

External Speaker Code of Practice

1 When to use this procedure

This process applies to all bookings of events involving the engagement of an external speaker to give a presentation, talk or lecture under the auspices of either the University of Bristol (the "University") or Bristol Students Union ("Bristol SU"), whether hosted on or off University or Bristol SU premises or online. The process is not normally expected to apply to the engagement of visiting speakers to contribute to the delivery of approved academic programmes or to take part in research seminars at UoB but does engage visitors to the University such as politicians or other visiting dignitaries.

2 Aim and Operating Principles

(a) Aim

- 2.1 The primary aim of this procedure is to allow events organised by members of staff of the University and Bristol SU, and students to go ahead in line with the University's firm commitment to Freedom of Speech, its values: [Our values | About the University | University of Bristol](#), with due regard to its public sector equality duty and in line with the EHRC Code's core ideas, in particular that the University "should always work to widen debate and challenge, never to narrow it".

(b) Operating principles

2.2 Training and Guidance:

All those involved in this procedure should:

- (i) consult the recent guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission on Freedom of Expression in Universities (February 2019) (the EHRC Code) and the University's Free Speech Policy which underpins this Code.
- (ii) If they are a member of University staff take the Training Module relating to Free Speech and Academic Freedom available on Develop.

2.3 Operation

All those involved in the procedure whether as an Event Organiser, an Assessor or the Decision-Maker should note the following operating principles:

- (i) To allow time to carry out the assessment process **ALL** self-assessment forms for
 - **in person events MUST be submitted at least 3 weeks before the date of the proposed event.**
 - **Online only events MUST be submitted at least 2 weeks before the date of the proposed event.**

If the self-assessment form is submitted outside these timescales a response cannot be guaranteed and the event may not be permitted to go ahead

- (ii) When choosing where the event is to take place note that:
 - There are a number of ways in which a room may be booked for an event; booking a room does not mean that permission has been given to hold the event; and
 - The proposed venue for the event may change if the assessment process finds that the proposed venue is not suitable for their event e.g. for Health and Safety or security reasons
- (iii) When choosing the date for an event consider avoiding key University dates such as open days or graduations. To make the event as inclusive as practicable also consider whether there is any adverse impact if the event is organised on, for example, key religious holidays or other days of cultural significance, for example days of remembrance.

- (iv) This procedure applies to all events involving an external speaker and must be followed.
- (v) It is expected that the vast majority of events will be given permission to go ahead at the earliest point in the procedure without the necessity of involving the Decision-Maker.
- (vi) External Users can only organise events through a member of University staff who will be the Event Organiser for the purposes of this procedure.
- (vii) Security costs will not be charged for any External Speaker event during the academic year 2024-2025.

3 The Event Organiser

3.1 The Event Organiser is the person responsible for the event.

The Event Organiser may be:

- A student(s), including a member(s) of
 - A Bristol SU affiliated group
 - An Independent/informal student group
 - A JCRs
 - An Academic (school, faculty or programme-based group)
- A staff member
 - UoB
 - Bristol SU

3.2 Event Organiser: Students and Bristol SU members of Staff

If the Event Organiser is a student or a Bristol SU member of staff they **must** undertake a self- assessment by completing the [Self-Assessment Form](#) to determine whether further scrutiny is required. Once the self-assessment form has been submitted it will be reviewed by the Bristol SU Assessor (or their nominee) who will decide whether the event can be approved at this stage or requires referral to the Decision Maker (see paragraph 4 below).

Event Organisers must:

- 3.2.1 Submit the self-assessment form in accordance with the timescales set out in section 2.3(i) above.
- 3.2.2 Comply with any mitigation required by either the Assessor or the Decision Maker and respond to requests from the Assessor or Decision Maker in relation to the event.

3.3 Event Organiser: University Staff (including where there is an External Users)

If the Event Organiser is a member of University staff they **must**:

- 3.3.1 complete the [Event Organiser \(Staff or External User\) Self-Assessment Form](#) within the timescales set out in section 2.3(i) above.
- 3.3.2 send the completed self-assessment form to external-speakers@bristol.ac.uk and to the relevant Assessor to ensure that there is a formal written record of this stage of the self-assessment process and the Assessor is aware that an event is being organised.
 - If they decide that the risks identified in the self-assessment are low and the answer to question 19 is “No” the event can go ahead and the venue can be booked. It is anticipated that the vast majority of events organised will fall into this category.
 - If they decide that the risks identified are moderate/high the Event Organiser and the Assessor must review the self-assessment and the Assessor must complete the steps set out in section 4.2 below.
- 3.3.3 Comply with any mitigation required by either the Assessor or the Decision Maker and respond to requests from the Assessor in relation to the event.

