

LSE PREVENT Group Meeting

19 January 2015

1:30pm – 3:00pm

TW1 6.01

LSEs response to government's counter-terrorism agenda

Chair: Robin Hoggard

Attending: Michael Blackwell, Dr Peter Howlett, Dr Sunil Kumar, Hannah Bannister, Veronique Mizgailo, Paul Thornbury, Alan Revel, Jim Walters, Nona Buckley-Irvine, Danny O'Connor, Marta Gajewska

Apologies: none

To note

- a) An updated version of the 01-04 paper distributed (*attached version 01-04b*).
- b) RH: Open and welcome
 - a. The Group is not a standing committee
 - b. Introductions
 - c. Timekeeping
- c) Timings for submission of responses to the draft Bill:
 - a. Tuesday 20 January 2015 – DMT to receive a finalised draft of paper 01-04 by RH
 - b. Wednesday 21 January 2015 – deadline for the UUK.
 - c. Sunday 25 January 2015 (tbc) – deadline for the local PREVENT network.
 - d. Monday 26 January 2015 – deadline for the Russell Group.
 - e. Noon on Friday 30 January 2015 – deadline for Home Office.
 - f. The Bill is likely to become law by the end of January 2015.
- d) Additional activity:
 - a. The Director wants to emphasise the School's response by sending a letter to Prof Snowden, President of UUK.
 - b. Lord Paul Myners offered to go public in defence of LSE's position (DO to lead on this).
 - c. Internal communications to staff and students on the School's activities and responses to PREVENT.

Business

1. Purpose of the group and mode of operation:
 - 1.1. *Paper 01-02* agreed by DMT
 - 1.2. No individual should be referred to external institutions without explicit agreement from the Director or the Provost.
 - 1.3. Discussion on student representation on the Group.
NBI: Muslim students should be represented on the group.
 - 1.3.1. Action point: Group members to consider and suggest best ways to secure appropriate student involvement and transparency.
2. Background and update on PREVENT and Channel:
 - 2.1. Paper 01-03
3. Issues for LSE:
 - 3.1. Update from the Camden PREVENT Network meeting RH and PT attended on 13 January 2015:
 - 3.1.1. overall negative response to the Bill;
 - 3.1.2. the Bill envisages action to curb legal non-violent extremism – clashes with longstanding legal duty on universities to ensure freedom of speech within the law;
 - 3.1.3. draft Statutory Guidance very prescriptive at some places about means as well as desired outcomes, but impractical (e.g. "all staff" to be given training);
 - 3.1.4. sensitivity around reporting individuals for initial assessment to authorities (the Police) without their knowledge; unclear what happens to their data – assurances on safeguarding essential;
 - 3.1.5. unclear on definitions such as 'conducive environment', 'radicalism', 'extremism'.
 - 3.2. Current activities at the School discussed - public events regulations and pastoral care work:
 - 3.2.1.HB: Joining PREVENT agenda with pastoral care work would be problematic. Student support staff should not need to be involved, as it would undermine the mutual trust and prevent both staff and students from engagement;
 - 3.2.2. PT: Students at risk would not seek pastoral care knowing of the PREVENT link; lack of trust a risk.
 - 3.3. SK: Need to think of our responsibility if a LSE student gets noticed elsewhere.
 - 3.4. NBI: SU will always be strongly against giving out student details.
 - 3.5. JW: the Church and Faith Groups are also collating a joint response; some faith groups have low engagement with their universities; however there is a good relationship at LSE, based on trust – at risk if PREVENT is introduced
 - 3.6. MB: there is a duty to take the Statutory Guidelines 'into account', and we need to show we have done that and, if we are to depart from the guidelines, be able to produce evidence and reasons why.
 - 3.7. Guidelines mention 'excluding' those promoting terrorism – that would mean de-registration and goes against PREVENT's idea of working together with at-risk people.
 - 3.8. Council has agreed that LSE should argue for removing universities from the Bill, however that is unlikely.

4. Consultation on the draft statutory guidance – LSE input – discussion.
 - 4.1. Paper 01-04b distributed (attached) – amendments for DMT on 20 January to include:
 - 4.1.1. point (i) to criticise the proposal to "exclude" legal, non-violent extremists from universities;
 - 4.1.2. point (ii) to be strengthened;
 - 4.1.3. point (v) – impracticality of providing training to all staff.
 - 4.2. Ultimate decision remains at the School (re: speakers or students).
 - 4.2.1. At-risk events could be co-chaired or presented in a discussion format to allow for presentation of alternative views.
 - 4.3. The government suggested HEFCE as the regulatory body on this, which creates risks, as it lacks relevant expertise and is a funding body.
5. Training for Group members and others at LSE – VM
 - 5.1. WRAP training available on 2 February:
 - 5.1.1. VM can arrange a session for the Group and publicize to staff;
 - 5.1.2. 2-hour session of presentation and Q&As.
 - 5.2. The Group agreed that publicizing the availability of the training before the Bill becomes law and the statutory guidance is finalised could be seen as endorsing the PREVENT agenda.
 - 5.3. The Group agreed to postpone any communications about training until the Bill is passed.

NBI: LSESU will not participate in training.

NBI: DMT members should not undergo training before Bill becomes law.
6. Comms
 - 6.1. Highlighted need for transparency (NBI).
 - 6.2. RH to share the British Academy response.
 - 6.3. Agreed to disseminate internal comms on the Group meeting to staff and students after DMT on Tuesday 20 January, subject to DMT's views.
 - 6.4. JW suggested Lord Myners meets with student representatives to discuss:
 - 6.4.1. RH to discuss with Jane Pugh;
 - 6.4.2. JW and NBI to identify students.
 - 6.5. SU may issue their own response to the open consultation on the Bill.
7. Next meeting date: tbc but probably after the Act is in place.
8. Close.