its members.
- .4. The University seeks to ensure that meetings, events and activities, whether about controversial ideas or otherwise, are inclusive, peaceful and civil. On this basis, the usual expectation is that meetings, events and activities being planned by or on behalf of the University or UoNSU will be supported to go ahead.

Meetings and events

- .5. The procedure set out at Appendix 3 must be followed by organisers of meetings and events, including by UoNSU where applicable. This procedure includes the risk assessment process and details of the potential steps that may need to be taken to protect the lawful exercise of free speech and academic freedom.
- .6. All organisers of meetings and events must complete the checklist set out at Appendix 4. If as a result a meeting or event is deemed to be low risk, it can be run and managed in accordance with local procedures in Schools/Departments/UoNSU, as applicable. If a meeting or event is not deemed to be low risk, the organiser of the meeting/event must complete the risk assessment at Appendix 5 and take such additional steps as are deemed necessary.

Security costs

- .7. Except as set out below, use of the University's premises by an individual/body for a meeting/event held under this Code of Practice will not be on terms that require them to bear some or all of the costs relating to their use of the premises.
- .8. The University will set an upper threshold for the security costs it will meet to ensure that an individual meeting/event can be delivered safely and securely. In circumstances where this upper threshold will be exceeded (because, for example, of the size of the meeting/event, the high profile of the visiting speaker and/or the potential for significant protest or disruption to University business), the University will pass costs over and above the threshold to the individual/body that wishes to organise the meeting/event.
- .9. In such exceptional circumstances, the University will provide the organiser of the meeting/event with a clear written summary of its calculation of the expected costs and an explanation for this calculation. The organiser of the meeting/event may appeal the apportionment of costs by writing to the Chief Operating Officer.

CONDUCT AT RELEVANT MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- .1. The meeting/event organiser and sponsor (as defined in Appendix 2) have a duty to ensure that, as far as possible, both the audience and any speaker act within the law during the course of a meeting/event. They have a particular responsibility to uphold the University's obligations to promote and protect the lawful exercise of freedom of speech and academic freedom. Notwithstanding this, speakers and attendees remain responsible for their own compliance with the law.
- .2. Where there is unlawful or unreasonably disruptive conduct by members of the audience at a meeting/event, the chair, along with the organiser and sponsor, is required to provide appropriate warnings. If there is continuing unlawfulness or unreasonable disruption, the chair can require members of the audience to withdraw or be removed by Security. Where such members of the audience are students or staff of the University, they may be investigated under the Student Code of Conduct (Non-Academic) or the staff disciplinary procedures, as applicable.
- .3. If an invited speaker, or other person present at the event, infringes the law (e.g., by threatening physical violence, racially abusing others or not having due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism), the chair will have the right to curtail or end the meeting/event and refer the matter to the police or other relevant authorities.

COMPLAINTS⁵

- .1. Students who wish to make a complaint about freedom of speech under this Code of Practice should follow the Student Complaints Code of Practice and will, ultimately, have the right to refer their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) if they remain dissatisfied with the University's response to their complaint.
- .2. Staff who wish to make a complaint about freedom of speech or academic freedom under this Code of Practice should follow the Grievance Procedure.

ENGAGEMENT WITH STAFF AND STUDENTS

- .1. The University will periodically update and share information, guidance and training with staff and students, through relevant channels on:
 - .1.1. free speech and academic freedom;
 - .1.2. this Code of Practice;
 - .1.3. the University's Statement on Free Speech and Academic Freedom; and
 - .1.4. any updates to relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE

- .1. A failure to uphold the principles and abide by the roles and responsibilities of this Code of Practice, may lead to disciplinary action under either the Student Code of Conduct (Non-Academic) or the staff disciplinary procedures. The University may also refer any potential breaches of the law to the police or other relevant authorities.

⁵ At the time of publication of this Code of Practice, it is not known when the UK Government will seek to bring into force the OfS complaints scheme as referred to in the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023. This section will be updated as required when more information on this is available.

REVIEW

.1. This Code of Practice will be reviewed at least every two years or as otherwise required.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1- Related Documents

- Statement on Free Speech and Academic Freedom at the University of Nottingham
- Dignity at Nottingham Policy
- Social Media Code of Practice for Staff & Students
- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff disciplinary procedure
- Staff grievance procedure
- Whistleblowing (Public Interest Disclosure) Code
- Student Code of Conduct (Non-Academic)

APPENDIX 2 – Roles & responsibilities for planning & managing specific meetings and events.

