

Content

Policy Statement 2

Definitions 2

Requirements of Safe Space Use 3

Communication of this Policy 4

Visiting Speaker Process 4

Complaints Under this Policy 4

POLICY STATEMENT

The University of Manchester Students' Union believes in liberation for all and everything that we do has equality and liberation at its heart. By enabling all of students to participate in the work that we do, we are helping to progress towards a fairer and more equal society.

Students are expected to respect the right of all members and staff to enjoy the Students' Union as a safe space environment, defined as a space which is welcoming and safe and includes the prohibition of discriminatory language and actions.

This policy is applicable to the whole student community, whether an individual or a member within a group, including but not limited to, Students' Union societies, volunteering projects, assemblies and public social media.

The Students' Union believes students should be free from discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics as set out in equality law. These are age, disability, trans status, pregnancy and maternity, marital status, race, religious beliefs, sex or sexual orientation. The Students' Union also believes that all students should be free from harassment and that no student should be the victim of hate speech.

We are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive space for all students. This space should be built on tolerance and mutual respect, with all students free from prejudice, including on the grounds of socio-economic status, gender identity and culture.

The Students' Union recognises discrimination can occur wherever it is not consciously challenged. Any person in a Students' Union space or attending a Students' Union event, including in non-Students' Union buildings, is accountable for their own language and behaviour. If behaviour is reported that is not in accordance with this policy, members may be asked to leave an event immediately by staff or an elected full-time officer.

The Students' Union believes strongly in the right to free speech within the boundaries of the law and recognises that feeling free to speak one's mind is a key prerogative of any liberation movement. As such, we are committed to taking steps to secure freedom of speech for our members, staff and visiting speakers. However, we acknowledge that this should not be to the detriment of the rights of other individuals and groups. Freedom of speech is important, yet intention to incite hatred is never acceptable.

We understand that balancing free speech with creating an inclusive, safe space can be difficult. Where concerns are raised with us, we are committed to engaging with all parties in good faith and gaining as broad an understanding of issues as possible.

DEFINITIONS

Students' Union refers to the University of Manchester Students' Union Registered Charity number 1144146.

Members of the Students' Union are as defined in the Students' Union Memorandum and Articles of Association.

References to societies apply to all student groups facilitated by the Students' Union whether constituted as societies or not.

References to society committee members apply to leaders of all student groups facilitated by the

Students' Union whether in a formal or informal leadership role.

REQUIREMENTS OF SAFE SPACE USE

Members of the Students' Union must not:

- Violate existing equality law by discriminating against others on the basis of their protected characteristics.
- Create or seek to create an unsafe or intimidating environment for any individual or group of individuals through harassment or unwanted attention.
- Say things that are likely to constitute hate speech by inciting hatred against any individual or group.
- Set up societies or other groups as front organisations i.e. groups that promote ideologies or organisations other than those clearly expressed in their constitutional aims.
- Deny any other member access to opportunities based on any irrelevant characteristic.

Student society committee members must take all reasonable steps to:

- Ensure that all events and activities of their society comply with this policy.
- Ensure that all events and activities of their society involving visiting speakers are granted the proper permissions in line with the visiting speaker process under the University of Manchester's [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#).
- Host events in spaces that are accessible to every student (or in the case of public events members of the public) who might be interested in them.
- Ensure that their society is not being used to promote or recruit to extremist ideologies or groups.
- Protect members and other participants in their activities from discrimination, harassment and hate speech.
- Ensure that opportunities are open to all regardless of any irrelevant characteristic.

Societies and representatives must actively engage with the Students' Union to ensure that visiting speakers at their events:

- Are informed about the terms of engagement agreed upon for the event and do not violate them.
- Are informed that students have the right to actively challenge their views.
- Do not promote or recruit to extremist ideologies and groups.
- Do not promote discrimination, harassment or hate speech.
- Do not incite riot, insurrection or any other activities which are likely to cause a breach of the peace or be otherwise unlawful, beyond the right to peaceful protest.
- Comply with the University of Manchester's [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#).

Societies must actively challenge any speakers or students who:

- Promote extremist ideologies or groups.
- Promote discrimination, harassment or hate speech.
- Incite riot, insurrection or any other activities which are likely to cause a breach of the peace or be otherwise unlawful, beyond the right to peaceful protest.

COMMUNICATION OF THIS POLICY

Every member of the Students' Union is responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy

The Students' Union will highlight this policy to students and others through:

- Publication of the policy on the Students' Union website.
- Training and information provided for all society leaders.
- Announcements at the start of each democratic meeting, including Union Assemblies.
- All other methods as deemed appropriate.

VISITING SPEAKER PROCESS

The Students' Union is here to support student led activity, which includes hosting a diverse visiting speaker program. To enable these events to go ahead safely and with proper consideration of their potential impact, we have in place a visiting speaker approval process. This is set out in the University of Manchester's [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#). All students and societies affiliated to the Students' Union must comply with this process.

Visiting speaker applications should normally be submitted to the Students' Union no less than 21 calendar days prior to the event. This will allow for proper due diligence to be performed and, if necessary, appropriate mitigation measures to be discussed among the organisers, University of Manchester and Students' Union.

COMPLAINTS UNDER THIS POLICY

Complaints received may result in disciplinary action by the Students' Union in accordance with the Students' Union member's disciplinary procedure as set out in the Code of Conduct and/or the Societies Bye-Law. Action that could be taken includes, but is not limited to, being banned from that activity, group or from all Students' Union activity and/or space. Where appropriate, cases may also be referred into the University of Manchester's disciplinary procedure.

Any complaints should be reported through the Students' Union complaints procedure by emailing contact.su@manchester.ac.uk in the first instance.

i. For clarity, reserving opportunities within the Students' Union and student societies for students of the University of Manchester is not prohibited by this – student status is a relevant characteristic in student groups.

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