

2024-25

Central Film School

## External Speaker Policy

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Central Film School recognises that external speakers have brought and continue to bring great diversity of experience, insight and opinion, enriching our events and activities and sparking discussion and debate among our students, staff and visitors alike.
- 1.2. In addition, the School has a legal duty, as a higher education provider, to protect the right to freedom of expression within the law.
- 1.3. The purpose of this policy is to set in place a governing framework for external speakers to ensure that this proud heritage, where debate, challenge and dissent are not only permitted but expected, can continue for current and future generations.

### 2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all events that take place on Central Film School's premises (and offsite events that are Central Film School-branded) which are not organised as part of the curriculum.
- 2.2. Such events might include:
  - extra-curricular talks or presentations organised by academic staff for students on a programme of study;

- a keynote presentation to staff/students/invited guests or a public lecture series;
  - events organised by the Students' Council;
  - an external or jointly organised conference taking place on Central Film School's premises or with Central Film School's branding.
- 2.3. External speakers are speakers who are not registered students or paid employees at Central Film School. The approval of Visiting Lecturers can be managed outside of this policy, unless it is thought that their identity and/or the content of their teaching session(s) raises the sorts of issues outlined in Section 4 of this policy

### **3. Booking an External Speaker**

- 3.1. Anyone organising an event that includes one or more external speakers must follow the process described in this Policy before booking the speaker(s).
- 3.2. The majority of external speaker requests will be straightforward and can be handled entirely at a department level by the staff or students concerned. In these cases, following the steps outlined in Section 4 below will suffice.
- 3.3. However, some requests may be complex and may require referral for further consideration. The referral process will only apply in a minority of circumstances where events or speakers are deemed to be higher-risk.

### **4. Assessment of Proposed External Speakers**

- 4.1. At least 1 month prior to the confirmation of any external speaker, the event organiser will be responsible for assessing the speaker against the following set of questions:
- **Question 1:** Has the speaker previously been prevented from speaking at Central Film School, or another university or similar establishment, or previously been known to express views that may be in breach of the External Speaker Code of Conduct?
  - **Question 2:** Does the proposed title or theme of the event present a potential risk that views/opinions expressed by the speaker(s) may be in breach of the External Speaker Code of Conduct?
  - **Question 3:** Is the proposed speaker/theme likely to attract attendance from individuals/groups that have previously been known to express views that may be in breach of the External Speaker Code of Conduct?

- 4.2. If the answer to all three questions is **NO**: The event organiser can approach the Student Services Coordinator with the suggested guest speaker. Should the SSC agree, they will then seek the approval of the Student Services Team. Once this is given, the event organiser and SSC can work together on creating the event.
- 4.3. If the answer to any of the questions is **UNCLEAR**: The event organiser must seek guidance from their line manager, the Prevent Lead, or the Student Services Team, whose responsibility it will be to further review the speaker(s) against the questions above.
- 4.4. Ultimately, if the answer to any of the questions is **YES**: It is the responsibility of the event organiser to submit a referral, via email, to the Senior Registry & Quality Manager at least 3 weeks prior to the event. In these cases, NO speaker(s) can be confirmed (booked) prior to the event organiser receiving authorisation.
- 4.5. Please note that events should not be advertised until the assessment has been undertaken and any subsequent referral has been green-lighted.

## **5. External Speaker Monitoring**

- 5.1. The School values, embraces and is totally committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. This commitment is defined, formally, in Central Film School's Equality and Diversity policy
- 5.2. The Student Services Team will monitor the outcomes of decisions to ensure that the School's responsibility for equality, diversity and inclusion is being appropriately enacted.

## **6. Complaints Procedure**

- 6.1. If an individual (a member of staff, a student, or an external visitor) feels that there has been a breach of this Policy, they can follow the standard CFS Complaints Policy & Procedure.

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