Role	Responsibility of the person in this role, or their nominee.
Event Organiser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ following the authorisation process laid out in this Code of Practice ✓ keeping records of all event checklists, risk assessments, decisions and internal / external communications ✓ completing event checklists and, where required, assessments of risk ✓ with the event sponsor, ensuring that any meetings/events for which they are the organiser, and that fall within the remit of this procedure, are added to the register maintained within their Faculty / Professional Service Department/ UoNSU ✓ liaising with the event sponsor, Security, Student & Campus Life and others.
Event Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ overall accountability for the meeting/event and ensuring it is carried out in line with relevant policies (e.g. the Code of Practice, Health & Safety Policy, Safeguarding Policy) and the relevant legislation ✓ providing oversight and support for the event organiser within this procedure ✓ supporting / advising on decisions for events assessed as low or medium risk ✓ supporting the panel and decision-making process for all meetings/events assessed as high risk ✓ with the event organiser, ensuring that any meetings/events that fall within the remit of this procedure, are added to the register maintained within their Faculty / Professional Service Department / UoNSU ✓ Sharing the details of any meeting/event with the person responsible for internal and external reporting in the Faculty / Professional Service Department / UoNSU.
Students' Union Student Groups Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ undertaking the role of event sponsor (as described above) for meetings/events being planned / organised by Students' Union affiliated student societies, clubs and groups ✓ undertaking the role of event approver for meetings/events being planned or organised by Students' Union affiliated student societies, clubs and groups assessed as low risk ✓ maintaining an up-to-date register of all events planned or organised by Students' Union affiliated student societies, clubs and groups and sharing this with the Director of Student Experience.
Director of Membership Services (Students' Union)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ensuring UoNSU compliance with the Code of Practice ✓ liaising with the Director of Student Experience on medium and high-risk cases ✓ undertaking the role of event approver for meetings/events being planned or organised by Students' Union affiliated student societies, clubs and groups assessed as medium or high risk ✓ supporting the panel and decision-making process for all UoNSU meetings/events assessed as high risk
Director of Student Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ supporting the panel and decision-making process for all meetings/events assessed as high risk, specifically considering issues related to safeguarding, student experience or the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty, and the development and maintenance of positive campus relations ✓ supporting UoNSU in the planning of student society meetings/events assessed as medium or high risk.

Director of Registry & Academic Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ supporting, as required, the panel and decision-making process for all meetings/events assessed as high risk, specifically in relation to any potential disruption to learning, assessments or exams ✓ being accountable for the management of free speech complaints made by students under the Student Complaints Code of Practice.
Academic Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ supporting, as required, the panel and decision-making process for all meetings/events assessed as high risk. ✓ supporting the UoN Free Speech Lead (Students)
Chief People Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ being accountable for the management of free speech and academic freedom complaints made by staff under the Grievance Procedure ✓ Supporting the UoN Free Speech Lead (Staff).
Director of Communications and Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ supporting the panel and decision-making process for all meetings/events assessed as high risk, specifically considering issues related to internal and external communications, and any risks relating to the media, social media, or other reputational issues.
The Head of Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ supporting the panel and decision-making process for all meetings/events assessed as high risk, specifically considering issues related to security ✓ supporting the authorisation process as detailed within the Code of Practice ✓ considering mitigations required for meetings/events assessed as medium or high risk ✓ considering and confirming meetings/events where exceptional circumstances mean some of the costs of security should be passed to the individual/body that has asked to use the University's premises for the meeting/event
Chief Operating Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ decision making in relation to all meetings/events assessed as being high risk, including whether there are exceptional circumstances for passing on some of the costs.

UoN Free Speech Lead (Students) [appointed by the Academic Registrar]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ co-leading the review, development and implementation of the Free Speech Code of Practice ✓ providing information, guidance and support on the process to be followed when planning and organising meeting/events ✓ coordinating the training and communication plan for students ✓ providing support to the oversight and governance of all free speech matters at the University.
UoN Free Speech Lead (Staff) [appointed by the Chief People Officer]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ co-leading the review, development and implementation of the Free Speech Code of Practice ✓ providing information, guidance and support on the process to be followed when planning and organising meeting/events ✓ coordinating the training and communication plan for staff ✓ providing support to the oversight and governance of all free speech and academic freedom matters at the University.
Visiting Speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ abiding by the principles of the University of Nottingham Statement on Free Speech and Academic Freedom and the Code of Practice

