

**The University and the Prevent Duty:  
A Briefing Note for Heads of Institutions and Institutional Administrators**

***This briefing contains hyperlinks to important supplementary guidance and forms. All information and documentation referred to can be found at [www.prevent.admin.cam.ac.uk/](http://www.prevent.admin.cam.ac.uk/)***

## **1. Brief background**

The Prevent Duty is part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, which was passed by Parliament in February 2015 and came into force in July of that year. Higher education institutions (HEIs) are required to meet certain legal obligations under the duty, the application and success of which will be monitored by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. An additional document – [Prevent explainer: how the University is responding](#) – provides detailed information on the history of the Prevent duty, its principal aims, what is expected of HEIs, and how the University of Cambridge is dealing with it.

## **2. Purpose of this note**

Heads of Institutions and administrators have a vital role to play in helping the University meet its statutory obligations under Prevent by familiarising themselves with the key issues in this briefing and sharing this information with staff in institutions. Administrators are requested to draw particular attention to the amendment to the room-booking process, staff training requirements, and how to raise a confidential concern about an individual in the unlikely event that this should be necessary.

## **3. Key issues to be aware of**

### **[\(a\) There is an updated Code of Practice on Meetings and Public Gatherings on University Premises](#)**

*What's new?*

- A procedure has been added to the room-booking process to deal with cases where a request to hold a meeting or an event for external speakers might be refused for reasons highlighted by the Prevent Duty. This applies to Faculties and Departments as well as central offices. Reasonable grounds for refusal under Prevent would include, but would not be limited to:
  - An external speaker or speakers who were known to be members of proscribed organisations,
  - The likelihood that views expressed at the meeting or event would risk drawing people into terrorism, or are the views of proscribed groups,
  - The likelihood that the event would incite others to commit a violent or illegal act,
  - The event would pose a genuine risk to the welfare, health or safety of members of the University or the public, or might give rise to a breach of the peace.

*What action is required?*

- It is for the relevant authority with responsibility for assessing room-booking requests to consider whether there may be grounds for refusal under Prevent. If the relevant authority believes there are reasons to refuse permission, the request to refuse permission should be sent to the Prevent Referral Group by emailing [preventconfidential@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:preventconfidential@admin.cam.ac.uk) with a statement of concerns. This referral should be made no later than seven working days in advance of the proposed event. Further details on the referral process are described in the Code of Practice.

### **(b) There is new guidance on booking meetings and events**

*What's new?*

- [There is a new form](#) that should be used to hold a speaker or other event on University premises,
- It includes guidance on [carrying out a risk assessment](#) if there are concerns about an event or an external speaker, and actions to take if the risk assessment merits further consideration by the Prevent Referral Group.

### **(c) Procedure for raising a concern under Prevent**

This document provides advice to those working in both the Colleges and University on what to do if there is a concern about a student or member of staff in relation to the Prevent duty.

### **(d) Training and guidance for staff**

All staff should be aware of the process of radicalisation, definitions of extremism and how to raise concerns in this context. Heads of Institutions should encourage all their staff to complete the online learning *Module 1 – The Prevent Duty in HE: Introduction*. The link to the Prevent Training Moodle site is above. A Raven login is required. There are also face to face briefings aimed at Heads of Institutions and others in understanding their role in safeguarding students and colleagues in the context of the Prevent duty.

Staff who are responsible for providing pastoral or student support should also complete the online learning *Module 5 – A Student and Staff Wellbeing Issue: Safeguarding, Pastoral Care and Student Support*.

Other Prevent-related training and support is available via the Prevent Training Moodle site.

*Further questions? Email [prevent@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:prevent@admin.cam.ac.uk)*