

Policy and Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech & Freedom of Expression

The object of this Policy, the Code of Practice and related policies is to delineate how Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Expression are protected by and operated within the law at the RVC.

Version	2.4
Status	FINAL approved
Responsible Officer /Department	Secretary to Council
Approvals	Academic Board - 23 rd March 2016
	Senior Management Group - 25 th April 2016
	Council – 22 nd June 2016
Review Date	

Policy and Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech & Freedom of Expression

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This Policy and Code of Practice sets out the manner in which the Royal Veterinary College wishes to meet its duties under the Education (No.2) Act 1986 (Section 43) Freedom of speech in universities, polytechnics and colleges (Appendix A). The primary duty is that: *'(1) Every individual and body of persons connected in the government of any establishment to which this section applies shall take such steps as are reasonably practical to ensure freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students and employees of the establishment and for visiting speakers.'*

1.2 The object of this Policy, the Code of Practice and related policies is to delineate how Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Expression are protected by and operated within the law at the RVC.

2. Context

2.1 The RVC is committed to its values. These are defined as: *"a combination of professionalism and commitment, manifest in a culture of compassion and caring, that speaks to others of our respect for our heritage, our dedication to quality and innovation, our devotion to the advancement of knowledge and the alleviation of suffering"*, and they are given further effect by the College Charter which exhorts its members to work *"ethically and with integrity and not to take any action which would be detrimental, irresponsible or unreasonable in the view of society"*.

2.2 The principle of academic freedom is enshrined in our Charter

6. The Code of Practice

6.1 Definitions:

- **Organiser(s)** of the event, where there are more than one party involved they are all considered the responsible party, but one individual should be designated as the *Principal Organiser*.
- **Host:** A host is defined as an individual responsible for inviting, accommodating and otherwise facilitating the visit of another individual or group on RVC Premises.
- **Guest:** an attendee at an event, a friend or colleague etc.
- **Speaker:** Any individual who will be speaking /facilitating an event, group discussion or meeting
- **Meeting/ Event:**

Appendix A

- Education Act (No. 2) 1986 (Section 43) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/61/section/43>
- Education Reform Act 1988 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/section/202>
- The Human Rights Act (Article 10) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/schedule/1/part/I/chapter/9>
- EHRC Guidance on Freedom of Expression
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/freedom-expression-guide-higher-education-providers-and-students-unions-england>
- UNESCO definition of Academic Freedom
http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13144&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
- Public Order Act 1986 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/64>
- Terrorism Act 2000
 - i. Support Offence: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/section/12>
 - ii. List of Proscribed Organisations:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/472956/Proscription-update-20151030.pdf
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
 - i. General Duty: