



Tasmania University Union Inc.

Media Policy

Responsible Officer:	Executive Officer
Approved By:	Board of Management
Approval Date:	21 June 2017
Review Date:	1 June 2018

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1. Purpose

The purpose of the Tasmania University Union (TUU) Media Policy (**Media Policy**) is to provide student representatives and staff with clear rules to guide communication through media other than social media. The Media Policy is intended to ensure that the TUU speaks with a united voice and advocates effectively on behalf of the University of Tasmania's student body, without unduly hampering the ability of student representatives and staff to fulfil their roles within the organisation.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- i) TUU student representatives elected and appointed;
- ii) TUU staff;
- iii) TUU Board of Management.

For the purpose of this policy Council is represented by the President, and the Board of Management is represented by the Executive Officer.

This policy does not apply to TUU appointed *Togatus* editorial and support staff undertaking their duties with *Togatus*.

3. Compliance with TUU Policies

In communication with the media, TUU student representatives and staff members must comply with all TUU policies and codes of conduct.

To the extent of any inconsistency, the provisions of the Media Policy shall prevail.

4. Definitions

- a) "Board" shall mean the TUU Board of Management.
- b) "Council" shall mean the Statewide Student Representative Council of the TUU.
- c) "Executive Officer" shall mean the person holding the office of Executive Officer of the TUU.
- d) "Media" shall mean any form of mass communication other than social media, and shall include but is not limited to television; print media such as newspapers, newsletters, books and magazines (including *Togatus*); and radio.
- e) "President" shall mean the person holding the position of President of the Council of the TUU.
- f) "Staff" shall mean employees of the TUU.
- g) "TUU" shall mean the Tasmania University Union Inc.
- h) "University" shall mean the University of Tasmania.

5. Communication with the Media

5.1 Official Position

5.1.1 TUU Official Position

The TUU official position about matters in relation to the TUU or higher education is determined by the Board.

The TUU official position about matters in relation to the TUU or higher education may be submitted by Council or the Executive Officer, but must be approved by the Board prior to being made public.

Any statement or press release issued pertaining to the TUU official position on any matters must:

- i) clearly acknowledge that the statement is made on behalf of the TUU; and
- ii) be circulated to members of Board, Council and the Executive Officer prior to its release.

Any official position of the TUU, shall not prevent the Council from advocating an alternative position provided it complies with clause 5.1.2.

5.1.2 Council Official Position

The Council, or President in accordance with provisions of clause 5.2 of this Policy, may determine Council's official position about matters in relation to the TUU or higher education.

Any statement or press release issued by Council or the President pertaining to Council's official position on any matters must:

- i) clearly acknowledge that the statement is made on behalf of Council if approved by Council; or
- ii) clearly acknowledge that the statement is the view of the President if Council have not been consulted; and
- iii) be circulated to members of Council, Board and the Executive Officer prior to its release.

Any official position of the Council, shall not prevent the Board from advocating an alternative position provided it complies with clause 5.1.1

5.2 Consultation with Council

The President shall take reasonable steps to consult with Council and seek approval before determining Council's official position about matters in relation to the TUU or higher education.

The President may determine Council's official position about matters relating to the TUU or higher education, if it is impracticable due to time constraints to consult with Council, but must state that it is the view of the President.

5.3 Official Media Spokesperson

Only the President and Executive Officer may communicate the TUU official position or the official position of Council to the media about matters relating to the TUU or higher education unless the Media Policy provides otherwise.

The President and Executive Officer should consult with each other prior to communication with the media, where practical to do so. Strong disagreement between the President and Executive Officer regarding communication with the media should be referred to the Chair of the Board.

5.4 Authorisation

The President or Executive Officer may authorise other TUU student representatives and staff to communicate with the media on behalf of the TUU.

The President or Executive Officer may not retrospectively authorise other TUU student representatives or staff to communicate with the media on behalf of the TUU.

In authorising others to communicate with the media on behalf of the TUU, the President and Executive Officer may take into account:

- The TUU's capacity to advocate effectively on behalf of the University's student body;
- The desirability of a consistent approach to authorising TUU student representatives and staff to communicate with the media;
- The TUU's potential exposure to legal liability;
- The ability of TUU student representatives and staff to fulfil their function within the organisation efficiently; and
- Any other relevant considerations.

TUU student representatives and staff authorised by the President or Executive Officer to communicate with the media on behalf of the TUU, must comply with all provisions of the TUU Media Policy.

