



DUTY TO PREVENT PEOPLE BEING DRAWN INTO TERRORISM

The Duty

The threat we face from terrorism is serious and real and we have a collective responsibility to take action.

We know that some organisations and individuals target students with a view to involving them in terrorist activity, and as such the Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill will place a duty upon universities, colleges and other education providers to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The duty is also being placed upon a range of other bodies such as prisons, hospitals, and local authorities. Most institutions already do this effectively. While the Bill will not give the institutions any new powers, it will encourage all institutions to engage as effectively in the future as the best do now.

We expect that the Bill will obtain Royal Assent in January 2015.

Statutory Guidance

Universities, colleges and other Further and Higher education providers will be required to comply with statutory guidance that accompanies the Bill.

This guidance will be drawn up in conjunction with universities, student unions, colleges and others and there will be a period of consultation with the sector to ensure that what we are expecting of institutions is reasonable, practical and proportionate. We recognise that universities need to balance their legal duty to ensure freedom of speech with protecting their students and staff from harm.

Most universities and colleges already take their responsibilities to protect their staff and students against the risks that some organisations and individuals pose very seriously. The guidance will build upon the good practice that already exists widely across the sector.

It will cover a number of areas including the use of IT on campus, the management of premises including prayer space and meeting rooms, as well as providing sufficient student welfare support. Some of the key issues covered by the guidance include:-

- Risk Assessment

We expect the institution to carry out a risk assessment proportionate to the size and complexity of the institution. The risk assessment will help an institution satisfy themselves and government that appropriate policies and procedures are in place, help identify and support any individuals who may be vulnerable and provide clear management oversight of the risks.

- External Speakers



The guidance that accompanies the Bill will state that universities and colleges must have clear policies and procedures for deciding whether it is appropriate to allow a speaker with extreme views on their campus. In some cases – and we have already seen this happen – they will not allow the event to take place. In other cases, they will wish to make sure that there is an opposing speaker at the event and that the event allows for open debate to challenge about the speaker’s views.

- Channel

The bodies covered by the schedule of the Bill are also covered by the duty putting the Channel programme on a statutory footing. Channel is a voluntary programme aimed at supporting vulnerable people who may be at risk of radicalisation. The duty will set out what is expected from institutions in terms of engagement with local Channel processes, and where and when it is appropriate to share information.

Monitoring Compliance

We will consult on the mechanisms for monitoring and ensuring compliance as part of the wider consultation on the statutory guidance. We are clear that any monitoring or inspection regime will need to be proportionate, realistic, efficient and cost-effective.

Sanctions for Non-Compliance

The Bill gives the Government the power to direct institutions to comply with the statutory guidance. We expect this to be used rarely and only where we have exhausted other options. We will consult on the most appropriate sanctions to ensure that they resolve issues of non-compliance in a proportionate manner. Ultimately if there is evidence to show that an institution is not complying with the statutory guidance or with their responsibilities to protect their students and staff from being drawn into terrorism then to the Secretary of State may issues a direction.