Marketing, Communications and Reputation Policy

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) The University of Newcastle (University) brand and reputation are valuable assets.

(2) The University aims to present itself in a cohesive manner that influences respective audiences and enhances the University's reputation, expertise, and offerings. Marketing and communication activities undertaken by the University play a key role in achieving this aim.

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) This policy establishes the governance requirements of the University's marketing and communications to protect its brand and enhance its reputation by:

a. supporting a single, consistent corporate image for the University;
b. managing the use of the University's brand across its controlled entities and third parties;
c. enabling a coordinated approach across all marketing, communications, platforms and channels managed by the University; and
d. identifying the roles and responsibilities of staff and students in the ongoing management of the University's brand and reputation.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This policy applies to the:

a. use of the University's name;
b. use of the University's brand by the University, its controlled entities and third parties;
c. University marketing and communications channels, including but not limited to domain names, platforms and University locations;
d. social media engagement and University social media profiles;
e. production of visual, written, video and audio communications relating to the University; and
f. interactions with media or media outlets.

Section 4 - Definitions

(5) In the context of this document:

a. “advertising” is a collective term that refers to paid communications used to influence an audience to take a specific course of action. For example, to study at, work at, or donate to the University. Advertising includes but

is not limited to print, outdoor, indoor, magazines, digital, video, television, cinema and radio;

b. “brand” is a collective term given to visual, written, video, or audio elements that enable a single and consistent appearance;
c. “channel” describes the communication platform, technology or method used to communicate to University audiences, eg social media, media outlet, email, website, publication, etc.;
d. “channel owner” refers to the University role that is responsible for the ongoing management of a specific channel;
e. “corrupt conduct” is as defined by the University's Public Interest Disclosures Policy, as amended from time to time;
f. “domains” are a distinct subset of the Internet which use addresses that share a common suffix or are under the control of a particular organisation or individual;
g. “lead generation” is the process of capturing personal information with the aim of increasing a person’s interest through targeted communications, with the end goal of turning that interest into a purchase of a product and/or service;
h. “media” is a collective term that refers to services and products that publish news and information, including but not limited to: printed publications; television and radio broadcasting services; and online and digital products and services such as websites, email newsletters (e-newsletters), blogs, webcasts, streaming services, podcasts, vodcasts, online magazines and e-publications;
i. “media agency” refers to an external provider who provides professional services in the planning and execution of paid advertising;
j. “media outlet” refers to a publication or broadcast entity that provides news and feature stories to the public through distribution channels such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet;
k. “policy document” is as defined by the University Policy Framework;
l. “platform” describes technology utilised to host an application and/or service for marketing and communication purposes;
m. “retargeting” is a tactic of presenting targeted advertisements to people who have already visited or taken action on a website or digital advertising;
n. “reputation” defines how the University wishes to be perceived as an entity and encompasses our brand, culture, leadership and the key values we stand for;
o. “serious maladministration” is as defined by the University's Public Interest Disclosures Policy, as amended from time to time;
p. “social media” is a collective term that refers to websites and applications that enable users to create and share information or ideas with others, or to participate in social networking;
q. “social media channel owner” refers to the University role that is responsible for the ongoing management of a specific social media channel;
r. “social media engagement” refers to active interactions, reactions, and connections a user has with content on social media platforms. Social media engagement may be undertaken in a personal or professional capacity. It is the process of moving from a passive scroller to an active participant and demonstrates personal interest, connection or investment in content through actions like liking, commenting, sharing, or saving. In the context of this document, social media engagement may be within or outside business hours;
s. “social media management tool” is an approved digital platform used to centrally create, schedule, publish, monitor, and report on social media content across multiple channels. These platforms support consistent communication, efficient workflow management, and compliance with organisational policies and standards;
t. “University spokesperson” is an authorised delegate of the University who is permitted to speak on behalf of the University to convey its official position(s) and represent its views to the public, media or stakeholders. Statements made by a University spokesperson are understood to reflect the University's stance, decisions, and interests rather than their own personal or professional opinions;

u. “user-generated content” is a collective term given to original, brand specific content created and published by customers on social media or other channels. User-generated content comes in many forms, including images, videos, reviews, a testimonial, or even a podcast;
v. “WCMS” refers to web content management system software that provides website authoring, and is an administrational tool that supports the University's web publishers to create and manage website content;
w. “web approver” refers to a member of University staff who, having completed the required training, have responsibility for reviewing, approving or rejecting content created by a web publisher prior to being published;
x. “web content community” refers to a group of University staff responsible for creating and maintaining content on newcastle.edu.au;
y. “web information architecture” is the logical, strategic and functional capabilities across newcastle.edu.au that ensures all areas of the University present as one coherent offering; and
z. “web publisher” refers to a member of University staff who, having completed the required training has the ability to create, edit and manage content within WCMS.

Section 5 - Brand

(6) The University's brand must be approved by the Vice-Chancellor (VC).

(7) The Director, Communications & Engagement is responsible for the implementation, management and obtaining approval of the University's brand.

