

Government response: Updated guidance to support trustee decision-making

The Charity Commission has today published updates to Chapter 5 of its guidance '[Protecting charities from harm](#)', which supports charity trustees to manage some of the challenges associated with hosting speakers and debates.

In our [evidence](#) and [response](#) to the Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into freedom of speech in universities, we committed to updating this guidance as we recognised it has not always been read in the manner in which it was intended. The Commission's published guidance sets out areas of charity law and practice, and assists trustees in the practical application of key principles.

In publishing the updated guidance, Aarti Thakor, Director of Legal Services at the Charity Commission said:

Charitable students' unions and higher education providers play a vital role in providing space for discussion and debate, encouraging students to develop political awareness, to challenge their own views and perceptions and to exchange ideas on a range of issues.

It is clear that freedom of speech can be integral to charities' activities in carrying out educational purposes. However it is known that freedom of speech is a qualified right and it must not be used as an excuse to fall short on legal duties. In engaging with and providing these important opportunities for their members, trustees must ensure they put their charity's best interests first, and limit any undue risk of harm.

We want to see all charities thrive for the betterment of the communities they serve. This updated guidance will help trustees ensure balance and make good decisions, bolstering their positive impact on society.

[Chapter 5](#) of our toolkit on 'Protecting charities from harm', which is designed as guidance for all charities, not just students' unions and higher education providers, has been updated to help charities that regularly host or hold events at their premises, use speakers at events or distribute literature (whether or not produced by the charity), to further their charity's purposes through the promotion and exchange of views and ideas.

The guidance is clear that the right to freedom of expression is an important element in furthering educational charitable purposes, and enabling debate and discussion is an important part of this. This guidance should not be used to prohibit those with lawful, albeit unpopular, views.

The updated guidance:

- Highlights the centrality of freedom of speech to charities with purposes to advance education
- Stresses the positive and important role students' unions and higher education providers have in the context of free speech and in educating through activism and discussion.
- Stresses what charities can do in order to support trustees to support charity trustees to manage some of the challenges associated with hosting speakers and debates
- Places due weight on the fact that inhibiting lawful free speech could damage a students' union's reputation, including their independence and credibility

Operational Guidance

The Commission has also updated its operational guidance on students' unions (OG48). This is internal guidance, produced to support Commission staff in their casework, that is published by the Commission for transparency reasons. The guidance was created in 2010 when students' unions were first required to register with the Commission.

Our review of this ensures it now:

- Sufficiently reflects relevant aspects of freedom of speech when students' unions carry out activities
- Ensures a clearer distinction is made between the trustees of students' unions, and the obligations that are specific to them, as opposed to the student societies themselves and their broader membership

The updated guidance is available to download here: [Charity Commission OG48 Students' Unions](#) (PDF, 503KB, 16 pages)

The Commission's [response](#) and [written evidence](#) to the Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into freedom of speech in universities is available on GOV.UK.

Ends

Notes to editors:

1. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. Read more about our work via the About Us page on [GOV.UK](#).
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[Press release: Major new multi million pound satellite investment deal for the UK](#)

A new multi-million-pound deal by European businesses Eutelsat and Airbus will see satellite components and major parts assembled in the UK.

[Press release: Major new multi million pound satellite investment deal for the UK](#)

- Eutelsat and Airbus invest millions in new satellite components and assembly in the UK
- Deal will support hundreds of high quality jobs in Portsmouth and Stevenage and thousands of jobs in the supply chain
- A year since the launch of the modern Industrial Strategy, this deal represents a further vote of confidence in the UK's future economy and growing space industry

A new multi-million-pound deal by European businesses Eutelsat Communications and Airbus Defence and Space for two new communication satellites will see components and major parts assembled in the UK before final assembly is completed in Toulouse, France.

Components and major parts of the assembly will be built in the UK under the contract signed today (Monday 19 November) between satellite operator Eutelsat and aerospace manufacturer Airbus, Business Secretary Greg Clark announced.

The deal, worth hundreds of millions of pounds, between Eutelsat, one of the world's top three providers of TV broadcast signals and Airbus is a huge vote of confidence in the UK expertise in the space industry, benefitting 500 high skilled workers involved in Eutelsat projects.

The new investment means Airbus sites in Portsmouth and Stevenage will manufacture key components of the two new satellites for Eutelsat, which will feature a brand-new electric platform to bring down size and cost, while boosting performance.

Eutelsat is to replace its three existing satellites with two new ones set to launch in 2021. Today's announcement means that 6 out of 7 of the company's

next satellites will be partially built in Britain, representing inward investment of up to €40 million per year.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

This investment is a significant vote of confidence for the UK's world leading space industry.

