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FREE SPEECH UNION

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Dr Tim Bradshaw
CEO, The Russell Group
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11th June 2021

Dear Dr Bradshaw,

Many thanks for your prompt response to my letter.

I am glad to hear that Russell Group members seek legal advice regarding internal processes. I very much hope your members will take advice on their harassment reporting websites, particularly those members who currently cite the law incorrectly.

Your response does not quite reassure me of the Russell Group's 'unambiguous commitment' to freedom of speech. I note that, while barely any members cite the Equality Act provisions that safeguard free speech, the free speech code of practice of every member but one (York) cites the legal limitations that inhibit it.

If the Group wishes to live up to its admirable [free speech principles](#), it may need to revisit that imbalance.

Nevertheless, I agree that the best test of these policies is whether, as a result of them, staff members or students suffer any unfair detriment. For that reason, the Free Speech Union will be reaching out to Russell Group staff and students, and offering to take up the case of anyone who believes their right to free expression has been inhibited.

Yours sincerely,

Toby Young
General Secretary
The Free Speech Union
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