Event Organiser	Event Sponsor	Event Approver
Students' Union Society member	Students' Union Groups Team	Low risk – Students' Union Groups Team
		Medium risk – Director of Membership Services in consultation with the Director of Student Experience or their nominee and Security
		High risk – panel recommendation for Chief Operating Officer (or their nominee) approval
Member of staff within a School or academic department	Head of School / Department or senior nominee from the school.	Low risk – event sponsor
		Medium risk – Head of School / Department, with advice from Faculty Operations Director or Pro Vice Chancellor where required and in consultation with Security
		High risk – panel recommendation for Chief Operating Officer (or their nominee) approval
Member of staff within a professional service department	Director of Professional Service Department	Low risk – event sponsor
		Medium risk – Director of Professional Service Department and in consultation with Security
		High risk – panel recommendation for Chief Operating Officer (or their nominee) approval
External hirer - Conferencing Office	General Manager, Nottingham Venues	Low risk – event sponsor
		Medium risk – Deputy Director of Estates & Facilities, and Catering, Hospitality & Conferencing Director and in consultation with Security
		High risk – panel recommendation for Chief Operating Officer (or their nominee) approval

APPENDIX 3 – Process for managing meetings/events

Stage	Steps
<p>Stage 1 (All events) <i>At least 3 weeks before the planned meeting/event – event organiser and sponsor.</i></p> <p><u>Please note, these timescales are minimum requirements, meetings/events can, and should be, planned much further in advance where possible.</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial action should be taken BEFORE any invitation to an external speaker is made, to ensure the ability to assess the potential impact of the meeting/event and include sufficient time for planning. 2. All meetings/events should be placed on a local (e.g. Students' Union, Faculty or Professional Service Department) register to ensure an audit trail and overview of decisions made. 3. The event organiser and sponsor should liaise at the beginning of the assessment / planning process to ensure consideration of all requirements and potential issues, talking to the Head of Security at the earliest opportunity if there are potential risks. 4. It is the event organiser's responsibility to fill in the event checklist (Appendix 4), with support and guidance available from the event sponsor as required. 5. All meetings/events deemed to be low risk following completion of the event checklist can be agreed and planned locally – once this decision is made, the speaker can be invited. 6. If a meeting/event is not deemed to be low risk, the event organiser must assess the risk further using the risk assessment template (Appendix 5).
<p>Stage 2 (Medium / High Risk) <i>At least 3 weeks before the planned meeting/event – event organiser, sponsor & Head of Security</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. All meetings/events assessed as medium risk should be discussed with the Head of Security to ensure a holistic, institutional assessment of the potential risk is carried out. 8. Where the Head of Security, or their nominee, confirms the level of assessed risk, they will advise on mitigations and provide support if required and the meeting/event can be agreed and planned locally – the visiting speaker can be invited at this point. 9. Where the mitigations cannot be provided (e.g. due to cost or availability), or the level of risk is increased to high after discussion with the Head of Security, the process detailed in Step 3 should be followed. The visiting speaker should not be invited until the appropriate point in Step 3.
<p>Stage 3 (High Risk) <i>At least 3 weeks before the planned meeting/event – event organiser, sponsor & appropriate</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. For all meetings/events assessed as high risk, the event sponsor will ask the Chief Operating Officer (or their nominee) to convene a risk panel. The risk panel will consider all risks and mitigations required to manage the meeting/event safely are noted and fully understood. The panel which will include the Head of Security, the Director of Student Experience, the Director of Communications and Advocacy or their nominees, and the Event Sponsor. The

panel members / decision makers.

UoNSU Director of Membership Services will attend for SU events only and the Deputy Director of Estates & Facilities / Catering, Hospitality & Conferencing Director for external hirers only. At the discretion of the Chief Operating Officer (or their nominee), the panel may also include other University colleagues who are able to contribute to the consideration and mitigation of the risks associated with an event.

11. The Head of Security (or their nominee) will provide advice and support on the cost and availability of security, consideration of the timing of the meeting/event in terms of clashes with any other meetings/events, liaise with the police where required and consider the health and safety of all members of the University community and any visiting speakers.
12. The Director of Student Experience (or their nominee) will consider the student experience in relation to safeguarding, the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including having due regard to the need to foster good relations, and consideration of the timing of the event in relation to other planned events, significant dates or current University climate.
13. The Director of Communications and Advocacy (or their nominee) will consider issues related to internal and external communications, and any risks relating to the media, social media, or other reputational issues for the University.
14. The Director of Registry and Academic Affairs, or an appropriate colleague within that department, will be consulted on any potential disruption to learning, assessments or exams where relevant.
13. The assessment of risk will be updated as a result of the risk panel consideration. Once full information is gathered, including the cost of any security required, one of the recommendations below will be agreed.