The UK is already a world-leader in developing satellite technology, with a 40 per cent share of the global export market of small satellites and building major parts for one in four of the world's commercial telecommunications satellites. This new deal builds on the recent announcement, as part of our Industrial Strategy, that the UK is investing in, and building, its first proposed spaceport in Sutherland. The Spaceport will further develop our expertise and capabilities in the space sector enabling us to launch small satellites.

Through our Modern Industrial Strategy, we are increasing the R&D budget to its highest level ever, building on our commitment to this sector and our world leading science base. This deal demonstrates that science, innovation and business has no borders.

UK expertise has contributed significantly to the build of 23 of Eutelsat's 38 satellites currently in orbit.

Eutelsat CEO Rodolphe Belmer said:

I am delighted to sign this agreement with Airbus to build two new state-of-the-art satellites, cementing the long-standing partnership between our two companies.

The agreement will see the manufacture of key parts of the new satellites at Airbus' facilities in Stevenage and Portsmouth. These satellites will renew the in-orbit assets at HOTBIRD, Eutelsat's largest video hotspot, ensuring our continued support to global broadcasters in delivering high quality video content and services throughout the UK and Europe.

We are impressed with the ongoing expansion of the UK space sector, particularly its growing industrial capabilities and development of cutting-edge technology, and we will continue to rely on the UK's ability to build and deliver world-leading spacecraft.

I am grateful for the support of the UK government and UK Space Agency, both of whom recognise the strong commitment Eutelsat has made to the UK over many years.

The Airbus UK facilities in Portsmouth and Stevenage will build the entire

communications payload, platform structure, propulsion subsystem, antennas and various mechanisms for the satellites. Airbus employs over 3,000 space engineers in the UK.

Colin Paynter, Managing Director, Airbus Defence and Space UK, said:

Airbus' telecommunication satellite technology developed in the UK has been key to this significant contract win. UK Space Agency support for the ESA ARTES programme has enabled Airbus in the UK to develop world leading technology for the world's leading satellite operators.

Notes to Editors:

1. The build of an electric propulsion system for another new Eutelsat satellite known as KONNECT was recently completed by Thales Alenia Space in Belfast, demonstrating the growing presence of space across the UK.
2. The UK Space Agency is helping industry to develop new technologies, infrastructure and services as part of the government's modern Industrial Strategy.
3. Major initiatives for the UK Space sector include the £99m National Satellite Test Facility at Harwell, the £92m to develop options for a UK alternative to the Galileo satellite navigation project, the £31.5m to support the development of the proposed spaceport in Sutherland in Scotland, and the UK's continuing commitment to being a leading player in the European Space Agency.
4. Eutelsat QUANTUM the first software defined satellite, able to adapt to new demands in coverage, bandwidth, power and frequency configurability simply by being reprogrammed from the ground. Its phased array antennas will be able to shape the broadcast footprint as required – unlike a fixed standard reflector on most telecommunication satellites. It will also be partially built by Airbus in Portsmouth and Stevenage. The UK Space Agency is part of the Eutelsat QUANTUM Public Private Partnership through the ESA participation.

[Press release: STATEMENT ON THE](#)

OCCASION OF THE BEGINNING OF 2019 ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

A reminder to Nigerians on our commitment to support the practice of democracy as the 2019 election campaign begins

Press release: STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF THE BEGINNING OF 2019 ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

As friends of Nigeria and its people, we will follow the campaigns and election process closely. Who wins the elections is for the Nigerian people to decide. Our concern is to see a process leading to free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections.

We hope to see transparent campaigns and we urge all voters to use their democratic right and vote. We are particularly keen to see greater participation of women, youth and people living with disabilities.

We urge all involved – political and non-political actors – to refrain from using hate speech and take a firm stance against violence. The 2015 Peace Accords played an important role in that regard and we welcome new efforts towards that end.

We were gravely concerned over widespread incidents of intimidation, interference and vote-buying during the recent gubernatorial elections. We were also perturbed by irregularities and violence during party primaries, and noted with particular concern that several women candidates were disenfranchised.

We reiterate the importance of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as it fulfils its constitutional role. INEC must be allowed to operate free from outside pressure and intimidation, and in turn must demonstrate full neutrality and professionalism. We encourage that adequate funding is swiftly facilitated for INEC and supporting institutions, and we hope to see the entry into force of improvements to the Electoral Act as soon as possible.

We wish to draw particular attention to the fundamental role of the security agencies in providing a safe and secure environment for the Nigerian people to exercise their democratic rights. It is vital that security agencies act, and are seen to act, in an impartial manner that maintains the high standards

of professional conduct.

We strongly support the principle of media freedom and the vital role the independent media plays in ensuring informed public debate. We also stress the importance of balanced, neutral and non-defamatory coverage.

At the beginning of the 2019 electoral campaign, we would like to reiterate our strong commitment to support democracy in Nigeria. We encourage Nigeria and its people to consolidate and deepen democracy, building on the standards set in 2015.

Signatories: European Union (Delegation to Nigeria), France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden.