Media Policy

Responsible Officer
Executive Director, Marketing and Communications

Approved by
Vice-Chancellor

Approved and commenced
December, 2014

Review by
December, 2017

Relevant Legislation, Ordinance, Rule and/or Governance Level Principle
Governance Level Principle 8 – Public Relations and Communications
Governance Level Principle 14 – Academic Freedom

Responsible Organisational Unit
Office of Corporate Affairs

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1 Objective

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Ensure the quality, consistency and professionalism of University of Tasmania communications with the media
- Protect the image and brand of the University against potential harm
- Enhance the University’s profile and reputation as a provider of world-standard teaching, learning and research and its role as a significant contributor to the economic, social and cultural life of Tasmania.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all persons who:

- Are authorised to act as spokespersons for the University on specific matters;
- Can provide expert or informed comment on specific subjects or issues;
- Are responsible for issuing media releases for specific University events or activities;
- Are employed by the University.

Exclusions

Other established protocols are in place for media communications for joint University partnership arrangements, such as with the State Government (for example, the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA)) or in Cooperative Research Centres (CRCs).

Advice on media communications relating to these joint ventures should be sought from the University Media Office or the Directors of these organisations.

3 Policy Provisions

3.1 Role of the Office of Corporate Affairs

It is the role of The Office of Corporate Affairs to support the University community to meet the objectives of the policy.

The Office performs its role by:

- Acting as the first point of contact and referral in dealing with enquiries from the media;
- Providing advice to University staff (or visiting experts) on the preparation of media material in a range of formats;
- Identifying University issues of potential interest to the media;
- Liaising with University partners (including the State Government) on specific media issues; and
- Drafting, editing, approving and distributing University media releases.

In performing its role, The Office relies on the professional skills and expertise of University staff and representatives to ensure the accuracy and relevance of
information contained in media communications. The Office will not alter factual content of any media communication.

The Office will provide professional assistance to help improve presentation, readability or newsworthiness.

3.2 Categories of Media Communication

The principal vehicles for University communication with the media are:

a) Authorised spokesperson

An authorised spokesperson may comment for and on behalf of the University on specific issues. These include but are not limited to University policies and planning, University contributions to the well-being of the wider community, higher education policies, budget or capital works issues, security and emergency issues, enrolments, academic and teaching developments or innovations, research, and the securing of major grants or sponsorships. Specific communication responsibilities for particular matters are detailed in the Delegations Policy and Schedules.

All media inquiries on these matters should be directed to The Office of Corporate Affairs in the first instance, or to the Manager, Corporate Communication or the Director of Corporate Affairs. The Office will identify the most appropriate authorised spokesperson.

b) University academic providing expert or informed comment

A University academic who provides expert or informed comment based upon and informed by their specific area of academic expertise.

Approaches to the academic may come from The Office of Corporate Affairs or directly from the media. University academics who are approached directly by the media for comment should inform The Office. The Office may assist with preparation for presentations, media monitoring and any follow-up.

c) Public event or announcement

Any public event or announcement organised by University staff for which a media release will be issued.

d) Crisis Communications

University crisis communications process is governed by the University Crisis Management and Recovery Plan.

e) Individuals providing comments

University staff or representatives may use their own discretion in providing comments to the media in their own right as individuals or outside their area of professional expertise. In such cases, those making comments should make it clear that the comments do not necessarily represent those of the University or any of its Colleges, Academic Units, or Administrative Sections.
Individual or personal comments made by University staff members on University communications platforms including email, are covered separately in the *Electronic Communications Policy*.

f) Media releases

Media releases are a primary mechanism by which the University provides factual information on its activities, events or plans to the media. The Office of Corporate Affairs has responsibility for drafting, editing and distributing media releases on behalf of The University. Staff may also draft releases for consideration by The Office. The author of the draft release is responsible for the accuracy of the content.

All releases edited by The Office for presentation, readability or newsworthiness will be returned to the author for final approval before distribution. All media releases are to be issued by the Office to ensure consistency in style, tone and content.

4 Responsibilities

The Director of Corporate Affairs is responsible for:

- Implementation of this Policy
- Compliance with this Policy

The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for:

- Monitoring and evaluation of this Policy
- Development and/or review of this Policy

The Manager, Corporate Communication, and Media and Communication Officers are responsible for:

- Interpretation of this Policy
- Advice on this Policy
- Records and Information supporting the activities of this policy will be created, managed and retained in accordance with University Records Management Policy, Procedures and Guidelines.

5 Definitions and Acronyms

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<th>Term/Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Unit</td>
<td>Means the secondary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, reporting directly to the College Executive Deans, as per Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>Means (a) the primary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, as per Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure</td>
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(b) the University College

Organisational Unit
College, Faculty, School, Centre, University Institute, other University Entity, Division, Section or University Business Enterprise.

Authorised spokesperson
A person who is authorised to comment for and on behalf of the University in specific areas of responsibility, to be established by and through The University's Ordinance or Delegation of Authority.

Expert Comment
Expert or informed comment provided by a University staff member based upon and informed by their specific area of academic expertise.

Media
Any print, broadcast, digital or social media content or platform that provides news or information to the general public.

Media release
A document distributed to the media detailing a news item, press conference or other public announcement which relates directly to the work of the University AND which appears on a University of Tasmania template.

Office of Corporate Affairs
The Office of Corporate Affairs ('The Office') was created in 2013, bringing together a range of functions. It sits within the Office of Marketing and Communications.

Prior to 2013 the Office was called ‘the Media Office’, a term which is still current and accepted in email, websites and other University content.

Policy Maker
The Policy Maker is the Vice-Chancellor of the University, or a person delegated to act of his behalf.

6 Supporting Documentation
- Open to Talent: Strategic Plan 2012 Onwards
- Delegations Policy
- Electronic Communications Policy
- Community Engagement Policy

7 Versioning

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Version</td>
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Version 3 – Media Policy (current document); approved December 2014, amended in December 2017 to incorporate final academic structures.