Possible Recommendations	Reason
The meeting/event can go ahead with stipulated mitigations	The mitigations required to manage the risk have been identified and can be put in place (in terms of cost and availability)
The meeting/event is delayed enabling appropriate mitigations to be put in place	Additional time is required to plan the mitigations required to manage the risks, liaise with the police, consider the costs and availability, etc. This may be specifically relevant when the timescales for planning a meeting/event as laid out above, have not been adhered to
There is consideration of exceptional circumstances in terms of security costs	Some of the cost of putting the mitigations in place should be passed to the individual/body that wishes to use the University's premises for the meeting/event
The meeting/event cannot go ahead	There are clear, evidence-based reasons related to the assessed risk, mitigations required to manage this risk, or the potential for unlawful speech, that mean the event should not go ahead as planned

A recommendation that a meeting/event does not go ahead, can only be based on the following:

- ✓ All reasonably practicable steps to mitigate any risks identified have been considered and an agreement made that those available will not manage the risks identified.
- ✓ Identification of a lawful basis on which to stop the meeting/event and therefore interfere with the intended speech.
- ✓ Stopping the meeting/event from going ahead is proportionate to the risks identified.

A recommendation that the event does not go ahead should provide reasons for this, noting where this decision supports one or more of the following:

- ✓ the interests of national security
- ✓ Prevent considerations
- ✓ public safety on campus
- ✓ the need to prevent crime or disorder on campus
- ✓ prevention of unlawful speech, harassment or the incitement of hatred against individuals or groups of individuals.

On the advice of the risk panel, the Chief Operating Officer (or their nominee) will make a decision and confirm this with the event organiser, sponsor, Head of Security and Director of Student Experience.

Once the decision is received, the following actions should be taken:

Decision	Action
The meeting/event can go ahead with stipulated mitigations	The event organiser or sponsor invites the external speaker, organises the meeting/event, with the agreed mitigations in place, in liaison with relevant colleagues. Where any additional information or evidence suggests an increased risk, there should be further liaison with the Head of Security
The meeting/event is delayed enabling	Further planning is undertaken, including further liaison with the Head of Security / Director of Student Experience as required, updating the assessment of risk and mitigations required, considering the costs and updating the recommendation to the Chief Operating Officer (or nominee) for further consideration

appropriate mitigations to be put in place	
There is agreement that there are exceptional circumstances in terms of security costs	Event organiser or sponsor liaises with the individual/body that wishes to use the University's premises for the meeting/event to share reasons for exceptional circumstances and undertake further planning
The meeting/event does not go ahead	Reasons for the meeting/event not being approved are recorded on the register

