



External Speaker Procedure (HE)

Version	1
Owner	Academic Board
Approving body	Board of Directors
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See Appendix A for version history

External Speaker Procedure (HE)

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Procedure sets out the operational process for managing Higher Education events involving external speakers at Boomsatsuma Education Ltd ('Boomsatsuma'), including arrangements for review, approval and monitoring. It is available to provide guidance to event organisers, external speakers, attendees and other interested parties.
- 1.2. It exists to support the implementation of Boomsatsuma's Freedom of Speech Policy and Code of Practice [\[Link\]](#), ensuring that lawful freedom of speech is secured and promoted while meeting relevant legal and regulatory obligations, including those arising from the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 [\[Link\]](#).
- 1.3. In applying this Procedure, Boomsatsuma will take reasonably practicable steps to secure and promote lawful freedom of speech. This Procedure will be applied in a manner that seeks, wherever reasonably practicable, to enable the lawful participation of external speakers and the delivery of events, with proportionate mitigations where risks are identified.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This Procedure applies to Higher Education events involving external speakers, whether held on Boomsatsuma premises, online, off-site under Boomsatsuma branding, or in partnership with external organisations.
- 2.2. It applies to Higher Education staff, students and any individual organising or hosting an event on behalf of Boomsatsuma.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. For the purposes of this Procedure, an 'external speaker' is any individual who is not a current employee or student of Boomsatsuma and who is invited to contribute to, speak at, present at, facilitate or otherwise participate in an event, session or activity associated with Boomsatsuma in a speaking or authoritative capacity. This includes participation in person, online or through pre-recorded contributions where the contribution forms part of the event content.
- 3.2. An 'event' is any organised activity associated with Boomsatsuma where ideas, information, teaching, performance, discussion or presentation are shared. This includes, but is not limited to, lectures, talks, seminars, workshops, panels, performances, conferences, public discussions and student-led events involving external speakers. Events may take place on Boomsatsuma premises, online, or at an external venue where the activity is organised, branded, funded or supported by Boomsatsuma.

4. Relationship to Freedom of Speech Policy

- 4.1. This Procedure gives effect to Boomsatsuma's Freedom of Speech Policy and Code of Practice.
- 4.2. All decisions made under this Procedure must be consistent with the principle that lawful freedom of speech should not be restricted solely because views may be controversial, challenging, unpopular or offensive.
- 4.3. Where risks arise, Boomsatsuma will seek to ensure that any restriction on lawful freedom of speech is lawful, necessary and proportionate. In relation to Higher Education activities, this may be informed by relevant Office for Students guidance, including the OfS three-step 'Framework for Assessment' [\[Link\]](#).

5. Event Requests

- 5.1. All Higher Education events involving external speakers must be submitted for approval by the External Speakers Panel using the External Speaker Booking Form (found on the Staff Info Portal). Requests should normally be submitted as early as reasonably practicable and, wherever possible, at least 15 working days before the event takes place.
- 5.2. Where an approved event is subsequently modified or rescheduled, organisers must notify the External Speakers Panel via externalspeakers@boomsatsuma.com as soon as reasonably practicable. Any material changes, such as changes to the speaker, topic, format, venue or intended audience, must be approved before the event is advertised or takes place.
- 5.3. Organisers must provide sufficient information to allow appropriate review, including:
 - The name and details of the external speaker(s)
 - The topic or subject matter of the event
 - The intended audience
 - The format, venue and timing of the event
 - The named organiser responsible for ensuring the event is delivered in accordance with Boomsatsuma's Freedom of Speech Policy and Code of Practice and this Procedure
 - Details of how attendees will be able to engage with or respond to the ideas presented
 - A preliminary assessment of any reasonably foreseeable risks.
- 5.4. Events must not be advertised, confirmed or delivered until approval, or reapproval where required, has been granted under this Procedure.
- 5.5. Boomsatsuma recognises that opportunities to engage external speakers may arise at short notice. Late requests will be considered wherever reasonably

practicable but may be refused where insufficient time is available to complete an appropriate assessment.

6. Review or Event Requests

- 6.1. Boomsatsuma will assess all proposed events on the basis that they should proceed unless there are lawful grounds for restriction or refusal.
- 6.2. The External Speakers Panel is responsible for reviewing event requests and determining whether approval should be granted, whether conditions should be applied, or whether refusal is justified. In making decisions under this Procedure, Boomsatsuma will seek to ensure that any restriction on lawful freedom of speech is lawful, necessary and proportionate to the risks identified.
- 6.3. The External Speakers Panel will normally comprise:
 - Head of Higher Education or nominee (Chair)
 - At least one other senior member of the Higher Education team
 - Other parties as appropriate to the nature of the event
- 6.4. The review process may consider:
 - Whether any unlawful activity is likely to occur
 - Whether there is a risk of harassment, discrimination or incitement to violence
 - Whether there are safeguarding, health, safety or security concerns
 - Whether the rights, freedoms or safety of others may be adversely affected
 - Whether reasonable and proportionate mitigations could reduce identified risks.
- 6.5. Where risks are identified, Boomsatsuma will seek, wherever reasonably practicable, to enable the event to proceed through proportionate mitigation rather than cancellation.

