

birkbeck

students' union

ROOM BOOKINGS POLICY

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Introduction

Birkbeck Students' Union hosts, organises & runs hundreds of events each year as a result of the self-organising efforts of our Student Groups, Representative Campaigns, & Student Officers; many of these events are held on campus in rooms that belong to Birkbeck University. The Union can book these rooms for students to use for pre-agreed activities & we encourage students to plan a wide range of activities as these events are an important part of life on campus for many Birkbeck students. This Room Bookings policy is designed to ensure that students are empowered to get the most out of their University experience whilst keeping in line with the legislation & policies that we are responsible for upholding.

Scope:

1. This policy is relevant to any scenario where the Students' Union plays a role in hosting an event in any room or space that belongs to Birkbeck University of London.
2. It should be understood that while the Union actively encourages all our members' self-organising efforts, the safety & wellbeing of our members is paramount. With this in mind Birkbeck Students' Union will always work with event organisers to balance safe-guarding considerations with our commitment to our members' ability to self-organise.

3. This policy is designed in reference to the BBKSU External Speakers' & Events protocols and therefore it will be followed in conjunction with these procedures.
4. Decisions will be made in reference to both Union & College Policies (e.g.: safeguarding, security & estates) as well as the charity legislation & laws that relate to our work as a Union.
5. The "Event Organisers" are the individuals making the request, in some cases this may be extended to fellow committee members or others perceived as involved in the planning/execution of a BBKSU event.
6. Failure to comply with any part of this policy may result in room requests being denied or further disciplinary action.

Room Booking Request Procedure:

When a SU group would like to host an event in a Birkbeck room, the following procedure should be followed:

1. An event should be created on the [Students' Union website](#) including a ticket option. Even where events are free, a free ticket option should be available to allow the Union to monitor interest & attendance for the event. It must be clear that the event is for BBKSU members.
2. The SU [Event Planning Form](#) must be completed for all room booking requests from all recognised BBKSU committees & student groups.
3. The Event Planning Form will clearly state whether food or beverages from the college's in-house catering company Sodexo are requested.
4. The Event Planning Form will clearly state where and how the event is being advertised, and the likelihood of external speakers or attendees.
5. The Event Planning Form will clearly state the requested setup & how the room will be used for the duration of the booking.
6. For any event, room booking requests should be made at the earliest possible opportunity to avoid disappointment:
 - 6.1. When the room request is for an "ordinary" event (such as a democratic or academic event only open to 40 or less Union members & staff) 14 clear days' notice of the proposed event date is suggested to avoid disappointment. Room requests for ordinary events can be submitted with less notice, however at busy times, or for larger rooms, we cannot guarantee a booking will be secured.
 - 6.2. When the room booking request is for an "ordinary speaker" event (such as a workshop or lecture open to 50 or less Union members & staff), at least 28 clear days' notice of the proposed event should be given. It should be clear that the [BBKSU External Speakers Protocol](#) is being followed. Room requests for ordinary speaker events can be submitted with less notice, however it is at the discretion of the Union Executive Committee/appropriate staff member as to whether the request will be considered.
 - 6.3. When the room booking request is for specialist events (such as larger events open to over 50 Union members & staff, events open to non-Birkbeck students, activities such as sports or rehearsals, where facilities for performances or film screenings are required or events

deemed to require enhanced security), at least 28 clear days' notice of the proposed event should be given. Specialist events are also events where there is to be a charge for entry to the event. Where appropriate, it should be clear that the BBKSU External Speakers' Procedure & Events Policies have been followed. For specialist events, it is strongly suggested that events are discussed with the appropriate member of Birkbeck staff as early as possible to avoid disappointment.

7. Upon making a room booking request, the Event Planners are assuming responsibility for the booking. By doing so, the Event Planners agree to the guidelines laid out in this policy, and to adhere to all relevant BBKSU & Birkbeck policies.
8. The appropriate member of staff will conduct a risk assessment on the event, considering all the relevant legislation & policy, as well as the SU's capacity to facilitate the safety & wellbeing of both the speaker & attendees.
9. Where the event is deemed "low risk", or where the Union is comfortable that it can meet the perceived safety requirements, the booking request will be forwarded to the college's room bookings department, and the event organiser will be contacted to confirm the request. A "low risk" event will typically be an ordinary or ordinary speaker event that is not deemed to require enhanced security or Union staff/officer support.
10. Where the event is deemed "medium risk", the event organiser may be contacted for further information, & measures to ensure the safety & wellbeing of all attendees may need to be discussed. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure the event's approval where the Union has the appropriate resources. Where all perceived risks can be mediated the booking request will be forwarded to the college's room bookings department, and the event organiser will be contacted to confirm the request. A "medium risk" event is a specialist event that the Union is satisfied can be run safely & in adherence to all the relevant policies and regulations.
11. Where an event is deemed "high risk", it is likely that the Union will have to consult with college staff (this may include members of security, estates, external relations & student services) before a decision is made. The event organiser will be informed at the earliest opportunity; in some cases, it is possible that changes to the format of the event will need to be agreed before the room booking request can be approved. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure the event's approval, however in some cases events may be deemed unsuitable to be held in Birkbeck rooms. In some cases, the Union may consider external venues for "high risk" events.
12. A response confirming the Union's approval of a request will always be communicated in writing via email. Where changes or additional preparations need to be made, event organisers/speakers may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss potential security or safeguarding arrangements.
13. Once the booking request has been forwarded to the college room bookings department, it will take an average of 7 clear days for the college to confirm a booking with the Union. In some cases, especially busy times, or for specialist/high risk events, this may take longer. Event organisers are asked to understand that this waiting time is beyond the Union's influence.
14. Once the college room bookings department has provided a response, the Union will communicate the relevant details to the event organiser at the earliest opportunity. If there are no rooms available, the Union will consider reasonable alternative options.

15. Where the event organiser is dissatisfied with the Union's initial assessment/response, an appeal can be made to the Union Executive Committee by contacting the Communications & Activities Officer.

Room User Policy

Once a room booking has been confirmed, the Event Organisers will be responsible for ensuring the safety of the event & that college & Union policies are adhered to at all times. The following guidelines must be followed for any event where a Birkbeck room has been agreed:

1. Events will be advertised and managed through the birkbeckunion.org website.
2. Rooms must be used for the purpose stated on the Event Planning Form.
3. Events held in Birkbeck rooms will not be advertised in "open" Facebook groups or with public Facebook events.
4. The Event Organiser must notify the Union of any changes to the format of the event.
5. The Event Organiser must take all reasonable steps to promote a safe, inclusive environment for attendees, including taking note of relevant college and Union policies.
6. Birkbeck Students' Union has the right to refuse entry to events without notice at any time, the event organiser should exercise this right with caution.
7. Union staff & members of the SU Executive must be permitted entry to the room at any time & their instructions regarding the event/room booking must be followed.
8. The room should be returned to the same state before the Event Organisers leave the room at the end of the booking.

Useful Links

The following links include some of the most relevant UK Legislation and Union & College policies that are relevant to this procedure.

[BBKSU Clubs & Societies Handbook](#)
[BBKSU Health & Safety Policy](#)

[Birkbeck External Room Bookings T&Cs](#)
[Birkbeck Health & Safety Policies](#)

For more info, please [contact us](#).