

Code of Practice in regard of Meetings on College Premises

Section 43 of the Education Act (No 2) 1986 places a duty on the College to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for its members, students and employees and for visiting speakers. A copy of the section is annexed to this code.

The section also requires the College to issue and keep up to date a Code of Practice to be followed by students, other members and employees of the College about the organisation of meetings that are to be held on College premises, and about the conduct required of those persons in connexion with meetings. This code of practice therefore applies to all students, other members and employees of the College in respect of meetings on any of the College's premises. Outdoor, as well as indoor, meetings etc, on College premises are included. Nothing in the code of practice, however, shall in any way reduce the rights or duties which a member of the College may have under the Statutes and Ordinances of the College.

The attention of student members of the College is drawn to the following College regulations for discipline:

- (a) No member of the College shall act in a manner which is prejudicial to good order or to the good name of the College.
- (b) No member of the College shall intentionally or recklessly impede freedom of speech or lawful assembly on College premises.
- (c) No member of the College involved in making arrangements for a meeting or other assembly on College premises shall intentionally or recklessly fail to give any notice which is required to be given under the terms of a code of practice issued by the College under the provisions of Section 43 of the Education (No 2) Act 1986.
- (d) All members of the College shall comply fully with the University regulations for discipline.

These regulations apply to *all* meetings held on College premises, including meetings organised by conferences and other outside bodies; and members of the College are reminded that actions that disrupt meetings or impede freedom of speech or lawful assembly will also constitute offences under the University's regulations for discipline: see below.

Organisation of meetings on College premises

Authorisation is required for all meetings (including dinners) to which speakers who are not resident members of the College are invited and for all other meetings organised by junior members of the College at which more than 12 persons are expected to be present, whether or not the meeting is open to the public. A general authorisation may be issued in writing to cover a number or a series of meetings organised by an individual, society, or group, but otherwise advance authorisation must be obtained from the Senior Tutor, or in the case of student members of the College from their own Tutor. Normally, a period of notice will be expected of (i) not less than 24 hours in advance in the case of a meeting where not more than 25 persons can reasonably be expected to be present, and (ii) not less than 15 days in advance where more than 25 persons are expected to be present. In exceptional

circumstances shorter periods of notice may be accepted at the discretion of the Tutor concerned. If a room is to be reserved a booking must be made through the Porters' Lodge or other relevant authority. An application for authorisation should state the name of the member of the College taking responsibility for the meeting, the date and time of the meeting, the place, the names, addresses and colleges (if any) of the organisers, the name of the organisation making the arrangements, and the name of any expected speaker, whether or not a member of the University. This requirement extends equally to meetings and gatherings in junior members' own rooms, if more than 12 persons are expected to be present.

The organisers of a meeting to which the previous paragraph applies must comply with any conditions set by the College authorities in respect of the organisation of the meeting or other activity and the arrangements to be made. Such conditions may include the requirement that tickets must be issued for public meetings, that an adequate number of stewards should be available, that the services of porters should be hired, that the police should be consulted about the arrangements, that the time and place of the meeting shall be changed, and that the meeting may be ordered to be cancelled on account of a threatened breach of the peace. The cost of meeting these requirements, and the responsibility for fulfilling them, rests with the organisers.

Conduct at meetings on College premises

The organisers of any meeting on College premises, and persons attending the meeting, must comply with instructions given by any College officer or by any other person authorised to act on behalf of the College (including the Proctors) in the proper discharge of their duties. The attention of members of the College is drawn to the College regulations on discipline including those listed above. Any person attending a meeting who is not a Resident Member of Christ's College may be required at any time to leave the College's premises, notwithstanding any payment that may have been made for attendance at the meeting and under such circumstances it is the responsibility of the organisers to make any appropriate reimbursement.

The University

The provisions of Section 43 of the Education (No 2) Act 1986 apply also to the University in respect of all its members, students and employees and visiting speakers. A College may invite the Proctors to enter its premises and authorise them to act in the discharge of their University duties. Members of the College are reminded that University disciplinary regulations apply on College premises as elsewhere in the precincts of the University, and their attention is particularly drawn to the following University regulations for discipline:

- (a) No member of the University shall intentionally or recklessly disrupt or impede or attempt to disrupt or impede the activities and functions of the University or any part thereof, or of any College.
- (b) No member of the University shall intentionally or recklessly impede freedom of speech or lawful assembly within the precincts of the University. No member of the University shall intentionally or recklessly fail to give any notice which is required to

be given to a University officer or a University authority under the terms of a code of practice issued under the provisions of Section 43 of the Education (No 2) Act 1986.