- 6.6. The protection of freedom of speech does not extend to unlawful expression or conduct that infringes the legal rights of others. There is no general right to be protected from offence within the law. The fact that views may be controversial, challenging, unpopular or offensive will not, in itself, justify refusal of an event.
- 6.7. Boomsatsuma will ensure that individuals involved in the review and approval of events receive appropriate training and guidance to support consistent and lawful decision-making.

7. Outcomes of Event Requests

- 7.1. Following review, an event may be:
- Approved with no conditions
 - Approved with conditions or mitigations
 - Deferred pending further information
 - Refused where there are lawful grounds to do so and identified risks cannot be mitigated through reasonably practicable and proportionate measures.
- 7.2. Conditions may include, but are not limited to:
- Use of a specified chair or moderator
 - Appropriate security arrangements
 - Adjustments to format or venue
 - Restrictions on items that attendees may bring to a venue
 - Requirements relating to attendance management
 - Requests for additional information necessary to assess legal, safeguarding or safety risks
 - Restrictions relating to event promotion or communications.
- 7.3. Where conditions are applied, Boomsatsuma will seek to ensure that they are proportionate and do not undermine lawful freedom of speech.

- 7.4. Organisers must agree to any conditions attached to approval. Where agreement cannot be reached, approval may be withdrawn and the event may not proceed.
- 7.5. Appeals against decisions under this Procedure may be submitted within five working days via externalspeakers@boomsatsuma.com. Appeals will be considered by the Director of Education, provided they were not involved in the original decision. Where the Director of Education was involved in the original decision, the appeal will be considered by another appropriate member of the Executive Committee.

8. Event Delivery and Oversight

- 8.1. Event organisers are responsible for ensuring that agreed conditions are implemented.
- 8.2. Organisers must ensure that external speakers receive relevant information regarding Boomsatsuma's Freedom of Speech Policy and Code of Practice and are informed of any conditions attached to approval.
- 8.3. Boomsatsuma reserves the right to monitor events to ensure compliance with approved arrangements.
- 8.4. During an event, Boomsatsuma may take immediate action to pause or terminate an event where there is an imminent risk of:
- Unlawful activity
 - Serious harm
 - Serious breach of safety or security
- 8.5. Lawful protest is permitted. However, protest must not prevent or obstruct the lawful exercise of freedom of speech by others.

- 8.6. Access to Boomsatsuma premises will not be denied solely on the basis of an individual's lawful views or beliefs.
- 8.7. Boomsatsuma reserves the right to withdraw approval for an event where new information arises that materially affects the original assessment.

9. Breaches, Concerns and Complaints

- 9.1. Failure to comply with this Procedure, including the requirement to seek approval for external speakers or to implement conditions attached to approval, may result in the cancellation or withdrawal of an event.
- 9.2. Where non-compliance is identified after an event has taken place, Boomsatsuma may take action under relevant staff or student procedures where appropriate. Where there is reason to believe that a breach of the law has occurred, Boomsatsuma may refer the matter to the relevant authorities and may defer internal processes pending the outcome of any investigation or proceedings.
- 9.3. Concerns relating to an external speaker event may be raised before, during or after the event. Organisers are responsible for ensuring that concerns raised during an event are recorded and addressed appropriately.
- 9.4. Complaints relating to the conduct of an event or the outcome of a review under this procedure may be submitted to externalspeakers@boomsatsuma.com. Boomsatsuma will acknowledge receipt of a complaint within 5 working days and will normally provide a substantive response within 20 working days.

10. Recording and Monitoring

- 10.1. Boomsatsuma will maintain records relating to the operation of this Procedure in order to support transparency, consistency and compliance with relevant legal and regulatory obligations.

10.2. Records will include:

- Event requests and subsequent amendments
- Decisions and any conditions applied
- Reasons for refusal where applicable
- Reported breaches of the Procedure
- Concerns raised before, during or after events
- Complaints relating to events or decisions.

10.3. Summary information relating to the operation of this Procedure will be reported periodically to the Academic Board to support oversight, identify themes and inform improvements to policy and practice.

10.4. Records relating to external speaker events will be retained securely in accordance with Boomsatsuma's records management arrangements.

11. Review

11.1. This Procedure will be reviewed periodically by the Academic Board to ensure it remains aligned with relevant legislation, regulatory expectations, and provider practice.

Appendix A – Version History

Version	Date	Changes
1	10 June 2026	New draft