

# Code of Practice for Meetings and Public Gatherings on College Premises

Section 43 of the Education (No2) Act 1986 requires the College to publish a code of practice on meetings and public gatherings on College premises. This code of practice is to be followed by all College members when organising meetings and events on College premises regardless of whether the event is indoors or outdoors.

Fellows, staff and students of the College are reminded that alleged breaches of the general regulations for discipline or of the rules of behaviour applicable to current registered students or of any relevant conditions of employment may be brought before the relevant disciplinary authority.

## Statement on Freedom of Speech

St John's College is committed to freedom of speech and its statement can be found [here](#). This Code of Practice should be read in conjunction with the College's Statement on Freedom of Speech.

## Authority and approval processes for meetings and events on College premises

All meetings and events held on College premises are required to have at least one event organiser who is a member of the College. If a meeting or event is proposed by an external group or individual without a College member involved in the event organisation, the event may only proceed on the condition that a College member to whom this Code applies is identified or nominated as the organiser responsible for the meeting or event.

Approval is required for all meetings and events to be held on College premises, indoors or outdoors. It is anticipated that, in most cases, such approvals will be given in a straightforward manner as part of the normal booking process. However, in the exceptional circumstances that the event approver considers that the holding of a meeting or event might reasonably be refused because of the duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, or for some other valid reason as indicated in the College's Statement on Freedom of Speech, there is a process of escalation to the College Officers. Only College Officers may refuse permission in this way and on these bases.

Should the event approver have any concerns over a meeting or event booking request then the request will be forwarded to the Head Porter and Domestic Bursar in the first instance with a statement of the concerns. This referral should be made at least ten working days in advance of the proposed meeting or event. If the Head Porter and Domestic Bursar are concerned that a particular forthcoming meeting or event needs to be escalated to College Officers (Master, Senior Tutor, Domestic Bursar) to review collectively then they may do so directly. The College Officers will, in consultation as necessary, determine whether the meeting or event can go ahead as originally planned, or in alternative premises, on a different date, or in a different format. Only in exceptional circumstances, for example when there are risks which cannot be mitigated or the event organiser refuses to meet any conditions which may be imposed, will permission be withheld. An organiser who challenges the College Officers' decision has the right of appeal to Council.

Any decision by the College Officers (including one upheld on appeal) that a meeting or event should not take place, or may only take place subject to conditions, is binding and takes precedence over any other decision which may have been taken by any other body or officer in the College.

## **Organisation and management of meetings and events on College premises**

Organisers of meetings and events must comply with any terms and conditions set by the College authorities in respect of the organisation of the meeting or event. Such terms and conditions may include the requirement that tickets should be issued, that an adequate number of stewards or security staff should be available, that the Police should be consulted and their advice taken about the arrangements, and that the time and/or place of the meeting should be changed. The cost of meeting the conditions, and the responsibility for fulfilling them, rests with the organisers of the event.

## **Other legal considerations**

The attention of organisers of meetings and events is drawn to sections [11](#) and [14](#) of the [Public Order Act 1986](#), concerning the conduct of processions and assemblies. Other legal requirements may also affect the conduct of meetings and events. These include incitement to violence, actions likely to cause a breach of the peace, or actions likely to stir up racial hatred. Meetings and events, even if directed to lawful purposes, cease to be lawful if they cause serious public disorder or a breach of the peace.

The attention of organisers is also drawn to the Licensing Act 2003. This act requires that licensable activities operating under the authority of any Premises Licence must promote the four Licensing Objectives i.e. the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm.

## **Application of this code**

Any person who is in any doubt about the application of this policy to any meeting or event in the College must consult the relevant Event organiser who, in consultation with the Domestic Bursar, will determine whether the provisions of the policy apply.