

# MEDIA RELATIONS PROCEDURE



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## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 CQUniversity Australia receives media attention at local, state, national and international levels. It is critical to the University's reputation that its interaction with media representatives be managed effectively, in a proactive and reactive manner, to ensure media coverage of CQUniversity is accurate, timely, positive in nature wherever possible, and reflective of the University's strategic aims and corporate values.
- 1.2 This procedure is designed to ensure that the University manages its media liaisons constructively and professionally. It identifies steps to be followed in relation to media interaction to ensure that outcomes are beneficial for the University and for individual academic and professional staff members.

## 2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to CQUniversity media relations and staff involved in media relations across University locations, including members of the Student Representative Council.
- 2.2 This procedure applies to channels including print and associated online platforms (such as blogs, opinion sites, radio and television).
- 2.3 This procedure does not apply to the management of social media. Refer to the [Social Media Policy](#) for further information on this.

### 3 PROCEDURE

#### Staff freedom to comment

3.1 This procedure does not limit the freedom of:

- University staff, as private citizens, to comment on community affairs as individuals, although one's University position/title may not be quoted when so doing
- University students and stakeholders, as private citizens, to comment on community affairs as individuals, or
- University staff to comment on his/her area/s of scholarly and/or research expertise. In making such comments it would be entirely appropriate to quote one's University position.

#### Limitations on staff comment

3.2 Appropriate compliance with this procedure will limit:

- negative and/or defamatory statements being made about the University and/or its staff members or students
- incorrect information about the University being shared with media outlets
- sensitive information about the University being shared with media outlets, and
- the University being implicated in or related to issues that have the potential to damage the reputation of the University and/or its staff members or students.

#### Staff comment on behalf of the university

3.3 The University authorises a number of officers to speak on its behalf. Staff (in consultation with Corporate Communications) may engage with the media on topics and issues within their areas of scholarly and/or research expertise: both proactively and reactively to relevant current affairs topics. When staff make comment on behalf of the University, the following provisions apply:

- unless Corporate Communications gives prior consent, University staff may not make comment on University or Council business
- University staff may not make comment on behalf of the University about political or social issues unless this directly relates to their area of expertise
- the Chancellor of the University, or their nominee, is the only person that may speak on behalf of the Council of Central Queensland University.
- the Vice-Chancellor and President, or their nominee, may speak on all areas of the University's activity.
- the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and President and Deputy Vice-Chancellors are authorised to provide media comment on University affairs.
- Pro Vice-Chancellor's Associate Vice-Chancellors and Deans are authorised to speak in matters related to their portfolio, region and school and where approved on other university business.
- senior officers of the University as described above may act as University spokespeople for areas within their respective portfolios. They may authorise staff members to comment on particular subjects. Where public comments are offered by staff as employees of CQUniversity, it is expected that the comments will relate directly to their areas of expertise. If the matter is outside of this area of expertise prior advice and approval should be sought from the Manager, Corporate Communications.
- When requesting support from Corporate Communications to promote an activity or project, staff should always ensure they have acquired approvals from relevant managers in relation to promoting the activity. Corporate Communications will not source these approvals.
- the Vice-Chancellor and President may at any time give or withdraw authorisation for any staff member to initiate or respond to media contact
- all media liaison (including that of subsidiaries, research centres and other organisational units within the University) will be handled through Corporate Communications, which is responsible for writing,

approving and distributing all media releases/statements that come from the University, as well as liaising with relevant journalists

- staff who become aware of issues or risks that could lead to media queries should contact Corporate Communications (Manager, Corporate Communications or Media Relations Officer) as soon as possible, so that key messages and an appropriate response can be formulated and key staff members briefed on these
- Corporate Communications provides high-level advice, support and media training. Staff, researchers, and authorised spokespeople should attend this training upon appointment and refresh their knowledge when training is available
- Corporate Communications is the central point of call for all incoming media enquiries. Any media enquiries received by staff members should be directed to the Manager, Corporate Communications or to a Media Relations or Communications Officer within this area.
- The University acknowledges that from time-to-time students and stakeholders will be approached for comment by representatives of the media on matters pertaining to University business. Wherever possible, Corporate Communications will endeavour to mitigate potential negative outcomes in such situations by acting as a conduit between students/stakeholders and the media. Where this is not possible, Corporate Communications will endeavour to mitigate potential negative outcomes through targeted media liaison and the use of University spokespeople to present a positive counterbalance in the media.
- Corporate Communications will maintain a calendar of national and international events related to key research areas at the University with an aim to proactively attract media attention
- Corporate Communications will comply with any protocols set out by a third party when producing materials to be sent to media outlets where the University and a third party is mentioned.

