

POPP Sub Doc Cover Sheet	
Code of Practice on the flying of flags at the University of Surrey	
Enabling Policy Statement	Our Partners and Reputation – VP Global
Executive Owner:	
Authorised Owner:	Director of Marketing and Communications
Authorised Co-ordinator:	Head of External Relations
Effective date:	July 2025 (as an associated item to the Events, VIP Visits and External Speakers Management Procedure).
Due date for full review:	July 2028
Owning Procedure:	Events, VIP Visits and External Speakers Management Procedure

Approval History

Version	Reason for review	Date
1.0	Reviewing previous flag policy under new framework; recasting as Code of Practice, aligned to the Events, VIP Visits and External Speakers Management Procedure	08 July 2025

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Code of Practice outlines the criteria for the flying of flags at the University of Surrey, primarily focused on flags flown from the main University flagpole on the Austin Pearce piazza, but also covering any other locations across our campuses where flag flying is being considered

2. Scope and Exceptions to the Code of Practice

- 2.1. The primary application of this policy is to any flags proposed to be flown from the main University flagpole on the Austin Pearce piazza.
- 2.2. There is no other authorised location for the flying of flags on University-owned and managed buildings on our campuses, with the exception of the flagpoles outside Surrey Sports Park (covered further in 2.3, below), and none will be approved without formal revision to this Code of Practice – the University reserves the right to request removal or to remove flags flown outside the provisions in this Code of Practice.
- 2.3. Our subsidiaries – Surrey Research Park and Surrey Sports Park are covered by this policy. Surrey Sports Park has flagpoles outside their main entrance. Requests to fly any flags on those are to be submitted and managed as set out in the procedural principles below.
- 2.4. Where buildings on our campuses are leased on a long-term basis to other organisations, including on the Surrey Research Park, we ask lessees and their staff to adhere to our policy. Contracts specify that the display of advertising or other materials (which include flags) are not permitted to be displayed outside buildings without prior approval.
- 2.5. This Code applies to all staff, students, partners of and visitors to the University.

3. Procedural Principles

- 3.1. The default flag flown from the main University flagpole is the University flag.
- 3.2. The Union Flag will be flown on the following government recognised flag flying days:

- 3.2.1. St David's Day (1 March)
 - 3.2.2. Commonwealth Day (second Monday in March)
 - 3.2.3. St Patrick's Day (17 March)
 - 3.2.4. St George's Day (23 April – although check each year, as this can be changed when it falls over the Easter period)
 - 3.2.5. Official Birthday of HM The King (second Saturday in June)
 - 3.2.6. St Andrew's Day (30 November)
- 3.3. Additionally, the Union Flag will be flown on:
- 3.3.1. Armistice Day (11 November), supporting remembrance events held in the piazza.
- 3.4. The Union Flag, the United Nations flag, or the flag of any other international organisation of which the United Kingdom is a member may also be flown to note the presence of visiting VIPs or dignitaries, with the approval of the Vice President Global.
- 3.5. In the event of a major national event (such as death of the Monarch) the University will follow government guidance on the raising of the Union Flag and lowering to half-mast – subject to event-specific approval from the Vice President Global. In the event of the death in service of the Chancellor or Vice Chancellor, the Union Flag or University Flag (as appropriate) will be raised and lowered to half-mast. The precise definition of half-mast is provided by the College of Arms, and if in doubt their guidance is to be followed. Half-mast means the flag is flown two-thirds of the way up the flagpole with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flag pole.
- 3.6. The University will not fly flags from the main University flagpole that represent:
- 3.6.1. any foreign country, including unrecognised countries
 - 3.6.2. religious groups
 - 3.6.3. a political organisation
 - 3.6.4. commercial organisations
 - 3.6.5. societies or membership organisations, including clubs or societies of the University of Surrey Student Union
- 3.7. Flying of other flags will be by exception, subject to prior approval – to include a specified and limited time period, and governed by the principle that this must be both consistent with the University's mission and aligned with the University's strategic aims.
- 3.8. Where the Union Flag (or any flag covered under 3.4) is to be flown in line with any other procedural principle, this takes precedence over any other flag approved to be flown, and other flags would be replaced on that date.
- 3.9. All requests for flags to be flown from the University flagpole on specific days must be made via the Authorised Co-ordinator or Owner of this policy, with the decision resting with the Vice-President, Global.
- 3.10. Requests must be made by email at least 28 days before the required date – except in the case that the requirement for a flag to be flown is in relation to a national event (see 3.5) or a short notice visit from a VIP or dignitary (see 3.4). Requests are to include start and end dates, description and name of the requested flag, and brief outline of how it is consistent with all of the requirements of 3.6.
- 3.11. These criteria do not curtail the right to free expression using other means that members of the University community may wish to exercise under the provisions of the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech.

4. Governance Requirements

4.1. Implementation: Communication Plan

This Code of Practice is primarily of concern to colleagues in the Events team, the Communications team, the Director of Campus Operations, the Head of Campus Safety, and the leadership teams at the Surrey Sports Park and the Surrey Research Park. These teams and individuals will be contacted directly once the Code of Practice has been approved – alongside the Events, VIP Visits and External Speakers Management Procedure – and will be encouraged to cascade to other relevant team members.

4.2. Implementation: Training Plan

There are no specific training plans associated with implementation of this Code of Practice, beyond the normal considerations relating to health and safety when raising or lowering flags on the flag pole.

4.3. Review

This Code of Practice will be reviewed alongside the broader “University of Surrey Events, VIP Visits and External Speakers Management Procedure” – the due date is July 2028, 3 years after the approval of the Procedure at PRC on 8 July 2025.