External Speaker Policy and Procedure

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Notes	This document should be used in conjunction with the: HBXL Adult Safeguarding Policy HBXL Prevent Policy HBXL Freedom of Speech Policy

1. Aims and Scope

HBXL Skills Academy is committed to providing a balanced and inclusive environment which encourages critical thinking, open discussion, and respectful debate. This policy sets out the procedures for requesting, assessing and approving external speakers and events. The aim is to ensure all events align with HBXL's values and safeguarding responsibilities.

This policy applies to:

- All HBXL Skills Academy staff and learners
- External individuals or organisations requesting to deliver talks, workshops, or presentations, such as HBXL Skills Academy alumni and employer partners
- Events held both on-site and online under HBXL's name

2. Definitions

Event: Any gathering that is hosted on HBXL premises, an external venue or online in the name of HBXL, that includes a speaker addressing a group, including in a teaching, learning or research setting or in the context of a curricular activity.

External Speaker: Any individual or organisation invited to speak who is not directly employed by HBXL Skills Academy.

Event Organiser: The staff member or learner responsible for arranging the event or speaker session.

3. Speaker Request Procedure

Step 1: Submission of Request

An External Speaker Request Form must be completed by the Event Organiser and submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at least 14 working days before the event. See Appendix 1 for the External Speaker Request Form.

Step 2: Initial Review

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) will review the External Speaker Request Form and assess the request via the External Speaker Initial Review questions in Appendix 2. They will consider:

- Relevance to the curriculum or learner development
- Compliance with safeguarding, Prevent Duty, and equality and diversity policies
- Risk of reputational damage or controversial content

Step 3: Risk Assessment

If a risk is highlighted during the initial review through a "Yes" response to any of the first four questions, the aim will be to facilitate the event but to ensure it can take place safely. A full risk assessment will be completed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Where risks that a proposed speaker or event could incite violence or hatred, discriminate against people with protected characteristics, defame a person or organisation, spread hate or violence, or encourage or promote acts of terrorism, the request will be referred to the Skills Academy Lead. The Skills Academy Lead will seek advice and guidance from relevant internal and external stakeholders. Any recommendation to cancel or amend the arrangements for a proposed speaker or event will be approved by the Skills Academy Lead.

Step 4: Approval or Rejection

The decision will be communicated within 5 working days of the request. If approved, the organiser will receive a confirmation. If rejected, clear reasons will be provided, and an opportunity to appeal may be offered.

4. Speaker Code of Conduct

All external speakers must:

- Abide by the values of HBXL Skills Academy: respect, inclusivity, and professionalism
- Follow safeguarding and health and safety guidelines
- Avoid promoting discrimination, extremism, or partisan political views
- Refrain from inciting hatred, using offensive language or inciting others to break the law

5. On-the-Day Procedure

All speakers must sign in and provide ID at reception, for in-person events.

A member of staff must be present throughout the event to monitor content and behaviour.

Any unexpected deviation from the approved content must be reported immediately.

6. Post-Event Review

After the event, the feedback form in Appendix 3 must be completed by the staff member or event organiser. Ideally, attending learners will also have the opportunity to give feedback on the event. Any concerns raised will be investigated by the DSL and recorded.

7. Non-Compliance

Failure to follow this procedure or any violation of the code of conduct may result in:

- Termination of the event
- Barring the speaker from future events
- Referral to relevant authorities (in safeguarding or legal cases)

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every 2 years by the Safeguarding Team, or sooner if required by changes in law or guidance.

Appendix 1: External Speaker Request Form

To be completed by the Event Organiser

Event Organiser Details

Event organiser's full name	
Event organiser's role	
Event organiser's email address	

External Speaker Details

External speaker's full name	
External speaker's organisation	
External speaker's background or connection with HBXL • Highlight any that apply • If you highlight "Other", please provide further details	HBXL Skills Academy Alumni Local Business Business Partner Academic Local Authority Other

Event Details

Date and time of event	
Length of event	
Location of event	
Topic of event • If linked to a module, provide the module name • Provide an outline of the content	
Purpose of event • Highlight any that apply • If you highlight other, please provide further details	Careers Employment Knowledge Exchange Research Training Other
Target audience	
Expected number of attendees	
Any promotional materials or slides? If yes, please attach a copy	

Appendix 2: External Speaker Initial Review and Risk Assessment

Initial Review

To be completed by the DDSL.

Question	Yes/No
1. Is the proposed speaker or event a political or religious figure or topic?	
2. Could the speaker be seen as a controversial figure?	
3. Could the topic of the event be seen as controversial?	
4. 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 Freedom of Speech Policy?	
Initial Review completed by	
Date	
Full Risk Assessment Required? If Yes, provide reasons.	

Full Risk Assessment

To be completed by the DSL, if there is a "Yes" response to any of the first four questions.

Question	Yes/No
5. Has the speaker been refused to speak here or at any other educational establishment before?	
6. Is the subject of their talk or the organisation they represent like to mobilise significant opposition, such that there might be a risk to safety of the public or members of the HBXL Skills Academy community?	
7. Does the speaker, or the organisation they represent have a controversial profile in the in the media and therefore likely to attract a heightened media interest?	
8. Is the event likely to attract unusual interest or unusually large numbers?	
9. Is the speaker representing an organisation proscribed by the UK Government?	
10. Is the speaker likely to raise concerns under the Prevent Duty guidance in terms of encouraging violent extremism or terrorism, or drawing people into terrorism?	
11. Is it likely that the speaker could do any of the following? a. Incite hatred or violence; harass the assembly by using hate speech; cause a breach of the peace or is likely to transgress the bounds of lawful free speech or assembly. b. Discriminate against or harass any person or group on the grounds of sex; gender reassignment; race, nationality or ethnicity; disability; religious or other similar belief; sexual orientation; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy or maternity or age. c. Defame any person or organisation. d. Spread hatred and intolerance. e. Encourage or promote any acts of terrorism or promote individuals, groups or organisations that support terrorism.	
Risk Assessment completed by	
Date	
Approved or Declined? If declined, provide reasons.	

If a risk is identified during the full risk assessment, the DSL must refer the External Speaker Request to the Skills Academy Lead.

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Appendix 3: External Speaker Feedback Form

To be completed by the Staff Member/Event Organiser after the event

Event Organiser Details

Event organiser's full name	
Event organiser's role	
Event organiser's email address	

External Speaker Details

External speaker's full name	
External speaker's organisation	

Event Details

Date and time event took place	
Length of event	
Actual number of attendees	

Event Feedback

Was the speaker's content and delivery appropriate for the event? Did the speaker cover the intended topic?	
Was the aim of the event achieved? Did the event have the intended impact on the audience/learners?	
Would you recommend the external speaker for future events?	
Do you have any concerns about the external speaker or event? If Yes, please give details and forward this form to the DSL.	