

Oxford Union Guest Speaker Invitation Policy

Purpose:

- 1) The Oxford Union invites guest speakers in order to further its objectives of preserving and advancing free speech and education, as outlined in Rule 2 of the Society's Rules and Standing Orders.

Invitation process:

- 2) A prospective guest speaker may only be invited with the consent of the sitting President or a designated agent of the President.
- 3) An invitation may not necessarily be valid for dates other than those in which the President, in whose name that invitation is extended, is a sitting Officer.
- 4) The Oxford Union cannot guarantee that it will be able to host every prospective guest speaker that is invited. There are a range of reasons why the Society may be unable to host a particular guest speaker, including scheduling difficulties, financial cost, and capacity. Invitations extended to prospective guest speakers should be drafted to avoid implying any such guarantee.
- 5) If the Oxford Union is unable to host a prospective guest speaker who has accepted an invitation, the President or his/her agent should communicate this to the invitee in a timely manner.

Terms on which invitations are extended:

- 6) All invitations extended to prospective guest speakers are extended subject to the following conditions:
 - a) The Chair and audience members shall have the opportunity to challenge the views of the guest speaker during their visit, including their personal views. In Speaker Meetings, this will include questions from the Chair and questions from audience members. In debates, this will include points of information, paper speeches and/or floor speeches.
 - b) The guest speaker is entitled to a quiet and courteous hearing but agrees that they are willing to be questioned and challenged on a range of topics during their visit, including their personal and political views.
 - c) The guest speaker may request advance notice of the Chair's proposed questions, but may generally not choose which question(s) will be asked. Due consideration will be given where topics may cause emotional or personal distress.
 - d) No Member may be excluded from an event other than in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the Society's Rules and Standing Orders. In particular, a guest speaker's security or other personnel may not unilaterally exclude any Member from an event.
- 7) The President may, at their discretion, choose to extend an invitation to a prospective guest speaker on alternative terms which depart from the provisions of this Policy.