



MONT ROSE<sup>®</sup>  
COLLEGE

# EXTERNAL SPEAKER POLICY

## 2023-2025

**Approved by:** Academic/Quality Assurance Board  
**Date of approval:** 18/05/2023  
**Effective date:** 18/05/2023  
**Next review date:** 30/05/2025

## **Introduction**

Anyone organising an event at Mont Rose College must follow the External Speaker Booking Process detailed below.

The majority of external speaker requests will be straightforward and can be handled entirely at a departmental level.

Some requests may be complex and may require referral for further consideration. This will apply in a minority of circumstances – to events or speakers deemed to be higher-risk.

## **Assessment of proposed external speaker(s)**

The External Speaker Code of Conduct should be sent to the speaker prior to the event and the confirmation that it was read and understood by the speaker received two weeks prior to the event.

Prior to the confirmation of any external speaker, the event organiser together with Events Organising Officer at Mont Rose College, will be responsible for assessing the speaker against the following set of questions:

- Has the speaker previously been prevented from speaking at any other College or similar establishment or previously been known to express views that may be in breach of the External Speaker Code of Conduct?
- Does the proposed title or theme of the event presents a potential risk that views/opinions expressed by speakers may be in breach of external Speaker code of Conduct?
- 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?

If the assessment is satisfactory and meets the requirements set in the External Speaker Code of Conduct and the External Speaker Policy, the event organiser can confirm the external speaker and register them to speak at the event.

If any of the above questions raise some confusion or concern, the event organiser must seek guidance from their line manager, head of function, whose responsibility it will be to further review the speaker against the questions above.

If the answer is yes to any of those questions above, the responsibility of decision will be forwarded to the Principal.

## **Legal Context**

- The duty to secure freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law

Section 43(1) of the education act 1986 places a direct obligation on Educational Institutions to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students, employees and visiting speakers

Free speech is fundamental to the role of Mont Rose College.

As a matter of law, educational institutions in England and Wales have a statutory duty to secure freedom of speech, reflecting their mission as places where new ideas can be advanced and where open and free debate can take place. The Education Act (No 2) 1986 requires the educational institution to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for its employees, students and visiting speakers. The Mont Rose College therefore requires all employees and students to tolerate and protect the expression of opinions within the law.

However, whilst the law promotes and protects freedom of speech, it also requires to ensure the public order and safety. The College recognises that it has a legal responsibility to create a balance between minimising the possibility of extremism or unlawful conduct and ensuring that it meets its legal obligations in relation to securing freedom of speech.

Academic Freedom is to be able to teach and conduct the research in an academic environment without the influence of religion, politics or other factors. This is very important for students and staff at Mont Rose College.

- Human Rights Law

The Human Rights Act 1998 protects the personal rights, prohibits harassment, defamation and unlawful breach of human rights, unfair treatment.

- Equality Law

The College owes duties to both staff and students under the Equality Act 2010 (in England, Wales and Scotland), and in some respects these duties can extend to the activities of external speakers. The Equality Law prohibits unlawful discrimination, namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- Criminal Law (including anti-terrorism laws)

Harassing, threatening, breach of the peace and terrorism all come under criminal law

- The Duty of Care to Staff, Students and Visitors

The College has duties under health and safety legislation to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their employees and students.

- Civil Law Claims Relating to Spoken Words

An external speaker can be liable for defamatory or false remarks.

- Data Sharing

Where the College wish to share information, they can only do so in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

- The Law Relating to Security Staff

- Students' Unions

- The information about external speakers could be shared with other providers, where legal and appropriate.

The External Speakers/Referrers could submit their requests for registration to campaign manager [safeguarding@mrcollege.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@mrcollege.ac.uk)

The External Speaker Policy was approval by BOG, continuously reviewed and updated on annual basis.