



NTC

Code of Practice –
Freedom of Speech, Events
and Speakers Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Nazarene Theological College (*NTC*) recognises that freedom of speech and expression within the law has fundamental importance within the higher education sector. *NTC* recognises its obligations under Section 43 of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986 to take measures to protect freedom of lawful speech and expression and the importance of doing so.

The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA) makes clear that all universities and colleges that register with the Office for Students (OfS) must uphold the existing laws around freedom of speech and follow the OfS's regulatory framework. In noting this, the Office for Students 'Guidance related to Freedom of Speech' (Regulatory Advice 24) requires providers to "to take the steps that, having particular regard to the importance of freedom of speech, are reasonably practicable for it to take in order to secure freedom of speech within the law for its students, staff and members and for visiting speakers [and] to maintain a code of practice setting out matters relating to freedom of speech."¹

The Office for Students: Prevent duty: Framework for monitoring in higher education in England 2018-19 onwards (12 September 2018), sets out how the Office for Students will monitor providers' implementation of the statutory 'Prevent duty' in the higher education sector in England.

NTC also recognises the need to ensure that academic staff members have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without placing themselves at risk of losing their jobs or any associated privileges they may have at Nazarene Theological College.

1.2 This Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech sets out the rights and obligations inherent within the principles of freedom of speech and expression and academic freedom. The Code shall be construed and applied in the spirit of upholding those principles wherever reasonably practicable within the law.

1.3 The Code's rights and obligations shall apply to:

- *NTC*, as an institution, including members of the Board of Governors;
- all members of *NTC* staff and/or those working on behalf of *NTC*;
- all duly enrolled students of *NTC* (whether full or part-time);
- the Student Council, and any of its societies, clubs or associations which normally operate on *NTC* premises; and;
- all persons invited by *NTC* to speak, perform, or otherwise take part in events to be held on *NTC* premises in accordance with the provisions of this Code.

1.4 References in the Code to "*NTC* premises" include premises which are owned and/or controlled by *NTC*.

¹ [https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-advice-24-guidance-related-to-freedom-of-speech/introduction/#:~:text=The%20Act%20protects%20free%20speech,the%20'code'%20duty\).](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-advice-24-guidance-related-to-freedom-of-speech/introduction/#:~:text=The%20Act%20protects%20free%20speech,the%20'code'%20duty).)

2. Freedom of Speech and Expression

2.1 *NTC* shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech and expression within the law is secured for every person to whom this Code's rights and obligations apply.

2.2 Every person to whom this Code's rights and obligations apply shall assist *NTC* in upholding this Code of Practice on freedom of speech.

2.3 *NTC* will not suppress freedom of thought and expression. However, Nazarene Theological College has a duty to ensure, wherever practicable, that such expressions do not constitute incitement to riot, insurrection, racial hatred, religious hatred, sexual harassment or other activities (beyond the right of peaceful protest).

2.4 Every person to whom this Code's rights and obligations apply shall refrain from organising or engaging in or otherwise being associated with any conduct intended to prevent the enjoyment of rights under this Code.

2.5 *NTC* shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable (including, where appropriate and following proper investigation, invoking disciplinary measures) to ensure that the obligations under this Code are complied with.

3. Events and Teaching

3.1 *NTC* has the responsibility to maintain good order on its premises. It has the right and the power to regulate and, if necessary, to impose conditions or restrictions upon activities such as teaching, performances, meetings and demonstrations held or proposed to be held on its premises. Any such events must comply with this Code.

3.2 **Visiting Lecturers and external speakers:** *NTC* has a number of visiting teaching staff giving one-off classes and masterclasses. Where a discussion is required concerning the content of proposed teaching, any rationale for restrictions will be determined by the Dean and colleagues, noted and recorded centrally by the Dean.

3.3 **External Speakers - Student Council:** The Student Council or student societies of *NTC* may have events which involve external speakers. It is assumed that these activities will be engaged in discussions relevant to the purpose of Nazarene Theological College. Where discussion is required concerning the content of the proposed activity any rationale for restrictions will be noted and recorded centrally by the faculty representative.

3.4 *NTC* will not unreasonably refuse to allow events to be held on its premises, subject to section 3.5 below.

3.5 In determining whether the holding of an event on *NTC* premises might reasonably be refused, where appropriate, consideration should be given to:

- the safety of persons attending the event and persons on *NTC* premises who might foreseeably be put at risk;

- the security of *NTC* premises; and
- the good name and reputation of *NTC*.

4. Practical Measures

4.1 *NTC* should permit the use of *NTC* premises only by organisers of events, whether internal or external, who undertake to comply with all lawful instructions issued by *NTC* in relation to the location, arrangements and conduct of such events, including adequate stewarding and moderating, chairing, monitoring, and the provision of adequate control over entry.

4.2 In cases in which it is reasonable to assume that there is a possibility of disruption at an event, *NTC* may consult with external agencies regarding the security arrangements required.

4.3 In all circumstances, a named Principal Organiser should be identified within the external organisation, who is responsible for the booking and control arrangement of the event, and who will be held responsible for maintaining public order and, as far as possible, securing compliance with this Code.

4.4 Any organisers of any event held on *NTC* premises shall be responsible for any costs involved in organising and holding such events and for ensuring, as far as possible, that nothing in the organisation and holding of such events infringes the law, or *NTC* regulations, in any way.

5. Sanctions and Penalties

5.1 A student, or staff member in breach of this Code may be subject to action being taken against them under the relevant *NTC* procedure.

5.2 Where those responsible for the breach are students or staff of a partner organisation of *NTC* the Principal (or nominee) shall inform the partner organisation with a view to that partner organisation taking action under its disciplinary or other relevant procedure.

5.3 Where a breach of this Code takes place at an event, *NTC* may take steps to assist the police in identifying any persons committing offences with a view to appropriate action being taken against them.

6. Review and Amendment of the Code

6.1 *NTC* will normally review this Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech every three years or as legislation dictates.

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