

## Freedom of Speech on our Campus

Freedom of Speech is enshrined in both Students' Union UCL's Memorandum & Articles of Association, Byelaws and in the UCL Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech. Our Parent institution is bound by Section 43 of the Education Act 1986, which places a direct obligation on Universities to 'take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students and employees of the establishment and for visiting speakers'.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore the Human Rights Act 1998 Articles 9, 20 and 11 enshrine the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of expression and freedom of assembly and association.<sup>2</sup>

The Union is committed to empower and support our clubs and societies to organise invitations for a variety of speakers that stimulate debate and further the non-academic development of our members. We will facilitate events where speakers are allowed the right to express their views and experiences, while differing, challenging and antithetical views are also heard and debated in a safe space.

*Note: The Union has not adopted the NUS No Platform Policy however we do have a policy that seeks to Fight Racism Fight Fascism which may have implications for which organisations or individuals we are able to host.<sup>3</sup>*

There are limitations on this commitment set by UK Law that protects individuals and groups from intimidation, discrimination and the incitement of a crime. The Union is bound by a number of different statutes and regulations and must always ensure that freedom of speech is maintained within this legal framework. In order to maintain our duty of care for the health and safety of all staff, students and visitors in particular we will:

- Do all that is reasonably practicable to protect our members from unlawful direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Not allow communication which is threatening, abusive or insulting, or intended to harass, alarm or distress.
- Not allow communication which targets a person, or group of people based on their skin colour, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender (sexual or identified), age, disability, marriage and civil partnership.
- Reaffirm that it is a criminal offence to incite or encourage others commit a crime, including acts of terrorism.

We ask that all speakers and event attendees are respectful of the beliefs and opinions of others.

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<sup>1</sup> Education Act (2) 1986, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga.1986/61>

<sup>2</sup> Human Rights Act 1998, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

<sup>3</sup> UCLU Policy 1238 Fight Racism Fight Fascism, <http://uclu.org/sites/uclu.org/files/policies/up1238.pdf>