This policy and procedure is to support Societies and CITY STUDENTS’ UNION to assess the risk of each external guest or speaker request and to reach sound evidence based judgements about the individual, the organisation or the topic to ensure CITY STUDENTS’ UNION meets its various legal obligations.

**WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EXTERNAL GUEST OR SPEAKERS?**

The term “External Guest or Speaker” is used to describe any individual or organisation who is not a student or staff member of City University or affiliated to CITY STUDENTS’ UNION. This includes any individuals who are student(s) or staff member(s) at another institution or Students’ Union.

All events involving an external guest or speaker organised by a CITY STUDENTS’ UNION affiliated and active Society must have approval before they may go ahead, even if the event is being held at a venue or location external to City University. This also includes events where there is to be live streaming or a pre-recorded film/speech of the guest or speaker is to be shown. All venue or room bookings for events or meetings where an external guest or speaker will be provisionally booked pending approval.

An application must be made for each external guest or speaker individually even if one or more guest or speakers are attending the same event. This also applies to guest or speakers you may wish to use as substitutes should your main guest or speaker is not available.

**THE POLICY**

1. Freedom of expression and speech are basic human rights. Open debate is central to the culture of academic freedom, the development of students’ ideas and understanding. These rights are protected by an act of parliament relating to freedom of speech and academic freedom on campus.

2. CITY STUDENTS’ UNION has a duty to ensure student safety and welfare is at the heart of its policies. As such the freedom to express views can sometimes be tempered by the need to secure freedom from harm for students and the City community.

3. Where there may be conflict in relation to controversial speakers or topics, CITY STUDENTS’ UNION is committed to reaching a decision on whether the speaker, topic or event may go ahead using sound judgement and evidenced based decision making based on the evidence supplied in the application form and our own data or research.

4. The President of the Society will be held responsible for the organising of any event where external guest or speakers are in attendance. They will be required to manage the event to ensure that all attendees are made aware of relevant procedures and regulations required for the event to progress.
5. All guests or speakers will be made aware of their responsibility to abide by the law and any City University and or CITY STUDENTS’ UNION regulations and policies. Including but not limited to these conditions of attendance:

**External Guest or Speakers are strictly prohibited from:**

- Encouraging, glorifying or promoting any acts of terrorism, including individuals, groups or organisations which support such acts.
- Inciting hatred, or violence or calling for actions which would break the law
- Spreading hatred and intolerance or disrupting the relationships between CITY STUDENTS’ UNION, City University (including all its staff and students) and external partners.
- Gather or raise funds for any external or third party organisation without the express written permission of CITY STUDENTS’ UNION.

6. Societies must notify CITY STUDENTS’ UNION of any event in which an external guest or speaker will be invited and their members will be attending the event. You must also notify CITY STUDENTS’ UNION if you have postponed or cancelled the meeting.

7. External guests or speakers may be publicised prior to approval being given by CITY STUDENTS’ UNION using the term: To Be Confirmed (TBC).

8. The Society has a duty to inform the Union of any new undisclosed risk that has come to their attention in the lead up to the event even after approval has been given and a risk assessment for the event has been completed.

9. CITY STUDENTS’ UNION reserves the right to cancel and or deny any external speaker at any time, if this procedure and policy has not been followed, if relevant health & safety measures cannot be met or if further evidence is supplied and gives cause for concern.

**RISK ASSESSMENT**

The President is responsible for the possible risk associated with the attendance of the speaker or with the content of his/her presentation.

A risk assessment is made by CITY STUDENTS’ UNION and the University giving careful consideration of what might go wrong if this speaker event goes ahead and then calculating the severity and likelihood of these problems arising.

CITY STUDENTS’ UNION and the University take into account risks in relation to Health and Safety i.e. is there a possibility of anyone being injured and Security i.e. is there a risk of disorder which could put people or property at risk. Clearly these two concerns overlap.

The tables below refer to how we rate the risk level of your speaker event.

Our rating of the risk associated with your speaker or guest will have a bearing on the decision to approve the speaker.
If your event is assessed as carrying a substantial or extreme risk, then you will be required to work in close collaboration with the CITY STUDENTS’ UNION to explore what additional measures could be taken to enable the event to go ahead. In some cases, permission may not be granted.

