namss National Association for Managers of Student Services

External Speakers Policy

1. Policy Statement

We recognise that speakers offer a breadth of opportunity, learning and enrichment for our members and others who choose to participate in NAMSS events. Open debate is central to the culture of academic freedom and the development of ideas, understanding and tolerance.

This framework relates to the engagement of external speakers at NAMSS events to ensure that contributions align with NAMSS' values - Inclusive, Collaborative, Integrity - and uphold lawful free speech whilst rejecting hate speech, discrimination or incitement to violence.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all NAMSS organised events, including but not limited to in-person conferences and NAMSS online sessions, where individuals who are not members of the NAMSS Executive Board are invited to speak, host or present.

3. Approval Process

Speakers will be approved by at least 2 members of the Executive Lead Team based on their expertise and relevance to the themes being explored. The decision making process, which could include a range of due diligence checks, will promote a diverse and inclusive speaker base reflecting a range of backgrounds, perspectives and experiences. The approval process will take into account the potential for the speaker to:

- Cause NAMSS to be in breach of its duty under the Equality Act 2010, the Charities Act 2011 or Counter-terrorsim & Security Act 2015
- Cause NAMSS to breach safeguarding and data protection legislation or to fail in its wider legal duties
- Cause reputational risk or damage to NAMSS
- Cause fear or concern or, give rise to a breach of peace by being present at an in-person event

NAMSS will not approve a speaker with the sole purpose of representing a political party or candidate.

A copy of this policy will be shared with all confirmed event speakers.

4. Regulatory Steps

The Executive Board may choose to approve a speaker with regulatory steps in order to reduce any potential risks identified. Steps may include:

- The content being filmed or recorded
- The content being observed by a member of the Executive Board

- A speaker promoting a particular view must encourage debate or challenge of the view during their session
- A copy of materials used by the speaker be submitted to the Chair in advance of the speech

5. Guidance for speakers

Speakers are expected to:

- Operate within a framework of positive debate and challenge, without seeking to insult other faiths or groups
- Respect the values of equity, equality, diversity and inclusion
- Avoid language or materials that incite hatred, violence, discrimination or call for the breaking of the law
- Comply with all applicable law and policies including, but not limited to, Charity Commission, Safeguarding, Prevent Duty and Health & Safety.
- Clearly state verbally or via presented or event materials that: *This session is not endorsed in any way by NAMSS*
- Not to encourage, glorify or promote acts of terrorism including individuals, groups or organisations that support or endorse such acts
- Not to spread hatred and intolerance in the community or aid in disrupting social and community harmony
- Not to raise or gather funds for any organisation or cause without the express advance permission of the Chair
- Not to promote any external groups, meetings, organisations or activities without the express advance permission of the Chair

6. Cancellation

NAMSS reserves the right to cancel a speaker's participation in any NAMSS organised event at any time if their inclusion could compromise safety, legality or NAMSS' reputation.

7. Concerns & Complaints

Concerns or complaints about a speaker must be made via email or the 'Contact Us' form on the NAMSS website. Please include the following in the message:

- The name of the speaker and date of the event
- A description of the concern including clear information relating to the approval criteria listed in Section 3.

Email: reporting@namss.ac.uk Website: https://www.namss.ac.uk/contact-us/

8. Investigation and Response

- **Acknowledgement:** You will receive an acknowledgement email within 5 working days.

- **Investigation:** An impartial Executive member will be allocated to investigate your report.
- **Response:** NAMSS will endeavour to complete the investigation within 28 days subject to the complexity of the situation. A written response will be provided on completion of the investigation.
- **Action:** Appropriate action will be taken which may include cancelling a speaker or implementing regulatory steps (see Section 4).

9. Confidentiality and Support

All concerns and complaints will be handled confidentially and sensitively. Information will only be shared with those directly involved in the investigation. Support will be offered to those affected.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or following any serious incident that indicates a need for changes.

Last Reviewed: November 2025	Next Review Date: November 2028