

CONFERENCE AND EVENTS POLICY

1 Introduction

This Policy replaces the Conference and Events Policy, approved by Executive on 28.2.11. It has been revised to reflect the changes following the campus consolidation and addition of the Hub/Business School, Art & Design new building and in anticipation of Birley Fields opening in 2014.

Conferences and events at MMU bring a wide range of prestigious organisations into a direct relationship with MMU, enhancing the external profile and reputation of the University. The aim of this policy is to ensure all aspects of such activity are delivered in accordance with MMU's values, strategic protocols and vision.

1.1 Purpose of Policy

The University aims to maximise the opportunities for increasing income generation through the optimisation of its space and facilities.

- 1.1.1 The University is committed to diversifying its income stream. A coordinated strategic approach to conference and events across MMU is essential to support the Vice Chancellor's aspiration to increase and track the income and expenditure generated by such activity.
- 1.1.2 A space booking protocol has been developed to promote a single comprehensive approach to room bookings and a revised financial strategy with the introduction of a single costing and pricing model will ensure the overheads for using space and facilities is factored into all commercial, academic and MMU sponsored events.
- 1.1.3 An integrated relationship between the Conference Office, RKE, Financial and Legal Services and SAS will be developed to support and maximise every opportunity.
- 1.1.4 Where there is a conflict of space hire, this is to be arbitrated through the Space Management Board.

This policy aims to support:

- The 2020 Academic Vision
- Services Strategy (Income Generation)
- Value for Money Strategy
- Facilities Strategic Framework
- Catering Strategy
- Space Management Policy

Key principles

- 1.1.5 The University, and not any group or individual within it, is the owner of its physical assets.

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- 1.1.6 As the owner of its physical assets, the University aims to ensure the best use of all its facilities. A flexible and cooperative approach should be adopted to achieve the best outcome for maximising University resource to support the generation of additional income.
- 1.1.7 Robust protocols for booking MMU facilities must be followed to assure the security of our environment, protection of our stock and equipment and adherence to procedures such as risk assessment and Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech.
- 1.1.8 The Financial Memorandum between HEFCE and MMU states that MMU should use public funds for proper purposes, and specifically in this context, HEFCE funds should not be used for subsidising loss making conferences and events.
- 1.1.9 All events should aim to cover all direct costs and space charges.

Key Targets

- 1.1.10 Generate agreed target income for University.
- 1.1.11 Improve the use of space and facilities to ensure maximum financial return on assets.
- 1.1.12 Effective service delivery.
- 1.1.13 Utilise support services (IT Services, Catering, Halls) to assist in generating additional income.
- 1.1.14 Raise brand profile and awareness of MMU in market place.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all commercial, academic and MMU sponsored conferences and events.

1.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Enquiries relating to this policy can be directed in the first instance to the University Conference and Events Manager.

This policy will be kept current, reviewed annually and will be amended as and when necessary in association with University policy changes with the approval of Director of Services.

2. Policy

2.1 MMU Conference and Events Delivery

- 2.1.1 The MMU Conference and Events Office will generate income through the hire of University facilities and resources.

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- 2.1.2 It will support academic conferences by offering a range of event management services, with additional administrative support from other University departments and third parties.
- 2.1.3 An intranet web portal has been created and will be managed and updated by the Conference and Events Office to support the delivery of a consistent approach to conferences and events across MMU. A web portal will be developed to provide guidance for students holding events at MMU.
- 2.1.4 There is a formal booking procedure to capture all conference and event activity across the University.
- 2.1.5 The Conference and Events Office will set competitive market rates and these should be consistently applied across MMU.
- 2.1.6 The Conference and Events Office will focus on income generation and support high profile events as required.
- 2.1.7 All event catering is to be booked through the University where a package will be developed in line with budget requirements.

2.2 Conference and Events Optimisation

- 2.2.1 There are strict protocols in place, which must be adhered to for booking events at MMU and this may affect the decision making process for ad hoc events. Guidelines to support this can be found on the Conference and Events website.

2.3 Risk Factors and Reputation

- 2.3.1 MMU will not support conference and event activity that in anyway undermines the reputation of MMU and is detrimental to the Estate resource.
- 2.3.2 It is the aim of MMU to ensure that the University delivers high quality events maintaining quality standards through a consistent approach.
- 2.3.3 It is essential that all Health and Safety aspects are adhered to and the appropriate Risk Assessment and Insurance Cover is observed. Due consideration should be given to any security implications that may impact on the venue or audience.
- 2.3.4 The University does not support self-catered events. The Catering Department have to ensure the safety of all customers who eat on premises. Expenditure for Catering is to be kept within the University, in order to ensure the service is sustainable throughout the year. Food supplied to or delivered within and by MMU has to be produced, stored, handled and transported to the highest standards of hygiene to meet the requirements of the Food Safety Act 1990. The reputation of the University may be compromised if this is not adhered to. A range of menus to suit different budgets are available on the website.

