

# NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



Education is a key tool in Australia's soft diplomacy strategy and provides significant benefits to our economy.

The University of Newcastle is committed to fostering global collaborations with institutions and individuals worldwide, creating opportunities through research, teaching, professional development, and cross-cultural experiences.

Through these opportunities we inspire and empower our students and staff to embrace global citizenship, and we facilitate research advances and discovery that would not be possible without international collaboration.

It is, however, acknowledged that in our fluid geopolitical environment, the sector must be vigilant against foreign interference and other matters related to national security.

The University of Newcastle is committed to ensuring our collaborations, research and education activities are mindful of the national interest.

To strengthen our protections against national security and foreign interference risks, the University has reviewed our artefacts and approved the National Security Strategic Framework.

Independent but related, the University has robust cyber and information security policies, procedures and strategies which underpin all activity within this Framework.

## FRAMEWORK FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES

### UNIVERSITIES FOREIGN INTERFERENCE TASKFORCE GUIDELINE PRINCIPLES

- Safeguard academic freedom, values, and research collaboration
- Research, collaboration, and education activities are mindful of the national interest
- Security is a collective responsibility with individual accountability
- Security should be proportionate to organisational risk
- The safety of the university community is paramount

### LEGISLATIVE PROTECTIONS

- Foreign Arrangements Scheme – transparency of organisational arrangements
- Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act – transparency of an individual's activities
- Security of Critical Infrastructure Act – risk assurance for organisational activities in the national interest
- Protecting Australia's Critical Technology Regulations – risk assurance for activities in the national interest
- Defence Export Controls – regulating international activities in the national interest

### DEFENCE INDUSTRY SECURITY PROGRAM ASSURANCE PRINCIPLES

The Defence Security Principles Framework supports a progressive and protective security culture that understands and manages risk, leading to robust security outcomes for:

- Personnel
- Physical Assets
- Information Security

## SUMMARY

- The Framework provides structure to the activities and governance put in place to uplift institutional and individual resilience against national security and foreign interference risks.
- The Framework employs the Universities Foreign Interference Taskforce (UFIT) Guideline principles, legislative protections, and Defence Industry Security Program (DISP) assurance principles as foundations.
- The Framework complements and dovetails other frameworks, tools and practices within the University, the sector and with government.
- The Framework has strategies that are aligned to three interdependent areas of focus: Governance; Awareness; and Our People.

# FRAMEWORK STRATEGIC PILLARS

## GOVERNANCE

Sustainable governance is uplifted through sound governance structures, robust policy and streamlined procedure, and supported by in-house capacity.

### Structures

Establishment of the Foreign Interference Committee (the University's Accountable Authority per the UFIT Guidelines) that provides a university wide point of response and coordination on all matters relating to foreign interference.

Cyber security uplift including establishment of the Cyber Security Governance Committee.

### Policy and Procedure

The Foreign Interference Policy links to policy including the Code of Conduct, Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom, the Transparency and Disclosures Policy, Responsible Conduct of Research Policy, and related processes.

Transparent and accessible reporting/complaint mechanisms.

Foreign Interference is integrated into the University's frameworks and processes:

- Risk Management Framework
- internal assurance audit cycle
- Annual Personal Interest declaration process

Baseline due diligence processes and pathways for escalation are clearly defined.

### In-house capacity

Appointment of a designated role to:

- advise on national security matters
- liaise with national defence and security agencies
- provide advice on FI risks and respond to emerging threats
- build further responsiveness to the UFIT guidelines.

Systematic monitoring and reporting of legislative and sector changes and threat updates from AusGov and external organisations, including Department of Education, Skills and Employ, Department of Home Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and security agencies.

## AWARENESS

Education and training are key elements in the University's strategy to raise awareness of foreign interference and to build national security resilience in staff and students:

- National Security Awareness training and Cyber Security training are mandatory for all staff annually.
- Foreign Interference Awareness campaign nuanced to identified cohorts: international coursework students, international HDR students, international staff, HDR supervisors, and staff and students of the broader campus community. The campaign commences pre-departure for incoming students and builds an understanding of academic freedom in Australia.
- Staff with assessment responsibilities for international arrangements are trained in due diligence.
- Insider threat awareness for defence researchers and project staff and on demand/as required.

## OUR PEOPLE

Staff and students play a key role in preventing, identifying and countering foreign interference and other national security issues.

The University also acknowledges that staff and students may be the targets of foreign interference.

In addition to the awareness strategies outlined above, the University undertakes uplift and support for the university community:

- Enhanced employment screening for identified roles including executive and senior management, and any staff engaged for Defence-related projects.
- Support tools for frontline staff who may observe instances of foreign interference or other matters of concern, or who may receive complaints/reports related to these activities.
- Support for students and staff most at risk from foreign interference.

## NATIONAL SECURITY LANDSCAPE

The University of Newcastle National Security Strategic Framework complements and integrates with other frameworks, tools and practices within the University, the sector and with government.

### INTERNAL

The University has mechanisms, processes and policies in place to ensure obligations are met.

Staff are trained and supported to identify and manage potential national security and foreign interference risks.

### EXTERNAL

- Universities Foreign Interference Taskforce – UFIT Guidelines, Sector networking, workshops and working groups
- Attorney General's Department – Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – Foreign Arrangements Scheme, UN and AusGov Sanctions
- Department of Defence – Defence Industry Security Program (DISP), Defence Export Controls
- Department of Education – Model Code on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom
- Department of Home Affairs – National Counter Foreign Interference Coordinator
- Security of Critical Infrastructure – obligations and Protecting Australia's Critical Technology regulations
- Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) – Outreach Program, NITRO Portal
- Australian Research Council (ARC) and other funding bodies