

## University of Cambridge

### Committee on Prevent and Freedom of Speech

The Committee is a joint committee of the Council and the General Board. The Committee will exercise general oversight in ensuring that the University meets its obligations under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 ('the Prevent duty') and its obligations under the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 (to secure freedom of speech), and any successor or related legislation.<sup>1</sup>

It shall be the duty of the Committee:

- To set and oversee the University's strategy in the various areas of activity in which the University is required to deliver compliance under the Prevent duty
- To keep under review the University's Prevent risk register and action plan and its underpinning policies and procedures, ensuring that these are robust, transparent, risk-based and proportionate and adjusted as necessary in the light of experience
- To keep under review measures to secure freedom of speech and academic freedom in the University
- To engage actively with relevant partners and, in particular, the Colleges, Cambridge University Press and Assessment (CUP&A) and the Student Union
- To monitor and review the resource requirements involved in delivering compliance with the Prevent duty and freedom of speech duties at the University
- To ensure that the University meets its regular and incidental Prevent duty and freedom of speech reporting requirements to the Office for Students and any other bodies
- To receive regular reports from its Referral Group and any working groups
- To make reports and recommendations to the Council and the General Board as necessary

In fulfilling its terms of reference, and mindful of the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and the need to have particular regard for the importance of free speech within the law, the Committee will consider whether any decisions that it takes, on policy or other matters, could directly or indirectly (and positively or negatively) affect free speech within the law and record in its decisions any significant points arising from these deliberations.

The Committee is constituted as follows:

(a) The University Prevent Lead as Chair

(b) Ex officio membership:

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<sup>1</sup> Updates to these terms of reference were approved with effect from 1 August 2024, being the date from which the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 had been expected to be in force. The legislation has not been substantively commenced and these terms of reference will be revised as necessary in due course. The relevant statutory duties to secure freedom of speech are those set out in section 43 of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986.

i. University

The Head of Education Services  
The Head of the Postdoc Academy  
The Director of Human Resources  
The Director of Health, Safety and Regulated Facilities  
The Head of Public Affairs  
The Chief Information Security Officer  
The Deputy Director of Academic Centres (Student and Professional Services), Institute of Continuing Education  
The President of Cambridge SU (Undergraduate) (for unreserved business)  
The President of Cambridge SU (Postgraduate) (for unreserved business)

ii. Colleges

The Chair of the Colleges' Committee  
The Chair of the Senior Tutors' Committee  
The Head of the Office of Intercollegiate Services

iii. Cambridge University Press and Assessment

A representative from Cambridge University Press and Assessment

(c) One Head of School, nominated by them from amongst their number

(d) One person appointed by the Council from amongst its number

(e) The Senior Proctor  
The Junior Proctor

Secretary: The University Prevent Coordinator (unless otherwise agreed by the Registry in consultation with the Chair). The Secretary may be supported by an Assistant Secretary.

The Chair of the Committee may, from time to time, delegate the Chair to a suitable deputy.

The Chair of the Committee may, from time to time, invite other persons to attend for particular items of business in a non-voting capacity.

Members in non *ex officio* classes shall be appointed in the Michaelmas Term to serve for two years from 1 January.

Members in *ex officio* classes are permitted to send deputies to meetings.

The Committee will normally meet once a term. The Chair may call additional meetings as required. The Committee may also determine business by circulation.

Any seven members shall constitute a quorum. Decisions shall be reached by consensus or, at the discretion of the Chair if required, by simple majority vote of those members present and voting, with the Chair's vote being casting if necessary. The same principles regarding decision-making shall be observed in the case of business progressed electronically.

The Committee shall establish a Referral Group to consider concerns raised under the Prevent duty regarding either individuals or meetings/events, as well as concerns raised on other grounds regarding meetings/events. Its membership shall be:

The Chair of the Committee on Prevent and Freedom of Speech (Chair)  
The Senior Proctor  
A University Teaching Officer  
The Head of Education Services  
The Head of Public Affairs  
Either the President of Cambridge SU (Undergraduate) or the President of Cambridge SU (Postgraduate) (for unreserved business)

The Chair of the Referral Group may, from time to time, delegate the Chair to a suitable deputy.

Members of the Group in *ex officio* classes may be represented by deputies. The Secretary to the Committee on Prevent and Freedom of Speech shall act as Secretary to the Referral Group. The Referral Group may engage advisors as necessary to assist it (e.g. in order to clarify issues pertaining to the University's legal responsibilities or the welfare and mental health of students).

The Committee also has the right to establish such working groups as may be necessary from time to time.