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| **P12**  **MEDIA & PRESS POLICY & GUIDELINES** |  |

**Document Owner: Marketing & Communications Manager**

**Introduction**

1. This document is designed for employees who may be contacted by media or press organisations on account of their role at the University of Northampton Students’ Union. The document provides guidance on the Union’s media and press policy and guidelines to follow should you be contacted.
2. This policy covers all external news media including broadcast, electronic and print. This does not exclude student media outlets or University of Northampton media and communications.
3. The Union expects all members of Students’ Union staffto read and follow the guidelines set out below*.* Employees should also note that they have a legal responsibility to accurately and fairly represent the Union in any public space, and are expected to uphold the integrity of the organisation. If you have any queries about the policy, please contact the Marketing & Communications Manager.

**Purpose of Policy**

1. The purpose of this policy and set of guidelines is to:
   1. Provide support and guidance for employees who might receive media enquiries
   2. Ensure information disclosed by the Students’ Union is timely, accurate, comprehensive, authoritative and relevant
   3. Protect the Union and its community;
   4. Create consistency and coherence across Union media activities.

**Principal Media Contact**

1. The Marketing & Communications Manager/Coordinator is the University of Northampton Students’ Union’s principal media contact. This department has expertise in media relations and will determine the best method by which to provide information.
2. The Marketing & Communications Department will convey the official Students’ Union position on issues of significance or situations that are particularly controversial or sensitive in nature.
3. Among Marketing & Communications’ responsibilities:
   1. Increase public awareness and understanding of the Students’ Union, the services that we provide our communities and our future activities.
   2. Promote a positive public image of the Students’ Union and the work we do to audiences that are important to the organisation, which includes our members, the University, our employees, the local community and national Student Movement.
4. Depending on the news item, a member of staff outside of Marketing & Communications may be asked to be a spokesperson on a particular issue due to their knowledge, experience or expertise. In such instances, the Marketing & Communications Department will work with that designated spokesperson to prepare them for the media interview as needed. Preparation may include developing talking points as well as training and interview practise.

**Guidelines for Talking with the Media**

1. A reporter, producer or other news media may contact you for a number of reasons, for example:
   1. To get information about the Students’ Union
   2. To get information about a recent unexpected event such as thefts or arrests, accidents or injuries; customer or employee complaints, regulatory actions; etc.
   3. To get information or comment about an action or event that could impact students, new products, changes in government or University policies.
   4. To get general information on a topical story in your community such as changes in local governmental officials or policies, problems or issues specific to the community you serve, etc.
2. Refer all media enquiries to the Marketing & Communications Department. Please do not say you are not allowed to talk to a reporter or have to get permission to do so. Instead, tell the reporter: “The Students’ Union policy is to refer all media enquiries to the Marketing & Communications Department. You can reach them by calling 01604 89 3610 or email.
3. Whenever taking a call from the media, the same courtesy and professionalism in which we approach our members should be displayed. Please act quickly when approached by the media to ensure that the reporter’s deadline is met. This is important because the way this call is handled may be the reporter’s first impression of the Students’ Union and that first impression may shape the story published or the news segment broadcast. In order to promote our customer service image, it is important to respond quickly, courteously and professionally to all media calls.
4. Please remember to contact the Marketing & Communications Department if and when you have been approached by the media. Even though you have referred the media, the Marketing & Communications Department may need your help to prepare a response. Do not let a reporter compel you to answer questions on the spot. It is always beneficial to prepare in advance in order to provide accurate and relevant information.

**Guidelines for Photographs and Film**

1. A similar process as described above will be used when someone from the media is requesting permission to take photographs or to film inside our facilities. Refer the caller to the Marketing & Communications Department. No one will be given access to your facility for a photo or filming without approval from this department. Approval will be determined based on a number of criteria including:
   1. What does the Students’ Union have to gain from the photo and filming?
   2. How much disruption will this cause to operations?
   3. Does the facility look “picture perfect” good?
2. A reporter or camera crew may show up unannounced. Please know that the Marketing & Communications Department will not send media to any venue or event without notifying the appropriate/duty manager on site.
3. When dealing with reporters and camera crews who may show up unannounced, the duty manager and staff should act with the same courtesy and professionalism as we approach our members. Contact the Marketing & Communications Department immediately and let them know which news source is there. They will contact the camera crew’s news room or the print photographer’s editor for clarification.

1. We cannot prevent the filming or photographing of common areas outside of our venues which we do not operate. Examples would include public footpaths, courtyards and walk ways. We cannot prevent filming or photography on University grounds, but permission must similarly be obtained from the University’s Advancement and International Relations Department.

1. The following guidelines should be used when television camera crews or print photographers show up unannounced any venue or event.

* 1. Although we cannot prevent the media from photographing or filming the exterior of our venues, we will contact their news room and/or editors for clarification.
  2. The media cannot enter our venues to photograph or film without permission.
  3. The media cannot block the entrance to our venues or prevent people from entering our venue or conducting business as usual.
  4. We can inform the media if our members complain about the inconvenience caused.
  5. Be courteous and friendly, remember everything you say and do may be observed and reported by the media representative who is reporting.

**Guidelines for Seeking Media Coverage**

1. In circumstances in which you believe you have a positive news story to share with the public, contact the Marketing & Communications Department. It is the only department authorised to distribute Students’ Union press releases, pitch coverage of particular events or hold media events.

1. Do not call a reporter directly without first consulting Marketing & Communications. The department will work with you to gather information and determine if and how the media should be contacted. Similar measures used by editors and reporters will be considered to determine if your story is newsworthy. Some news items may be more appropriate for internal publicity or University communications.

**REVIEW**

1. This policy will be reviewed bi-annually at the Marketing & Communications Meeting, before submission to the SMT, as per the Document History attached.

# Document History – MEDIA & PRESS POLICY & GUIDELINES

**Date of this revision**: 07/07/13

**Date of next revision**: tbc

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| **Revision date** | **Previous revision date** | **Summary of Changes** | **Changes marked** |
| 07/07/13 | n/a | **First issue** |  |

## Owner

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## Approvals

Approval will be made via email from a valid email address as shown below.

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