RHODES UNIVERSITY
Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

POLICY RELATING TO HIGH-PROFILE GUESTS AND POLITICAL ACTIVITY ON CAMPUS

Policy Volume	Academic Faculty and Students
Policy Chapter	Student Affairs Policies
Responsible Committee/Unit/Division/Faculty	Safety and Events Committee
Responsible Chairperson/Director/Manager	Director, Facilities and Infrastructure Director: Division of Student Services and Development
Dates of First and Subsequent Council Approvals	Date of Approval by COUNCIL: 4 December 2014
Policy Approval Pathways (e.g. committee, Senex, Senate, Council)	Institutional Planning Committee (IPC) – Senate – Council
Revision History: Approved Reviews	Date of Approval by SENATE: 21 November 2014 Date of Approval by COUNCIL: 4 December 2014
Review Cycle (e.g. every 2/5/7 years, etc.)	3 years
Next Review Date	2028

1. POLICY PARTICULARS

1.1. **Policy Title**	Policy Relating to High Profile Guests and Political Activity on Campus
1.2. **Policy Statement** (State in a single paragraph the policy mandate and how this relates to the University Mission and Vision)	In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Rhodes University recognises the right of all students to basic civil and political rights, including the right to form societies and the right to freedom of association. This right has to be enjoyed in a manner that respects and recognises the similar and equal rights of others. In this context, no discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or coercion will be permissible. All students and Student Societies are encouraged to engage critically with the national agenda, to debate social and political issues at stake in the country, and to arrange events which will assist the student body to make informed decisions in respect of current social and political issues. In the interests of democracy, the University must ensure that there is free and critical engagement on such issues on campus and that there is no speech that incites violence or encourages intolerance.
1.3. **Reason for Policy** (What this policy aims to achieve)	The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa enshrines the right to freedom of speech, freedom of association, and the right to engage in political activities. As an academic institution committed to the principles of democracy and intellectual engagement, Rhodes University recognises the importance of fostering a campus environment where these rights are upheld and exercised responsibly. The policy on High Profile Guests and Political Activity on Campus aims to balance the rights of students and staff to engage in political discourse with the need to maintain an orderly academic environment.
1.4. **Policy Objective/s** (What are the measurable objectives of this policy)	This policy aims to avoid the disruption of teaching and learning by ensuring that clear guidelines and procedures are adhered to in the planning and executing of any event or activity that is likely to attract large audiences. Specifically, the objectives are to: a. reminds the University community of the norms of free and fair debate and intellectual engagement b. clarifies the steps which must be followed when inviting high-profile guests to Rhodes University c. outlines the Code of Conduct at such events at Rhodes University d. ensures the safety and security of all University staff, students and visitors This policy should be understood and implemented in the context of other relevant University policies. One act may be in conflict with more than one University policy or rule, may constitute more than one disciplinary offence and may be dealt with accordingly.
1.5. **People affected by this Policy** (e.g. All units of the University)	Rhodes University Students and Staff
1.1. **Who should read this Policy** (People who need to heed this policy to fulfil their duties)	All students and Staff
1.2. **Implementers of this Policy** (Who will manage the implementation of this policy)	Director, Facilities and Infrastructure Director: Division of Student Services and Development Registrar's Division, Student Representative Council, Proctors, Campus Protection Unit
1.3. **Website address/link for this Policy**	https://www.ru.ac.za/institutionalplanningunit/qualitypromotion/rhodesuniversitypolicies/policiesa-z/

2. RELATED DOCUMENTS FORMS AND TOOLS

(University Policies, Protocols and Documents (such as rules/policies/protocols/guidelines related to this policy)

Relevant Legislation (Legislation/Regulatory requirements/Organisational Reports – name these)
2.1   Student Disciplinary Code
2.2   Regulation of Gatherings Act 205 of 1993.
2.3   Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997.
2.4   The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 – Chapter 2: Bill of Rights; and

Related Policies	
Related Protocols	
Forms and Tools (documents to be completed in support of this policy implementation)	
E.g. Policy template for the policy itself. Documents pertaining to procedures for implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation of the policy.	