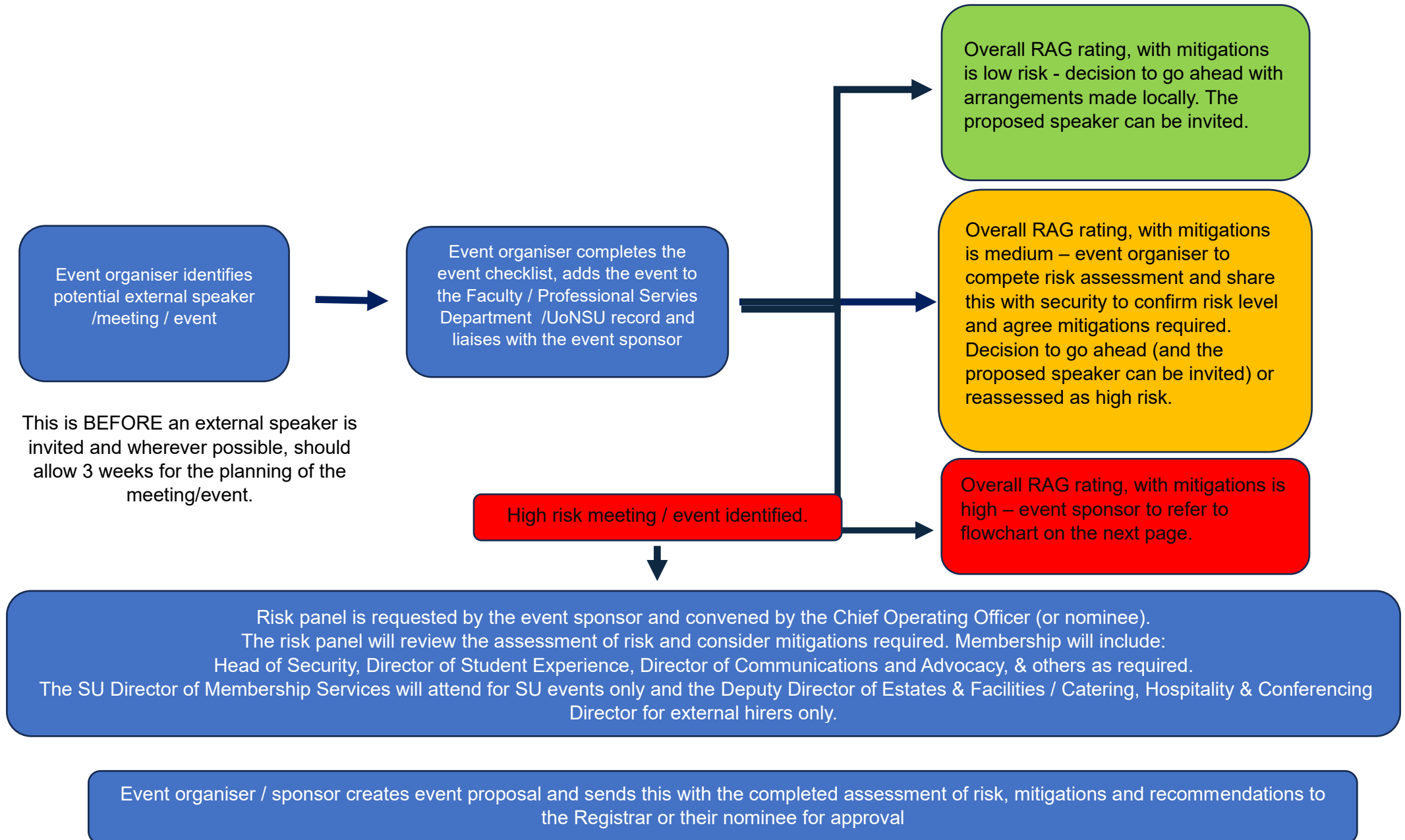
Action to be taken when there is not the 3 weeks' planning time required for the process above.

Where possible, all meetings/events that fall within the scope of this process, should be planned within the timescales laid out above, as a minimum, to ensure any risk is assessed and mitigating action put in place. Where these timescales have not been adhered to, this may result in the meeting/event being delayed or not going ahead.

Where concerns have arisen about a meeting/event that is already planned, the following action should be taken by the event organiser in conjunction with the event sponsor:

- a. Undertake an immediate assessment of risk to identify and record all risks and any mitigating action that can be agreed locally.
- b. Where the risk is assessed as medium or high, share the assessment of risk with the Head of Security to consider and agree any additional risks and actions required.
- c. Share the assessment of risk with the appropriate event approver (SU Director of Membership Services, Director of Student Experience, Head of School / Department, Director of Professional Service Department) to seek approval for the event. Call a risk panel meeting if required and time allows this.
- d. Where the risk is assessed as high, share the assessment of risk and recommendation from the event approver / risk panel with the Chief Operating Officer for approval.

Flowchart - Process for managing meetings/events





Risk panel considers, reviews and develops (where required) the assessment of risk to agree recommendations from one of the following:

- Recommend the meeting/event goes ahead with stipulated mitigations
- Recommend the meeting/event is delayed to enable appropriate mitigations to be put in place
- Recommend consideration of exceptional circumstances for the cost of mitigations to be passed to the external speaker / organisation
- Recommend the meeting/event does not go ahead, with clear reasons related to assessed risk and mitigations required



Decision by the Chief Operating Officer (or nominee)

Approved



Not Approved



Not approved within proposed timescales – further planning required and / or exceptional circumstances agreed.

Event organiser or sponsor invites external speaker, organises event, with the agreed mitigations in place, in liaison with relevant colleagues.

Reasons for the meeting/event not being approved are recorded.

Event organiser or sponsor undertakes further planning and, if applicable, liaises with the potential speaker / organisation to share reasons for exceptional circumstances in relation to costs.