2.4 Environment

2.4.1 MMU is committed to reduce the environmental impact of its business activities and has a robust Environmental Sustainability Policy with targets.

This policy recognises MMU's commitment to environmental sustainability and that the aspects of conference and events activity across MMU have an impact on our immediate and wider environmental impact.

2.4.2 This Conference and Events Policy will support the MMU commitment to Environmental Sustainability through the following routes:

2.4.2.1 To understand the aspects and environmental impact of conference and events activity in support of the University Environmental Management system.

2.4.2.2 To support the most efficient use of resources and be aware of the impact of such activity on the environment

2.4.2.3 Support the promotion of sustainable travel to conferences and events to guests

2.4.2.4 Engage and support the waste and resources management strategy, particularly in respect of reducing waste to landfill, minimising packaging from suppliers and enhancing the promotion of recycling during events

2.4.2.5 Produce material for residential guests to make them aware of environmental policy and to reduce energy use

2.4.2.6 Purchase, use and promote fairtrade products, and sustainable food, where possible.

2.4.2.7 Support a sustainable solution to a reduction in the consumption of plastic bottled water.

2.4.2.8 Minimise printing and support the use of sustainable printing methods.

2.5 Sponsorship

2.5.1 MMU staff involved with organising conferences and events are advised that before any approach is made to a potential sponsor careful consideration is given to the University's strategic priorities for fundraising and sponsorship, and advice is sought on the best practices to adopt. Initial advice and guidance will be provided online at www.mmu.ac.uk/venues/intranet.

2.6 Branding

2.6.1 MMU conference and event organisers will ensure that MMU branding is adopted for all MMU conference materials. Guidelines on the corporate visual identity can be found at www.mmu.ac.uk/marketing.

2.7 Filming

- 2.7.1 All filming enquiries must be processed through the Conference and Events Office so they can ensure that the appropriate contractual arrangements and risk and insurance aspects have been dealt with. As a public body, providing free services to certain organisations may be a breach of State Aid rules and therefore, a charge may apply to organisations who wish to film on MMU premises, such level of charge to be at the discretion of the Conference and Events Office.
- 2.7.2 Where possible, all enquiries should be received in good time to allow the Conference and Events Office to process any administrative paperwork, get the contractual arrangements in place and to carry out the necessary checks referred to above. It is an absolute requirement of any filming taking place that appropriate insurance details and a risk assessment is obtained from the third party prior to filming commencing.

2.8 Booking Conditions

- 2.8.1 Terms and Conditions must be issued and implemented for all commercial hire of space and facilities for conferences and events.
- 2.8.2 Booking Conditions will apply to all academic and MMU sponsored conferences and events to ensure best use of space and facilities to maximise opportunities.

2.9 Financials

- 2.9.1 Income generated by Faculties, Central Departments or the Conference and Events Office will be captured in a University Conference Trading Account, to ensure appropriate accounting of all activity.
- 2.9.2 A University wide single costing model will be used for pricing purposes and appropriate space charges applied. A Business Case and Cost Checklist must be completed to receive the relevant approvals prior to the allocation of a project code. Loss making events may not be approved.
- 2.9.3 The University may have the discretion on occasion to reduce or possibly waive the overhead. Any agreement to do this would take into account the objective of the event and the cost and value to MMU. This would have to be specifically agreed in advance by the Deputy Director of Finance.
- 2.9.4 Events which MMU are promoting (including MMU-sponsored conferences) or organising as being MMU lead should, in the main part, be carried out on MMU space (unless specific reasons have been identified in advance i.e. suitable space not available) using MMU facilities (including catering) to maintain the financial sustainability of the University. Any proposal to use non-MMU space must be supported by an appropriate business case.

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- 2.9.5 Space charges for events outlined in 2.9.4 will form part of the surplus and remain with the Faculty or Department.
- 2.9.6 All invoices associated with conferences and events must be raised promptly through the University's Accounting system.

3. Version Number and Approval Dates

Version	1	Author Name & Job Title	Janet Scull Conference and Events Manager
Approved Date	28.2.11	Approved by: (Board/Committee)	Executive and Directorate
Version	2	Author Name & Job Title	Janet Scull
Approved Date	31.1.14	Approved by: Director of Facilities	Claire Twaites
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