- (c) All members of the University shall comply with any instruction given by a University Officer, or by any other person authorised to act on behalf of the University, in the proper discharge of his duties.
- (d) All members of the University shall state their names and the Colleges to which they belong when asked by a Proctor or Pro-Proctor, or other person in authority in the University or in any of the Colleges in the University.

Other legal requirements

The attention of organisers of public meetings and assemblies is drawn to Sections 11 and 14 of the Public Order Act 1986, concerning processions and assemblies. Other legal requirements may affect the conduct of meetings. A speaker, for example who incites an audience to violence or to breach of the peace or to racial hatred commits a criminal offence. Equally, assemblies of persons, even if directed to lawful purposes, cease to be lawful if they threaten serious public disorder or breach of the peace. Attention is also drawn to the provisions of the Licensing Acts which require the licensee to maintain good order on licensed premises, and give him the power to expel persons from the premises if he considers it necessary.

Application of the Code

Any person who is in any doubt about the application of this Code of Practice to any meeting or public gathering in the College is under an obligation to consult the Senior Tutor, or in the case of student members of the College their own Tutor, who will determine whether the provisions of the Code apply.

Breach by any member of the College of any of the requirements of this Code may be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

Annex: Section 43 of the Education (No 2) Act 1986

43. (1) *Every individual and body of persons concerned in the government of any establishment to which this section applies shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students and employees of the establishment and for visiting speakers.*
- (2) *The duty imposed by subsection (1) above includes (in particular) the duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the use of any premises of the establishment is not denied to any individual or body of persons on any ground connected with –*
- (a) the beliefs or views of that individual or of any member of that body; or*
 - (b) the policy or objectives of that body.*
- (3) *The governing body of every such establishment shall, with a view to facilitating the discharge of the duty imposed by subsection (1) above in relation to that establishment, issue and keep up to date a code of practice setting out –*

- (a) *the procedures to be followed by members, students and employees of the establishment in connection with the organisation;*
 - (i) *of meetings which are to be held on premises of the establishment and which fall within any class of meeting specified in the code; and*
 - (ii) *of other activities which are to take place on those premises and which fall within any class of activity so specified; and*
 - (b) *the conduct required of such persons in connection with any such meeting or activity; and dealing with such other matters as the governing body consider appropriate.*
- (4) *Every individual and body of persons concerned in the government of any such establishment shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable (including where appropriate the initiation of disciplinary measures) to secure that the requirements of the code of practice for that establishment, issued under subsection (3) above, are complied with.*
- (5) *The establishments to which this section applies are;*
- (a) *any university;*
 - (b) *any establishment which is maintained by a local education authority and for which section 1 of the 1968 (No. 2) Act (government and conduct of colleges of education and other institutions providing further education) requires there to be an instrument of government; and*
 - (c) *any establishment of further education designated by or under regulations made under section 27 of the 1980 Act as an establishment substantially dependent for its maintenance on assistance from local education authorities or on grants under section 100 (1)(b) of the 1944 Act.*
- (6) *In this section;*
- “governing body”, in relation to any university, means the executive governing body which has responsibility for the management and administration of its revenue and property and the conduct of its affairs (that is to say the body commonly called the council of the university);*
- “university” includes a university college and any college, or institution in the nature of a college, in a university.*
- (7) *Where any establishment -*
- (a) *falls within subsection (5)(b) above; or*
 - (b) *falls within subsection (5)(c) above by virtue of being substantially dependent for its maintenance on assistance from local education authorities;*
 - (c) *the local education authority or authorities maintaining or (as the case may be) assisting the establishment shall, for the purposes of this section, be taken to be concerned in its government.*
- (8) *Where a students’ union occupies premises which are not premises of the establishment in connection with which the union is constituted, any reference in this section to the premises of the establishment shall be taken to include a reference to the premises occupied by the students’ union.*