APPENDIX 4 – Event Checklist

School / Department / Faculty / Society / Group / Club proposing the event	
Name & role of event organiser	
Name and role of event sponsor	
Name & role of the person carrying out the assessment of risk	
Date of assessment	
Proposed date of event	
Proposed name of event	
Main activities proposed	
Names of any speaker(s) proposed	
Location(s) of event	

Ref		Yes	No
1	Is an external speaker to be invited to lead / speak at the event?		
2	Has any speaker previously been prevented from speaking at the University of Nottingham?		
3	Are there any known connections to ' proscribed terrorist ' groups?		
4	Does any speaker require their own personal, or additional, security measures?		
5	Is it expected or reasonably foreseeable that there could be a risk to the safety of visiting speakers, attendees and/or members of the public or the University community such that they may be at risk of physical harm or threats, harassment and/or intimidation?		
6	Is it expected or reasonably foreseeable that there could there be a risk of damage to University buildings or property and/or disorder or crime?		
7	Is it expected or reasonably foreseeable that there could be a risk that the views likely to be expressed by any speaker are contrary to the law?		

Initial decision / actions

- Where all of questions 2-7 above are answered no, the event can be planned locally without the need for further consideration under this Code of Practice
- If one or more of questions 2-7 above are answered yes, the risk assessment template (at Appendix 5 of the Code of Practice) must be completed.

APPENDIX 5 – Assessment of the risks

An assessment of risk is required to show that you have considered all the possible risks that might arise within a meeting/event you are planning and to ensure you are being pro-active in putting mitigations in place to minimise the impact of any risk that might arise. They are also used to support decision making in the planning process.

Ref	Risk & Potential Impact	Current RAG rating	Mitigations to be put in place	By who?	By when?	RAG rating with controls	Cost (if known / appropriate)
1	External speakers						
2	The focus of the event						
3	The audience						
4	General						
5	Exceptional circumstances						
Overall RAG without mitigations			Overall RAG rating with mitigations in place				TOTAL

Definitions

Green / Low Risk	Based on the information and evidence available, there is no / low requirement for additional steps to protect freedom of speech and community safety at the meeting/event.
Amber / Medium	Based on the information and evidence available, there is a requirement for additional steps to protect freedom of speech and community safety at the meeting/event, which can be managed by the controls identified.
Red / High	Based on the information and evidence available, there is a requirement for significant additional steps to protect freedom of speech and community safety at the meeting/event, which require additional consideration from others within the University (eg security, communications, EDI, safeguarding)

	Recommendation - delete as appropriate	Reason - delete as appropriate
1	The meeting/event is able to go ahead with stipulated mitigations	The mitigations required to manage the risk have been identified and can be put in place (in terms of cost and availability)
2	The meeting/event is delayed to enable appropriate mitigations to be put in place	Additional time is required to plan the mitigations required to manage the risks, liaise with the police, consider the costs and availability, etc
3	There is consideration of exceptional circumstances in terms of security costs	Using the definition of 'exceptional circumstances' above, some of the cost of putting the mitigations in place should be passed to the external speaker / organisation
4	The meeting/event does not go ahead	There are clear, evidence-based reasons related to the assessed risk, mitigations required to manage this risk, or the potential for unlawful speech that means the meeting/event should not go ahead as planned

APPENDIX 6 - Decision / Approval Form

The appropriate box to be signed, dated by the named person in line with the table below

Event	Event Approver
Students' Union event	Low risk – Students' Union Groups Team
	Medium risk – Director of Membership Services in consultation with the Director of Student Experience or their nominee and Security
	High risk – Chief Operating Officer or their nominee
School, Faculty or academic department event	Low risk – Member of staff in school / department
	Medium risk – Head of School / Department, with advice Faculty Operations Director or Pro Vice Chancellor where required and in consultation with Security
	High risk – Chief Operating Officer or their nominee
Professional service department event	Low risk – member of staff in professional service department
	Medium risk – Director of Professional Service Department
	High risk – Chief Operating Officer or their nominee
External hirer (e.g. Conferencing)	Low risk – member of staff in professional service department
	Medium risk – Deputy Director of Estates & Facilities, and Catering, hospitality & Conferencing Director and in consultation with Security
	High risk – Chief Operating Officer or their nominee

Delete as appropriate and add summary justification for decision.	Approval for the event to go ahead - add a summary justification.		
	Approval for the event to be delayed enabling appropriate mitigations to be put in place - add a summary justification.		
	Approval for the exceptional circumstances and the costs of mitigations be passed to the external speaker / organisation - add a summary justification		
	Approval that the event should not go ahead - add a summary justification.		
	Name / Role	Signature	Date