3. POLICY DEFINITIONS

(Technical or Conceptual terms used in the policy)

No	TERM	DEFINITION
3.1	**High Profile Guest**	An individual with significant public, political, or social influence whose presence on campus is likely to attract large audiences and media attention. This includes but is not limited to political figures, celebrities, renowned academics, and public intellectuals.
3.2	**Event Organiser**	A member of the Rhodes University community (student, staff, or affiliated organisation) responsible for planning and coordinating events involving high-profile guests. This person must adhere to all procedural requirements as outlined in this policy.
3.3	**Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic and Student Affairs (DVC: A&SA)**	The Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic and Student Affairs (DVC: A&SA) is a senior university official responsible for Academic and Student Affairs who is authorised to grant approval for hosting high-profile guests on campus, ensuring that the event aligns with the University's academic and operational priorities.
3.4	**Safety and Events Committee**	A designated committee within the University is tasked with reviewing and approving detailed proposals for events involving high-profile guests, ensuring that all safety, security, and logistical requirements are met.
3.5	**Campus Protection Unit (CPU)**	The University's internal security team is responsible for maintaining safety and security during events, working in coordination with external agencies like the South African Police Services (SAPS) when necessary.
3.6	**South African Police Services (SAPS)**	The national law enforcement agency that may be involved in providing additional security and crowd control for events with high profile guests, especially those expected to attract large audiences.
3.7	**Student Representative Council (SRC)**	The elected student body may endorse events organised by student societies and facilitate communication between students and the University administration regarding events involving high-profile guests.
3.8	**Conference Office**	The administrative office is responsible for managing venue bookings, logistics, and protocol for events involving high-profile guests, ensuring compliance with University policies and procedures.
3.9	**Venue Booking**	The process of reserving a specific location within the University for hosting an event involving a high-profile guest, which requires prior authorisation and adherence to safety and logistical guidelines.
3.10	**Student Disciplinary Code**	The set of regulations and procedures established by Rhodes University to address and adjudicate incidents of student misconduct. This code outlines the rights and responsibilities of students, the process for handling disciplinary cases, and the potential sanctions for violations. It aims to maintain order, uphold the University's values, and ensure a safe and conducive learning environment.

4. PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THIS POLICY

OVERVIEW

The principles outlined herein aim to uphold the values of academic freedom, inclusivity, and safety while facilitating constructive discourse and engagement with high-profile guests and political activities on campus.

Rhodes University strives to carry out the following, as far as is reasonably practicable:

4.1. The orderly expressions of ideas are regarded as key to a university's intellectual engagements and social awareness. This search for truth requires a free and open dialogue to exchange ideas and opinions. However, this can only occur if discourse is continuous and disciplined**.**

4.2. Freedom of expression and speech are basic rights that are protected by law

4.3. The Higher Education Act No 1010 of 1997 imposes a duty on all the South African higher education institutions to take all reasonable steps to ensure that freedom of speech and expression within the law is secured for students and employees of a university. This also applies to External Speakers visiting a university.

4.4. Rhodes University has a responsibility to maintain good order on its premises. As such, it has the right and power to regulate and, if necessary, to impose conditions or restrictions upon Events such as meetings and demonstrations held or proposed to be held on its premises. Any such Events must comply with this Policy and its Procedure and other related provincial and national regulations on public gatherings

5. DIRECTIVES FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS POLICY

(Actions and processes by which the policy objectives will be achieved.) In order to ensure the successful implementation of the policy on High Profile Guests and Political Activity on campus, the following directives are established:

5.1. Initial Approval: Event organisers must seek initial authorisation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic and Student Affairs (DVC: A&SA) or Vice Chancellor (VC) at least six (6) weeks prior to the proposed event. The request must include details about the high-profile guest, the event's purpose, and the anticipated audience size.

5.2. Health and Safety Committee Review: Following initial approval, organisers must submit a detailed proposal to the Health and Safety Committee at least three weeks before the event. The proposal should outline all safety, security, and logistical arrangements.

5.3. SRC Endorsement: For events organised by student societies, SRC endorsement is required after obtaining initial approval. Outside organisations must apply through the Conference Office and pay any applicable fees.

5.4. Application Form: The application form must specify the subject to be discussed, a copy of the intended speech, the names of all speakers, the time and place of the Event, and must be certified by the signature of the appropriate officer of the Organisation.

5.5. Venue Booking: Only after receiving authorisation from the DVC: A&SA/VC and fulfilling Health and Safety Committee requirements may organisers book a venue through the Facilities Officer.