5.5 Prohibited Comments

The following are strictly prohibited by any TUU student representative or staff member communicating with the media:

- i) Express views that could potentially expose the TUU to legal liability; or
- ii) Express views that bring the TUU into disrepute; or

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- iii) Express views contrary to official TUU positions; or
 - iv) Express views about the TUU's internal operation or the performance of other TUU student representatives or staff; or
 - v) make statements or comments that constitute bullying, harassment or intimidate of another person; or
 - vi) Make statements or comments known to be inaccurate.

Without authorisation from the Council or the Executive Officer, TUU student representatives or staff members must not:

- i) Express views about higher education or the TUU; or
- ii) Promote any commercial venture; or
- iii) Express views about the administration of the University; or
- iv) Criticise any stakeholder or external organisation.

All student representatives and staff members authorised to communicate with the media must comply with directions from the President and the Executive Officer.

6. Enforcement of Policy

6.1 Complaints

Complaints in relation to breaches of the Media Policy should be made in writing, providing evidence of the alleged breach.

6.1.1 Student Representatives

Upon receiving a complaint that a TUU student representative has breached the Media Policy, Council must investigate the alleged breach and provide the TUU student representative responsible with an opportunity to respond. A determination will then be made by Council on the validity of the complaint, and any appropriate disciplinary action.

6.1.2 TUU Staff

Upon receiving a complaint that a TUU staff member has breached the Media Policy, the Executive Officer must investigate the alleged breach. The process to determine the validity of the complaint and the appropriate disciplinary action is specified in Clause 37 Performance Management of the TUU Enterprise Agreement 2014.

6.1.3 President

Any complaint against the President of breaching the Media Policy should be referred to the Executive Officer.

6.1.4 Executive Officer

Any complaint against the Executive Officer of breaching the Media Policy should be referred to the Chair of the Board.

6.1.5 Conflict of Interest

The TUU may engage an independent investigator for complaints of serious breaches of the Media Policy where a conflict of interest is declared.

6.1.6 Unresolved Complaints

Unresolved complaints of bullying, harassment or discrimination which contravene the University's Behaviour Policy may be referred to the University for investigation of general misconduct and disciplinary action under Ordinance No. 9 Student Discipline.

6.2 Disciplinary Action

If alleged breaches are confirmed to have occurred, disciplinary action for breaches of the Media Policy by TUU student representatives may include the following, and will be determined according to the seriousness of the breach:

- Official warning; or
- Attendance at mediation sessions; or
- A fine equivalent to two week's pay (or such other amount determined by Council); or
- Suspension from office for a period of one month without pay (or such other period determined by Council); or
- Vote of no confidence to remove the student representative from office.

In most instances, unless the breach is determined to be serious, Council will issue an official warning, detailing the nature of the breach and consequences of further breaches.

6.3 Factors Affecting Disciplinary Action

Factors relevant to the determination of the appropriate disciplinary action for TUU student representatives who have breached the TUU Media Policy include:

- Whether the student representative knowingly breached the Media Policy;
- The representative's motivation;
- The representative's history of compliance with the Media Policy;

- The representative's history of compliance with other TUU policies and the code of conduct;
- The TUU's exposure to legal liability;
- The desirability of a consistent approach to Media Policy breaches to deter future breaches; and
- Any other relevant considerations.

6.4 Procedure for Determination of Policy Breach

Council may only determine whether a breach took place and the appropriate disciplinary action at a Council meeting.

Student representatives accused of breaching the Media Policy have a right to speak before Council makes a determination. Should a student representative accused of breaching the Media Policy fail to attend the Council meeting without providing a reason for his/her absence to the General Secretary, he/she is taken to waive this right.

A member of Council must give the student representative accused of breaching the Media Policy one week's notice before making a determination.

6.5 Special Procedures for Imposing Fines or Dismissal

Disciplinary action of imposing a fine, suspending or removing the student representative from office requires an approval vote of six members of Council.

A motion of No Confidence to remove student representatives from office must be ratified by the Board to be effective.

6.6 Appeals Process

A student representative may appeal a penalty imposed for breaching the Media Policy. Appeals will be heard by the Board, should be forwarded to the secretary of the Board and must be:

- i) in writing;
- ii) state specific clause of policy breached;
- iii) state penalty imposed;
- iv) provide grounds for appeal;
- v) provide supporting evidence for appeal.

The appeal will be considered by the Board, who will advise the student representative of the decision within 7 days of receiving the appeal.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or as needed, by Council and the Executive Officer. Any amendments deemed necessary will be approved by the Board.

8. Versioning

<i>Title</i>	<i>Para. Amended</i>	<i>BOM Approval Date</i>
Policy approval		18/8/2015
Policy review	2, 4, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 6	21/06/2017