

# *Seminar: Freedom of Expression - Contemporary Challenges in the UK*

*HRLC (Civil and Political Rights Unit), School of Law,  
University of Nottingham*

**Wednesday 7 December 2022, 14.00-16.00**

The seminar will be held online via MS teams

## **Introduction**

**Freedom of expression has been described as the 'touchstone or cornerstone' of all rights. In the UK system, it is considered to be one of a very small number of 'fundamental common law rights'. It is also a 'Convention right' under the Human Rights Act 1998, drawn from Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950). However, it has always been understood as a right that can be qualified or limited by other rights or interests. This Seminar looks at three current Bills before the UK Parliament, each of which is concerned with freedom of expression. It aims to examine the three Bills in terms of the issues and challenges they raise in terms of freedom of expression. Are they consistent with the historic status and importance of freedom of expression in the UK? Can the qualifications or limitations they impose on freedom of expression be justified? Are they seeking to change the balance between freedom of expression and other rights and interests?**

## **Programme:**

### **Part I: Bill of Rights Bill**

Comment: 'Freedom of expression in the Bill of Rights Bill' Professor Paul Wragg (University of Leeds)

Responses:

Judith Skillen (University of Nottingham) (on the expression/ privacy balance)

Sejal Parmar (Cardiff/ FCDO) (on how discussions around the bills are shaping the development and framing of UK foreign policy, and also its projection and effectiveness).

Discussion

### **Part II: Online Safety Bill**

Comment: 'Lawful but harmful', Professor Lorna Woods (Essex)

Comment: 'The Regulation of Hate Speech' Peter Coe (Birmingham University)

Responses: Nicholas Hatzis (University of Nottingham)/ Oliver Butler (University of Nottingham).

Discussion

### **Part III: Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill**

Comment: 'Freedom of Speech in Higher Education' Professor Dominic McGoldrick (University of Nottingham)

Response: Professor Stephen Bailey (University of Nottingham)

Discussion