



LUTHER KING CENTRE POLICY AND PROCEDURES: PREVENT DUTY

The Government requires that relevant higher education bodies have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent duty). Information demonstrating compliance is required.

Context and Concerns

The *'Prevent Duty Guidance: for higher education institutions in England and Wales'* published by the Government raises a number of underlying concerns regarding this duty, and while the Governing Board and Operations Committee are generally content to fulfil the requirements within the broad advice provided, the following issues need to be noted.

- a) The Government uses language in ways that lack precision and meaning. Words such as 'terrorism', 'radicalising' and 'extremist' are all used freely at different points but the only attempt at any definition appears to be in the related document *'Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales'* where 'extremism' is defined as 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces'.

We believe this to be inadequate. A much more careful attempt is needed to provide a proper understanding of these terms if institutions are to know what issues to address.

- b) The reference to 'fundamental British values' is itself a less than adequate way of understanding these terms. While those listed might gain generalised consent, they raise many questions. Why are these regarded as core British values and not others that might be listed? Is democracy about being part of a society where there are equal rights and responsibilities, or is it about adherence to a particular electoral system? What happens when individual liberty conflicts with another of the values listed?

Whatever answers are given to such questions, it could easily be argued that these so-called British values are very often absent from the society that supposedly professes their importance.

- c) As a Christian theological institution serving the main nonconformist churches within England and Wales, our primary allegiance is to the gospel values witnessed to in the life of Jesus Christ. We belong within the radical church traditions of this country, and as such we are committed to living and teaching radical gospel values. We draw on the proper meaning of that word, which is about always returning to our roots found in scripture. In the past members of our communities would have been regarded as radicalised. They faced persecution for their commitment to religious liberty and their consequent refusal to obey

the law. They were regarded as dangerous extremists who needed to be opposed, sanctioned, and if necessary imprisoned.

This is the context from which we come. It is a context that provokes concerns regarding the Government's Prevent Duty, and will influence how we respond.

Principles

On the basis of the values inherent in its Christian life and faith, LKC affirms the following key principles:

- The importance of free speech
- The importance of academic freedom
- The importance of freedom of religion
- A rejection of the use of violence and of terrorism in all its forms
- The importance of work for peace and reconciliation

It is the responsibility of the Operations Committee of LKC to ensure both that these principles are upheld at all times and that the Prevent duty is fulfilled. General oversight is provided by the LKC Board.

Any threats to these principles, together with any concerns regarding terrorist involvement, should be brought to the Operations Committee.

LKC has a Christian foundation and all those who study at LKC are made aware of this fact. Indeed, the vast majority are preparing for a form of Christian ministry and are involved in local churches. There is a chapel on site and shared worship on a regular basis, but due to its founding principles no facilities are made available for those of other faiths.

Policy and Procedures

With regard to the Prevent duty required by Government, the following shall apply:

- a) It is the responsibility of the Operations Committee at each of its meetings to receive details of external speakers and events, and of all branded events, and approve these as necessary in accordance with the 'Policy and Procedures: Events and Speakers' document. Speakers and events not authorised will be subject to cancellation.
- b) It is the responsibility of the Operations Committee to ensure that any necessary training of staff takes place and that this is refreshed as needed. Details of who has received training and when will be monitored at each meeting.
- c) It may be necessary to share personal information about a person with external authorities and organisations if, for example, a person is thought to be at risk of radicalisation (as currently understood by the government) and in need of support. Information sharing must be assessed on a case-by-case basis and to ensure the rights of individuals proper account must be taken of:
 - *Necessity and proportionality*: personal information should only be shared where it is strictly necessary to the intended outcome and proportionate to it.
 - *Consent*: wherever possible the consent of the person concerned should be obtained before sharing any information about them.

- *Data Protection Act and the Common Law Duty of Confidentiality*: in engaging with external bodies, they will be made aware of their own responsibilities under the Data Protection Act.

It is the responsibility of the President as the Prevent Lead to be the point of contact for any concerns, to authorise any sharing of information, to monitor all incidents, and to report to the Operations Committee as necessary.

- If anyone is identified as engaged in illegal terrorist-related activity, that person should always be referred to the Prevent Lead, and the police informed immediately.
- If a member of staff has any concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation (as currently understood by the government) or of being involved in terrorism, it is their responsibility to speak with the Prevent Lead, together with the student's college Principal, who together will decide on the sharing of any information, taking legal advice as necessary.

d) It is the responsibility of the Operations Committee to ensure that IT policies are in place that meet the requirements of the Prevent Duty.

e) It is the responsibility of the Operations Committee to ensure that all staff and students are aware of the Prevent Duty and its implications for them. The Principals of the constituent colleges are responsible for overseeing the pastoral support and welfare of the students, and as part of this they will ensure that:

- Any specific concerns are reported and shared with the Prevent Lead.
- Any general concerns are reported to the Operations Committee.

The Prevent duty will be a standing item on the Operations Committee agenda, where all related issues will be monitored and receive attention as necessary.

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