

Policy for VIP Visits to the University

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Department:	Marketing, Communications, Admissions and Communications
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Related policies:	Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech Events Policy Health and Safety Policy Prevent Policy
Policy History	This is a revision to the original policy dated June 2012

Version History

Version	Author	Revisions Made	Date
1	Sam Jones	First Draft	28 May 2012
2	Sam Jones	Revision to Policy	30 January 2018

Approval History

Committee Sign Off

Version	Committee Name	Date of Sign Off
1	Executive Board	26 June 2012
2	Executive Board	27 February 2018

Equality Analysis

Version	Reviewed By	Comments	Date

1	Introduction
	<p>A VIP is a person who is accorded special privileges or treatment due to their status. Visits to the University of Surrey by a VIP provide a key opportunity to raise the profile of our institution, to promote our achievements and to realise our strategic ambitions.</p> <p>The University must ensure that VIP guests are accorded appropriate regard and security, and that the highest possible professionalism is brought to the planning and management of such visits.</p>
1.1	Purpose of Policy
	<p>To establish the University's procedures for interacting with VIPs to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate staff and departments are informed in good time • the University takes full advantage of the opportunities presented the visit • an effective media and communications plan can be implemented • any potential risks are managed and appropriate measures are put in place to support and protect the visitor • the positive reputation of the University is protected • records of VIP engagement across the University are maintained centrally <p>It should be noted that this Policy is intended to support staff to engage with VIPs in the interests of the University and its objectives. The principles and procedures outlined are not intended to interfere with or replace the networks and connections that exist, but to enhance them.</p>
1.2	Scope
1.2.1	This Policy applies to any visit to the University by a VIP guest, whether they be attending or speaking at an event or conference, attending a meeting, or visiting a facility.
1.2.2	<p>This Policy applies to the following VIPs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royalty, Royal Representatives and International Dignitaries such as Ambassadors and High Commissioners • Members of Parliament including Government Ministers, local government officials and international politicians • Diplomats and Senior Public Servants • Chairpersons and Chief Executive Officers of major companies and organisations • Senior officers from charitable trusts • Heads or senior officers of higher education bodies (e.g. HEFCE, Research Councils, etc) • High profile and notable Academics (Nobel prize winners, Presidents, Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors or equivalent of other universities) • Religious leaders / Heads of Church
1.3	Legislative Context
1.3.1	Section 43 of the Education Act (No 2) 1986 places a legal requirement on the University to issue a code of practice in relation to Freedom of Speech, which should be adhered to for any VIP Visit taking place at the University of Surrey.
1.3.2	The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 section 26 , (Prevent Duty Guidance) which requires clear University Events policies to be in place, to ensure that when exercising functions of any kind, due regard has been given to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
1.3.3	The Equality Act 2010 includes a public sector duty to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people. This involves considering the need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics (gender, age, race, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, gender reassignment); meet the needs of people with protected characteristics and encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low. This policy will endeavour to ensure that equality considerations are embedded within all event management processes.
2	Policy
2.1	Principles

2.1.1	Where staff are planning to invite a VIP to campus, permission should be sought from the Vice-Chancellor's Office <u>before</u> an invitation is extended, by completing the VIP Visitor Approval Form available here . In some cases the VIP may be the one to request the visit; in this instance it is also essential that the Vice-Chancellor's Office is informed immediately.
2.1.2	It is recommended that invitations to VIPs are extended asap and no less than six months in advance, especially if a VIP is being invited to visit for a special occasion, or on a particular day.
2.1.3	Letters of invitation to a VIP should be signed by the Vice-Chancellor or in some cases the Chancellor. Sufficient time should be allowed for the letter of invitation to be drafted, sent to the Vice-Chancellor's office for approval and signature, and returned to you for mailing.
2.1.4	A review of other University events should be undertaken to ensure that as far as possible no clashes occur with other major University events or visits.
2.1.5	Whilst the Vice-Chancellor's Office needs to be informed of a VIP Visit, there should not be an automatic presumption that the Office can provide resource or support for the visit, unless specifically agreed well in advance. Day-to-day coordination of the visit will remain the responsibility of the department extending the invitation.
2.2	Procedures
2.2.1	We cannot define detailed procedures for every VIP Visit, as the variables are too great and the possible scenarios too broad. However, please consult the Events Handbook and accompanying templates here to assist you in the organisation of a VIP Visit. If you have any questions, please contact events@surrey.ac.uk for the attention of the Events Manager.
2.2.2	Where VIPs are being invited to participate in an event either as speaker or guest, please refer to the Events Strategy if you require support from the University Events Team.
2.2.3	For a high profile visit, the planning process should begin in good time and it is recommended that a Project Team formed. The Project Team should include staff responsible for initiating the invitation, representatives from the VC's office, Events Team, External Communications Team and where appropriate the VIP's office. A project lead should be identified.
2.2.4	Due consideration should be given to protocol which dictates that a senior member of the University should meet and greet the VIP Visitor. In most cases this will be a member of the Executive Board. Please ensure they are contacted well in advance to get the date in their diary. If you would like the Vice-Chancellor to perform this function please indicate on the VIP Visitor Approval Form. His office will then liaise with you on his availability.
3	Governance
3.1	Responsibility
3.1.1	Overall responsibility for the University of Surrey VIP Visits Policy rests with the President and Vice-Chancellor, or his nominee.
3.1.2	All individuals who are involved in the organisation of a VIP Visit must comply with the University VIP Visits Policy, and associated policies. Line managers are responsible for ensuring that staff in their areas are aware of this policy, and have access to the available guidance to enable them to comply.
3.2	Exceptions to this Policy
	The President and Vice-Chancellor, or his nominee, are authorised to approve any exceptions to this policy.
3.3	Supporting Documentation
	Further information including the VIP Visitor Approval Form and event planning toolkits can be found on the Events Team Intranet pages .