Please note:

- If the event is to take place outside the UK the Event Organiser must consult with the must consult with the relevant Global Engagement Team (International Education, Partnerships, Civic or Philanthropy) about completing the self-assessment form and before sending it to external-speakers@bristol.ac.uk and the Assessor
- If any Event Organiser is unsure about the answers to any of the questions in the self-assessment form please refer the matter to an Assessor who can direct them to sources of support/advice to assist them to complete the assessment.

On referral to an Assessor the Event Organiser may *provisionally* book the proposed venue.

4 The Assessor

4.1 The Assessors are:

- 4.1.1 The Bristol SU Director of Student Opportunities and Community (or Deputy) where the Event Organiser is a student or Bristol SU member of staff, (This will happen automatically when a student or Bristol SU staff member submits the online self-assessment form).
- 4.1.2 Heads of School where the Event Organiser is a member of academic staff and the event being organised is linked to the Event Organiser's work within the relevant School or Department.
- 4.1.3 Divisional Heads where the Event Organiser is a member of professional services staff or a member of staff (academic or Professional Services) is organising an event on behalf of or in conjunction with a staff group, a staff and student group, a staff network or other organisation such as a recognised trade union.

4.2 The Assessor must:

- 4.2.1 consider the self-assessments passed to them by Event Organisers and complete their assessment in line with the Assessors Risk Assessment Guidance.
- 4.2.2 not impose any mitigation that requires Event Organisers to pay for the security costs of an event but may consider requiring the Event Organiser to change the proposed date for their event or proposed venue for the event on the basis of advice from the University's Security Services.
- 4.2.3 when this assessment is complete, complete the [Assessors Summary Assessment Form](#) and either:
 - 4.2.3.1 If they agree the event can go ahead inform the Event Organiser of any mitigations that are required and ensure that they are put in place; or
 - 4.2.3.2 If they decide that the matter should be referred to the Decision-maker (for example if the Assessor has assessed any of the risks as high) send the Decision Maker their assessment of the risk including suggested mitigations.
 - where Assessor is a Head of School or Divisional Head send their completed Assessors Summary Assessment and a copy of their confirmation to the Event Organiser (including any mitigations they have put in place) and to external-speakers@bristol.ac.uk to ensure that there is a formal written record of this stage of the assessment process.
 - where the Assessor is the Bristol SU Director of Student Opportunities and Community (or Deputy) keep a record of all assessments made.
 - Liaise with the Event Organiser to ensure that all mitigations put in place either by the Assessor or the Decision Maker are complied with.
 - refer the matter to the Decision Maker if the Event Organiser does not comply with the any mitigations put in place.

5 The Decision Maker

5.1 **The University Decision Maker** is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost (or nominee) for events in:

- a UoB venue other than Bristol SU venues (see below)
- external venues being organised by a UoB member of staff in the course of their employment

The Bristol SU Decision Maker is the Bristol SU Chief Executive (or nominee) for events in:

- Bristol SU venues
- external venues being organised by a Bristol SU affiliated student group or Bristol SU member of staff

5.2 The Decision Maker will:

5.2.1 Consider what mitigation could be arranged in accordance with the EHRC Code in order to make it possible for the event to take place.

5.2.2 Decide whether the event can go ahead. Their decision is final. They may give conditional approval, subject to the Event Organiser putting mitigating measures in place.

5.2.3 Require the Assessor to ensure the Event Organiser's compliance with any approval conditions/mitigations and may inform the Event Organiser that the event cannot go ahead if the conditions/mitigations are not met.

5.2.4 If they are not available in the 48 hours prior to the event or on the day of the event refer the matter to their nominee.

5.2.5 Not charge Event Organisers for the security costs of an event but may consider requiring the Event Organiser to change the proposed date for their event or proposed venue for the event on the basis of advice from the University's Security Services.

