



# Freedom of Speech Policy

## Freedom of Speech Statement

Academic freedom and freedom of speech are fundamental to our nature as an apprenticeship Training Provider. In the pursuit of new knowledge, free and open debate is crucial. We will therefore seek at all times to encourage a culture of vigorous and fearless discussion within the law that ensures critical thinking, and which challenges violent extremist and illegal narratives and those who seek to promote them.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anil Godhawale'.

Anil Godhawale  
Managing Director

## Fundamental principles

The role of London Metropolitan College and our parent company the Projcon Group Limited (LMC) in ensuring free speech is reinforced in two pieces of legislation:

1. The Education Act 1986 states that: 'persons concerned in the government of any establishment shall 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.' LMC will not, therefore, as far as is reasonably practicable, deny access to its premises to individuals or bodies on the basis of their beliefs, views or policies.
2. The Equality Act 2010 covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

The associated public sector equality duty requires education providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

## Code of Practice

This Code of Practice applies to all staff, students, governors, visiting speakers and to all events and activities held within LMC premises.



LMC expects students, staff, governors, and visitors to ensure freedom of speech within the law is assured. There is also an expectation that students, staff, governors, and visiting speakers will demonstrate sensitivity to the diversity of the LMC student community and to show others respect.

LMC will always seek, in the first instance, to allow an event to go ahead. However, an event which creates an environment of fear, harassment, intimidation, verbal abuse or violence (or which encourages support for or participation in violent acts), particularly as a result of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation, is likely to be unlawful and will not be permitted to go ahead.

The following procedure should be followed where there are concerns:

1. If students, staff, governors believe that an event they are organising poses a risk under this Code, they are required to refer the matter in the first instance to the Managing Director. No advertising of the event is permitted until a decision is reached on its compliance with the Code of Practice.
2. The Managing Director will make an initial assessment. If he decides the event complies with the LMC Code of Practice, it can go ahead. They may, however, require the organisers to put in place safeguards, such as extra security or a strong and well-informed chair with the power to intervene or close the event down if there is a breach of the Code. They may also require the organisers to record the event, so there is no dispute afterwards about what was said by whom.
3. A named Principal Organiser should be identified for each event who is responsible for the booking and control arrangements and conduct of the events including stewarding and moderating, chairing, monitoring and entry.
4. The organisers of the event will be responsible for any extra expense incurred.
5. If the Managing Director decides the event poses too great a risk under the Code, they may decide to consult with students, staff or other groups before coming to a final decision, or take legal advice. The Managing Director's decision will be final and will not be subject to appeal.
6. The expression of views that may be controversial, but do not breach the law, will not constitute reasonable grounds for refusal. Reasonable grounds for refusal would include: incitement to commit a criminal act; unlawful expression of views; support for an organisation whose aims are illegal (e.g. an organisation prohibited under law); the creation of an environment likely to give rise to a breach of the peace.
7. If an event has been advertised, students and staff may still make representations to the Managing Director if they feel it breaches the LMC Code of Practice. If the event is allowed to take place, they will be allowed the right to peaceful protest for one hour prior to the event taking place. They will not be permitted to interfere with the running of the event.



8. Wilful breach of this Code will be dealt with under LMC disciplinary procedures and, if necessary, by recourse to law.
9. LMC will withhold the right to use LMC premises if it fears there is a likelihood of this Code being breached.



London Metropolitan  
College