5.6. Logistical Coordination: Organisers must work closely with the Conference Office to coordinate all logistical aspects, including guest lists, invitations, and protocol.

5.7. Security Coordination: For events with an audience of over 150, organisers must liaise with the Campus Protection Unit (CPU) and the South African Police Services (SAPS) to ensure adequate security.

5.8. Safety Protocols: Organisers must follow the guidelines provided by the Health and Safety Committee, including submitting a detailed safety plan and ensuring compliance with all stipulated requirements.

5.9. Internal Communication: The Communication and Advancement Division must be informed about the event and involved in the planning process to manage media relations and internal communication.

5.10. Advertising and Promotion: Flyers and pamphlets must comply with the Rhodes Policy for Advertising for Students on Campus. The primary audience should be the University community, with external attendance permitted only in exceptional cases.

5.11. Code of Conduct: All events must adhere to the University's Student Disciplinary Code, promoting a culture of tolerance and respect. Disruptive behaviour, harassment, or violence will not be tolerated and will be addressed through the University's disciplinary procedures.

5.12. Monitoring and Reporting: The appointed Chairperson of the event must ensure that participants comply with the Code of Conduct. Any breaches should be reported to the University Prosecutor for investigation.

5.13. Post-Event Review: After the event, organisers must submit a report to the Health and Safety Committee detailing the event's outcomes, any issues encountered, and recommendations for future improvements.

5.14.	**Policy Review:** The Director of Student Services and Development will convene a task team at the beginning of each academic year to review and update this policy as necessary, ensuring it remains relevant and effective.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(Roles and responsibilities of Key personnel/Divisions/Faculties/Departments)

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Academic Departments and Faculties	Ensure the alignment and quality of events involving high-profile guests and political activities with academic objectives.
Conference Office	Manage logistics and venue bookings.
South African Police Services (SAPS)	Collaborate with CPU to ensure the safety of all attendees. Address potential security threats or incidents. Provide crowd control and security support during events.
The Registrar's Division	Provide information on the academic calendar.
Communications and Advancement	Manage interactions with the press and external media.
Event Organisers	Obtain necessary approvals and adhere to procedural requirements. Ensure compliance with safety, security, and logistical guidelines.
Prospective Event Participants	Respect norms of free and fair debate and intellectual engagement and comply with safety and security measures implemented by organisers and University authorities.
Health and Safety Committee	Evaluate proposals to ensure safety, security, and logistical requirements are met and approve or reject event proposals based on thorough review.
Student Representative Council (SRC)	Approve society and other student-organised events involving high-profile guests. Facilitate communication between students and the University administration.

7. CONTACTS

Area of Concern	Division/Faculty/Department	Telephone	Email
Event Safety Protocol	S.H.E Officer	8278	safety@ru.ac.za
Media and Communication	Communications and Advancement	8521	communicationsadvancement@ru.ac.za
Venue Booking and Facilities	Registrar	8652	venuebookings@ru.ac.za
Security and Safety	Campus Protection Unit (CPU)	8146 /8795	campusprotection@ru.ac.za
Student Affairs	Student Services and Development	8181	studentaffairs@ru.ac.za

8. POLICY REVIEW PROCEDURE

(Actions and processes by which the policy will be reviewed)

8.1.	The Director of Student Services and Development shall initiate the review of this policy every three years by June of the relevant year. If necessary, the policy may be reviewed earlier based on recommendations from relevant stakeholders.
8.2. Formation of Review Task Team	

• At the beginning of the review year, the Director of Student Services and Development will set up a task team to review the policy. This task team will include the following members or their nominees:	
• Chair of the Health and Safety Committee	
• President and Sports and Societies Councillor of the Student Representative Council (SRC)	
• A University Prosecutor	
• Representative from the Communication and Advancement Division	
• Representative from the Registrar's Office	

8.3. Submission for Approval

The revised policy draft will be submitted to the Health and Safety Committee. Upon their approval, it will be forwarded to the Student Services Council, Student Disciplinary Committee, Senate, and Council for final consideration and approval.

8.4. Communication of Approved Revisions

Once the Senate and Council approve the revisions, the updated policy will be widely distributed to all relevant parties. The web version of the policy will be updated accordingly.

Communication of the review process

9. POLICY CONTEXT: RELEVANT DOCUMENTS CITED/CONSULTED/ADOPTED

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LIST OF APPENDICES