## Style and branding

- 3.4 Persons in charge of preparing media items including media releases, feature articles, and UniNews stories should always follow the standards set in the University's Writing Style Guideline and Brand Guidelines – particularly when referencing the organisation's name, history, organisational areas and position titles.
- 3.5 Where the Writing Style Guideline contradicts the Australian Style Manual, standards in the Australian Style Manual are to be applied.

## Complaints

- 3.6 Any complaints regarding the performance of the media or any misrepresentation of facts must be made to Corporate Communications, not the media. Corporate Communications will work with relevant media outlets to arrange for a retraction or change to the story.
- 3.7 Staff members should direct concerns about University operations and/or policy to the manager of that area and should not speak to the media to raise these issues. Staff members who do not comply with this procedure may face disciplinary action.

## Emergency and crises communication

- 3.8 In an emergency incident or event, or where a crisis has been declared by the University, the importance of defined, clear, and consistent messaging to internal and external University stakeholders is paramount. In such events, staff are to refrain from making comment on the University's behalf unless authorised, and are to direct all media enquiries to Corporate Communications in every instance.
- 3.9 In the event of an emergency or crises, CQUniversity's Crisis Management Control Group will be activated. Once activated this group will coordinate all media relations activities in any declared emergency. Refer to the [Crisis Management Control Group Terms of Reference](#) for further details.
- 3.10 The Campus Head/Campus Director is the head of the Emergency Response Team in any declared emergency pertaining to that campus. The Campus Head/Campus Director is authorised to provide media comment in emergency situations relating to their campus; however, advice should first be sought from Corporate Communications. Refer to the [Emergency Response Team Terms of Reference](#) for further details.

- 3.11 No representative of the University is authorised to speak on police matters related to any incidents directly or indirectly involving the University.
- 3.12 In the event of a staff member or student death, CQUniversity is not authorised to make comment unless set out in the [Acknowledgement of Deceased Persons Policy and Procedure](#).

### **Paid media placement**

- 3.13 Paid media placements are a form of advertising and any requests to gain this type of placement must be requested through the Marketing Directorate.
- 3.14 The Marketing Directorate will request appropriate content through Corporate Communications.
- 3.15 Corporate Communications will repurpose existing material or if nothing appropriate exists will develop new content in consultation with the requester, provided requests are made ahead of deadlines.

### **Social media**

- 3.16 Media content will be shared where appropriate on social media platforms. Content can include stories developed by the CQUniversity, stories appearing online that mention CQUniversity, and stories that make reference to a topic that relates to CQUniversity's interests.
- 3.17 Content can be shared on official CQUniversity channels.
- 3.18 If a staff member identifies themselves as an employee of the University and engages in content sharing on social media, the staff member should state that their opinions are their own.
- 3.19 Before engaging on social media platforms related to CQUniversity, staff should familiarise themselves with the [Social Media Policy](#).

### **Media reporting and evaluation**

- 3.20 Corporate Communications will prepare and distribute daily media clippings reports related to CQUniversity, the Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training sectors and industry.
- 3.21 Corporate Communications will utilise reporting functions available on the University's media reporting service to develop annual and quarterly reports.
- 3.22 Corporate Communications will use the University's media reporting service to generate special reports on any trending organisational or sector issue.

## **4 RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Compliance, monitoring and review**

- 4.1 The Director, Vice-Chancellor and President Officer and Manager, Corporate Communications are responsible for the compliance, monitoring and review of the Media Relations Procedure.

### **Reporting**

- 4.2 No additional reporting is required.

### **Records management**

- 4.3 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this procedure in a recognised University recordkeeping system.

## 5 DEFINITIONS

5.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University [glossary](#).

## 6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Acknowledgement of Deceased Persons Policy and Procedure](#)

Brand Guidelines

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Critical Incident Procedure](#)

[Crisis Management Control Group Terms of Reference](#)

[Business Continuity and Crises Management Policy](#)

[Business Continuity Planning Terms of Reference](#)

[Emergency Response Team Terms of Reference](#)

[Social Media Policy](#)

Writing Style Guideline

## 7 FEEDBACK

7.1 University staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing [policy@cqu.edu.au](mailto:policy@cqu.edu.au).

## 8 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
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Administrator	Manager, Corporate Communications
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Notes	