6 Reporting

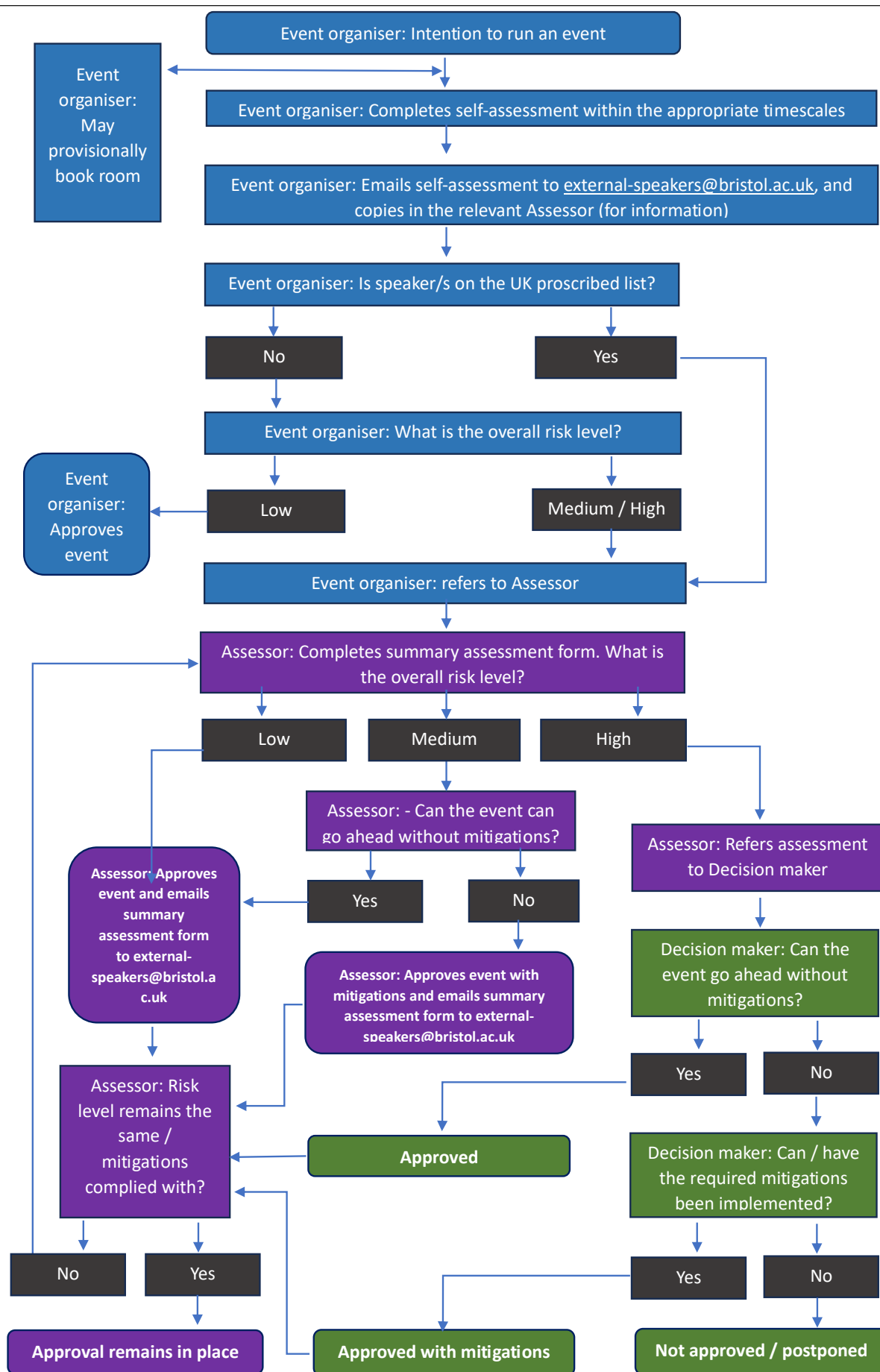
Board of Trustees will receive an annual report on the operation of the External Speaker Code of Practice.

7 Conduct of those attending and organising events.

7.1 In relation to any event organised under this Code all members of the University are reminded of their obligations under the [University's Acceptable Behaviour Policy](#), the [Student Disciplinary Regulations](#) and Staff [Conduct Procedure \(Ordinance 10.4 Code of Conduct\)](#), including their obligation to respect the rights of others to freedom of speech. Bristol SU members are expected to comply with the Bristol SU Code of Conduct.

7.2 If a member of University staff or a student wishes to make a complaint about a matter related to Free Speech and/or academic freedom they may do so under the Procedure for considering complaints raised by staff and students relating to [Free Speech and Academic Freedom](#).

Appendix 1: Process where the Event organiser is a University staff member



Appendix 2: Process where the Event organiser is a student or Bristol SU staff member