**How we calculate the risk assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Level</th>
<th>Rating Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low (1)</td>
<td>The speaker or guest is a known expert in their field and is not known to be controversial, or to hold controversial views. His/her presence on University premises is not likely to be regarded as provocative in any way. The topic of the talk is not controversial nor is it likely to be regarded as offensive by anyone. Access to the event is limited to City University students and staff only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable (2)</td>
<td>The speaker or guest may hold a strong position on their topic but this would not be regarded as controversial. The speaker / guest may not have a publicly established reputation in their field. The talk is not likely to be regarded as controversial. It is very unlikely to attract adverse media attention or require staff or security presence. Attendance may be high but the event is open to City University students and staff only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate (3-4)</td>
<td>The speaker and/or topic may be uncontroversial but the event is open to non-City University students and staffs, including the general public and high numbers are likely to attend. The topic may be regarded by some as controversial and this could be a cause for concern even if attendance is likely to be low. There may be a need for some security presence. The event is being held at an external venue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantial (6)</td>
<td>The speaker /guest and/or topic are controversial. There may be adverse media attention and a member of SU staff or security should attend. The speaker has been refused permission to speak at another institution before. Attendance at the event will be high and is open to non-City University students and staff. The event is being held at an external venue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Extreme (9) | The speaker/guest and or topic are highly controversial and will definitely attract adverse media attention. The speaker/guest has been refused permission to attend an event at City University and other institutions before. High attendance is expected at the event. The speaker/guest and or topic may attract protest from other students or outside organisations. Non City University student and staff are invited to attend. Security presence would be essential.  

*The event should not take place unless strict controls are put in place to protect individuals and property.*
**Risk Level Guidelines**

(Calculation is Severity x likelihood)  
(1-2) = Low;  
(3-4) = Medium  
(6-9) = High

**The Procedure**

**Application**

An application for an external guest/speaker to attend an event shall be sent to the Union for approval.  **Applications must be sent to the Union at least 4 weeks prior to the event date.**

Definition of an event is any meeting/debate/discussion that is attended by City University London students whether the event is to be held internally or externally. Only correctly completed application forms will be accepted for processing by the Union.

**Assessment**

**Stage 1**

CITY STUDENTS’ UNION shall carry out its duty of due diligence to assess the risk of the requested external guest/speaker attending the event. The process shall include but not be limited to assessing:

- Level of controversy the external guest/speaker may attract or cause
- Level of adverse media attention
- Health and Safety/Security issues
- The potential for the speakers presence to cause fear or alarm to the student body
- The potential for the guest or speakers presence to give rise to breach of peace
- Adherence to the Union’s Values and Behaviour statement and the student group’s constitutional aims and objectives

**Stage 2**

The University also has to give approval for the external guest/speaker to attend using their own due diligence processes. If approval is given the external guest/speaker may attend the event.
Stage 3
The University has the right not to approve an application for an external guest or speaker if the application fails their due diligence process. If this is the case the Union may appeal against this decision. If the appeal is successful then the external guest/speaker may attend the event.

- If the appeal is unsuccessful the external guest/speaker may NOT attend the event

RESPONSE

Once the Assessment process has been completed a decision on the approval of the external guest/speaker shall be given. If successful the request shall be sent onto the University.

If the request has been denied the applicant shall be informed and a possible appeal process may begin.

Approval may be given with conditions which must be met in order for the event to take place and the guest or speaker to attend. These may include but are not limited to:

- Requiring that the event be filmed by an independent body
- Requiring that the event be observed or attended by CITY STUDENTS’ UNION staff members, and or City University or third party officials
- Requiring that the event by subject to additional security measures
- Requiring that the style of the event be changed to include an opportunity to debate or challenge the views of the guest or speaker
- Requiring that the event be closed to individuals who are not current staff or students of City University
- Requiring that a copy of any speech to be delivered must be submitted to CITY STUDENTS’ UNION

Please note that the Assessment Process is ongoing if additional evidence is produced that the Event itself may not take place under the conditions already stated. The Union and the University has the right to:

- Postpone the event until further notice
- Suspend the event with no notice (even during the event itself)
- Impose further conditions on the event taking place
- Withdraw permission for the event to go ahead
APPEAL

An appeal may be made on the basis that the due diligence process was not carried out correctly by CITY STUDENTS’ UNION. An appeal may be made if circumstances concerning the speaker or topic change following our decision. The appeal will be given to the President of the Union who will appoint someone to review the process. If it is found that the process was carried out correctly then the request remains denied.

If the reviewer finds that the process was carried out incorrectly then the application is resubmitted for due diligence where a decision will again be made to approve or disapprove the request.

If the request is disapproved then the external guest/speaker may NOT attend the event.

There is no further appeal process after this decision has been given.