

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression: Institutional Support Task and Finish Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The primary objective of the Task and Finish Group is to review policies and approaches to supporting students and colleagues who encounter unwanted publicity or who are attacked due to their exercising of academic freedom and freedom of expression, or who experience distress due to somebody else's exercising of their academic freedom and freedom of expression.

Guiding Question(s)

1. How can the university effectively and consistently support and protect colleagues who encounter unwanted publicity or who are attacked due to their exercising of academic freedom and freedom of expression, or who experience distress due to somebody else's exercising of their academic freedom and freedom of expression?

Remit

The Task and Finish Group will:

1. review, amend, and create policies in support of the Institutional welfare of students and colleagues who encounter unwanted publicity, or who are attacked, due to their exercising of academic freedom and freedom of expression.
2. consider School-based and University-level Institutional support capacity and suggest changes if needed.
3. devise approaches to achieve appropriate support for individual staff and students across the University.
4. in liaison with the Legislation Work Stream, ensure that policies are legally informed around relevant legal protections for individual colleagues.
5. Support the Workstream Convenor & create a plan for the workstream, so that progress can be tracked and issues rectified.
6. Use their expertise and understanding to support the co ordinating group to identify and plan communications that are needed to support any new policies, procedures, guidance, or other provision

Membership

The Task and Finish Group membership will comprise those with relevant academic and professional expertise and experience.

Timescale and meeting arrangements

The number, frequency and format of meetings will be ordinarily monthly. However, additional meetings may be scheduled in support of the milestones and key deliverables. To ensure maximum participation, meetings may be online unless the purpose of the meeting would be better supported by a different mode.

The meeting agenda and any papers will normally be circulated via email, at least 5 working days prior to each meeting, and a note of actions will be circulated within 5 working days of each meeting.

Reporting

The Task & Finish Group will report monthly (using the standard reporting template) on its progress to the Coordinating Group and will support the achievement of deliverables within its focus area

Governance and Operation

The Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Pastoral Support Task and Finish Group reports to the Coordinating Group via the Task and Finish Group Convenor.