Prevent Policy Statement

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places an obligation on the University to, “in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.” This is known as the “Prevent Duty”.

Statutory guidance has been issued setting out how higher education institutions should meet the Prevent Duty. This can be found at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance). The guidance states that “due regard” means that Universities “should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions”.

Compliance with the Prevent Duty is monitored by HEFCE and further details can be found at [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/reg/prevent/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/reg/prevent/).

The University also has a legal obligation to ensure freedom of speech and protect academic freedom. Equality and academic freedom are enshrined in our Charter of Incorporation as principles of the University and our Freedom of Speech Code of Practice sets out the University’s view that freedom of speech, within the law, is fundamental.

The University is committed to maintaining a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all members of our community, encouraging debate and discussion, whilst seeking to safeguard those that are vulnerable. It is within this context that we seek to balance the legal obligations placed upon us.

This Policy Statement sets out the University’s approach to the Prevent Duty.

Scope of the Policy Statement

This Policy Statement applies to all officers, students and staff of the University. It also applies to contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers and agency workers.

Although the University’s Council has overall responsibility for the University’s compliance with the Prevent Duty, it has agreed that the Vice-Chancellor will discharge this obligation, supported by the Security Services Manager.

This Policy Statement will be reviewed from a legal and operational perspective once a year. The Security Services Manager will ensure that appropriate training will be provided for all employees who may deal with concerns raised under the Policy Statement or otherwise be involved with the University’s response to the Prevent Duty.

University responsibilities

The University has taken a risk-based approach to balancing the Prevent Duty with its other legal obligations. It has sought to put in place appropriate measures to identify, understand and minimise the risk of its members being radicalised or drawn into terrorism.

The University has a long and rich history of regularly welcoming external speakers from around the world to its campuses. However, in common with the wider higher education sector, the University has
identified external speakers as a small but potential risk to its staff and students. As such, it has an External Speaker Policy which must be followed in organising events involving external speakers.

**Raising concerns**

Any student or member of staff may become concerned that an individual within the University is at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Concerns can be about terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism, or where individuals are at risk of moving from extremist (albeit legal) groups into terrorist-related activity. The Prevent Duty Guidance defines “extremism” as “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs and calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas”.

This Policy Statement places no requirement on staff or students to deliberately spy on members of our community, to challenge individuals directly or to determine whether an external referral should be made about an individual. Staff and students are encouraged to be mindful of conduct by individuals within the University that may indicate that they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to act appropriately to balance supporting those individuals with safeguarding others within the University and beyond.

In this context, staff or students with concerns of the nature described above should refer those concerns to the Security Services Manager or contact prevent@reading.ac.uk. All referrals made in this way will be treated sensitively, securely and, so far as possible, confidentially. If you are unsure whether to make a referral of a concern under this policy, you are encouraged to speak to your personal tutor, Head of School or student wellbeing (if you are a student) or your line manager, Head of School or Head of Function (if you are a member of staff).

If there is an immediate threat to any individual or property, you should notify the police by calling 999, as well as advising Security on 6300.

Otherwise, referrals will be considered and, where appropriate, investigated by the Security Services Manager or his or her nominee. Following this investigation internal action may be taken. Serious concerns, following discussion with the Vice-Chancellor as appropriate, may be subject to an external referral. Concerns will only be shared externally where there is a clear and compelling requirement to do so.

A confidential record of action taken under this Policy Statement, including external referrals, will be retained. All information will be held and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the University’s Data Protection policy.

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<td>The Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Council</td>
<td>21 March 2016</td>
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Flowchart: Reporting Concerns Relating to Prevent

Concern Identified

Raise informally (to Personal Tutor, Wellbeing, Head of School, Head of Function or Line Manager)

Raise formally?

NO → No further action

YES → Immediate threat to individual or property?

NO

Call 999

YES

Notify Security on ext.6300

NO

Notify Security Services Manager or email prevent@reading.ac.uk for investigation

Serious concern?

NO → Appropriate internal action and record retained

YES → External referral necessary?

NO

YES → Appropriate external referral and record retained