

## Purpose and Scope

This policy articulates Murdoch University's principles for decision making in relation to events and speaking engagements that have the potential to include sensitive topics.

This policy applies to all staff, students, and visitors of the University and to all events or speaking engagements held on the property or facilities of the University, or in the name of the University at an any location.

## Policy

1. In this policy, the following words have the following meanings:
  - 1.1. 'Event or Speaking Engagement' means any event organised or speaker engaged to attend the University's property or facilities, or under the name of the University.
  - 1.2. 'Duty to Foster the Wellbeing of staff and students':
    - 1.2.1. Includes the duty to ensure that no staff or student suffers unfair disadvantage or unfair discrimination on any basis recognised at law including race, gender, sexuality, religion, and political belief;
    - 1.2.2. Includes the duty to ensure that no staff or student is subject to threatening or intimidating behaviour by another person or persons on account of anything they have said or proposed to say in exercising their Freedom of Speech;
    - 1.2.3. Supports reasonable and proportionate measures to prevent any person from using lawful speech which a reasonable person would regard, in the circumstances, as likely to humiliate or intimidate other persons and which is intended to have either or both of those effects; and
    - 1.2.4. Does not extend to a duty to protect any person from feeling offended or shocked or insulted by the lawful speech of another.
  - 1.3. 'Sensitive topic' refers to an issue or subject that needs to be managed with care because it is likely to cause strong emotional reactions in some people.

2. This policy must be read in conjunction with the [Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Regulations](#).
3. Planned Events or Speaking Engagements will not be permitted if they:
  - 3.1. Are unlawful.
  - 3.2. Compromise the University's duty to foster the wellbeing of staff and students.
  - 3.3. Fall below the University's scholarly standards to an extent that would be detrimental to the University.
4. If the planned Event or Speaking Engagement does not fall under the "non-permitted categories" and is assessed to be sensitive, a risk assessment must be undertaken using the [Murdoch University Risk Management Framework](#) as described in the [Event Approval Procedure](#), that considers the following elements at a minimum:
  - 4.1. Reputation
  - 4.2. Disruption to operations
  - 4.3. Law and order
  - 4.4. Hate speech
  - 4.5. Safety and wellbeing of Staff and Students
5. The University maintains the position to provide an environment where ideas can be freely expressed and debated within the constraints of the law.

## Governance

<b>Approval Authority</b>	Senior Leadership Team
<b>Owner</b>	Vice Chancellor
<b>Legislation mandating compliance</b>	
<b>Category</b>	Primarily a function of management
<b>Related University Legislation and Policy Documents</b>	<a href="#">Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Regulations</a> <a href="#">Murdoch University Risk Appetite</a> <a href="#">Murdoch University Risk Management Framework</a> <a href="#">Event Approval Procedure</a>
<b>Date effective</b>	17/06/2024
<b>Review date</b>	17/06/2027

## Revision History

Approved/Amended	Date Approved	Resolution No. (if applicable)
Approved	17/06/2024	

*Please refer to the electronic copy in the Policy and Procedure Manager to ensure you are referring to the latest version.*