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| Version number: | 2.0 |  |
| Policy owner: | Director of Student Support and Transition |
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Freedom of Speech Code of Conduct

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| This Policy has been reviewed and supersedes all previous issues. It has undergone the following approval process: | | |
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| Equality Analysis |  |  |
| LT&SE Team |  | 20 May 2020 |
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| The Policy was last issued in February 2016  The principal changes relate to: | | |
| Section/Paragraph | Title | Change: |
| Front page |  | New cover sheet |
| Throughout |  | Formatting |
| Page 1 | Introduction | Removal of note to add link to SU policies |
| Page 1 | Principles S.4 | Link to Equality and Diversity Policy inserted |
| Page 2 | Principles S.5 | References and links to the University’s Electronic  Information Security Policy and the Social Media Policy inserted. Reference to a toolkit for the use of social media deleted. |

**Freedom of Speech Code of Conduct**

# Introduction

Our Freedom of Speech Code of Conduct sets out the principles which underpin the procedures to be followed by University staff and students and by any other party using, or seeking to use, University premises for a meeting or activity1, and the conduct required in respect of any such meeting or activity. The Code also applies to off-campus activities held in the University’s name, and to the promotion on campus of off-campus activities.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to enable the University to meet its duties under Section 43 of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986 to take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for students and staff of the University and for visiting speakers regarding the organisation of meetings and other activities on University premises.

For the purposes of this Code, reference to University premises includes premises occupied

by the University of Chichester Students’ Union.

# Principles

1. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right and is protected under the Human Rights Act 1998. Higher Education Institutions play an important role in enabling students and staff “to express, encounter, negotiate and enjoy difference in a climate of respect and

learning”. The University has a particular obligation to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured. This includes a duty to ensure that the use of University premises is not denied to an individual or group based on their beliefs, views, policy or objectives.

1. Freedom of speech is not, however, an absolute right. The University is not required to provide a platform for views which are contrary to the civil or criminal law. It is mindful of its other legal obligations which may require it to have regard to what is said on its premises. For example, its duty to ensure that staff, students and others who engage with the institution are protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and that good relations between individuals and groups are facilitated. The University also has due regard for the need to ensure security and its statutory duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
2. In balancing its responsibilities in terms of both ensuring freedom of speech and academic freedom, and also protecting student and staff welfare, the University will act reasonably and proportionately and in accordance with its values, policies and the law.
3. The University’s [Equality and Diversity Policy](https://www.chi.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-statements/inclusivity-equality-and-diversity/inclusivity-documentation) sets out the University’s commitment to promoting equality, diversity and human rights, and to sustaining an environment which is free from all forms of unfair treatment, discrimination and harassment for all those who study, work and engage with the institution.

1 University of Chichester [External Speaker or Performance / Event Policy](https://www.chi.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-statements/freedom-speech)

1. Staff and students are expected to adhere to the University’s rules on the use of information communication technology set out in the [Electronic Information Security Policy](https://www.chi.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-statements/it-information-and-web). These prohibit the creation, display, production or circulation of material which is illegal or likely to cause offence. Additional guidance on the use of social media is provided in the University’s [Social Media Policy](https://www.chi.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-statements/it-information-and-web). Students are also bound by the University Disciplinary Procedures and staff by the Staff Disciplinary Policy.