

GUEST SPEAKERS, EVENTS & HUMAN VALUES POLICY (FREEDOM OF SPEECH)



Rationale and Scope

Mercury wholeheartedly accepts that it must manage freedom of speech in line with its Safeguarding Policy, specifically with regard to Prevent and in-line with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Mercury will support its staff to help ensure they meet their legal obligations and to implement this policy.

Mercury affirms its commitment to freedom of speech and to its legal obligation to take such steps as is reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for learners, employees and visiting speakers.

Mercury Training Services Ltd has a legal duty to ensure that a speaker exercising their right to freedom of speech does not commit an offence under current legislation, for example by inciting an audience to violence, breach of the peace or racial hatred.

The requirements of this policy apply to Mercury staff and learners.

Principles

Mercury believes that a culture of free, open and robust discussion can be achieved only if all concerned avoid needlessly offensive or provocative action and language.

Mercury expects all individuals to be sensitive to the diversity of its community and to show respect for individual values and beliefs.

Any activity which is likely to give rise to an environment in which people could experience fear, harassment, intimidation, verbal abuse or violence, particularly because of their ethnicity, race, nationality, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender, disability or age, is contrary to Mercury's values.

Mercury's values

We regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance.

We want learners to understand that while different people may hold different views about what is 'right' and 'wrong', all people living in England are subject to its law.

Mercury Training Services Ltd promotes the fundamental Human values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Actively promoting the values means challenging opinions or behaviours that are contrary to fundamental Human values.

Mercury will work with its staff to:

- enable learners to develop their knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- enable learners to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
- encourage learners to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely

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- enable learners to acquire a broad knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
- promote tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling learners to gain an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures
- encourage respect for democracy and democratic processes, including respect for the law

The list below describes Mercury's expectations of its staff in developing learners' understanding and knowledge in the area of Human Values:

- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety
- An understanding that the freedom to choose and hold faiths and beliefs is protected in law
- An acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself, or having none, should be accepted and tolerated and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination

Events

Mercury Training Services Ltd may hold a number of different types of event during the course of the business operation. The health and safety aspects of events are covered through the Health and Safety Policy. The purpose of including events within this policy is to identify specific requirements with regard to external visitors and speakers.

Before hosting an event with visiting speakers, the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) will ensure that **visiting speakers understand and accept Mercury's expectations with regard to freedom of speech and Human Values.** Furthermore, the DSP will ensure that the event

- will not in any way work against the promotion of knowledge and freedom of choice will recognise the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- will raise the profile of Mercury Training Services Ltd in educating the community about its services, facilities and/or its curriculum offer

Reviewed

Signed: *Paul Lawton-Jones*

Date: 03/08/2022

Position: Managing Director

Next review: 02/08/2023

RESPONSIBLE PERSONS

Overall responsibility

Mr Paul Lawton-Jones

Position: Managing Director