(8) Materials produced with the intent to communicate information to audiences relating to the University's reputation, expertise, activities, achievements or offerings must comply with the University's Brand Guidelines.

(9) Creation and distribution of marketing and communication materials without appropriate approval constitutes a breach of the Student Code of Conduct or Staff Code of Conduct and the delegations of authority (see Delegations Register), and may be subject to disciplinary action.

(10) Staff must use the University's logo, email signature or corporate stationery (including business cards) in their capacity as an employee of the University.

(11) Staff or students of the University must not use the University's brand in ways that may bring the University's reputation into disrepute.

(12) Staff and students must not reproduce the University's brand identity, logo or crest with the intent to be on-sold.

(13) Staff are encouraged to utilise templates and tools hosted on the Marketing and Communications Resources Hub.

Section 6 - Channels

(14) All University-managed communication channels must comply with the University's Brand Guidelines.

(15) The use of a channel (including social media) to harass, vilify, bully or discriminate against another person is strictly prohibited and constitutes a breach of the Student Code of Conduct or Staff Code of Conduct.

(16) Staff wishing to share third party user-generated content from any public platform on a University-managed channel, with the intent to promote the University, must obtain consent in writing from the content owner, before use.

(17) Any collection of personal information including lead generation, through any University-managed communication channel must comply with the Privacy Management Plan.

(18) All communications via University channels must comply with all relevant:

a. University policies including the Staff Code of Conduct, Student Code of Conduct and the Code for the Protection Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom; and
b. legislation, including but not limited to the Copyright Act 1968 (Commonwealth), Trade Marks Act 1995 (Commonwealth) and Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Commonwealth).

Social Media Channels and Accounts

(19) Staff and students outside of the Communications & Engagement team must not create or manage new social media accounts that use the University of Newcastle's name, brand, logo, or any official visual identity.

(20) All previously approved University of Newcastle social media accounts must be managed using the approved social media management tool.

(21) The Communications & Engagement team owns the University's relationship with the approved social media management tool.

(22) Social media channel owners must report any security breaches or inappropriate content immediately to the Communications and Engagement team.

(23) All previously approved University-managed social media channels must be reviewed by the Director, Communications & Engagement at a minimum, annually. Any non-performing social media channels may be made inactive by Communications & Engagement, in consultation with the social media channel owner.

(24) Communications & Engagement reserve the right to remove content or request closure of the social media account if policy breaches occur.

Website

(25) All University websites, web domain names and sub-domain names must be approved in accordance with delegations of authority and should be hosted within the offical on newcastle.edu.au domain to maintain security, brand integrity and compliance, unless approved otherwise by an authorised delegate.

(26) The Web Team, within Future Students (Domestic) business unit is responsible for the governance of the University's digital presence, including:

a. information architecture;
b. accessibility compliance (WCAG 2.1 AA);
c. Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) strategy;
d. user interface (UI) and user experience (UX); and
e. web platform strategy and roadmap.

(27) Access to the Web Content Management System (WCMS) is restricted to trained users. Mandatory training is provided by Future Students (Domestic) and must be completed before publishing rights are granted.

(28) Content published on University websites must directly support the University's mission, strategic priorities, and core activities and be in accordance with relevant University policy and procedures.

(29) Web content must comply with the following standards:

a. Accuracy and currency: information must be correct and regularly reviewed. Outdated or misleading content must be removed promptly.

b. Inclusive language - all content must adhere to the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Brand Guidelines, Staff Code of Conduct and Student Code of Conduct.
c. Design and branding - web pages must be constructed utilising the approved templates and components provided with the WCMS platform and in accordance with the University's Brand Guidelines.
d. Accessibility: all content must meet WCAG 2.1 AA standards and follow the University's accessibility commitment.
e. Approval workflow: content must follow established approval procedures before publication.
f. Prohibited content – pages must not contain or link to offensive, illegal, defamatory or privacy breaching material. Content must also comply with the Staff Code of Conduct, Student Code of Conduct and Privacy Policy.
g. Copyright compliance: images, text, video, or software must not be published without written consent of the copyright owner, and attribution must be displayed on the page.
h. Domain names: any acquisition or management of external domain names requires prior approval under the University's delegations of authority. External domains must comply with University branding, security, and accessibility standards.

(30) Staff are prohibited from publishing policy documents on web pages that are not approved in accordance with relevant delegations of authority. Web pages may contain links to policy documents published in the University Policy Library but must not publish policy documents independent of the Policy Library.

Section 7 - Social Media Engagement

(31) Social media engagement with content regarding the University of Newcastle must comply with the relevant University Code of Conduct (see Staff Code of Conduct or Student Code of Conduct).

(32) Explicit permission from colleagues, students, or any other individuals must be obtained before sharing their images, videos, or personal information via social media.

(33) All social media engagements must be compliant with relevant legislation and University policies, including but not limited to those related to:

a. work health and safety;
b. copyright;
c. privacy and personal information;
d. foreign interference;
e. academic freedom and freedom of speech;
f. data protection and digital security;
g. gender based violence; and
h. workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination.

(34) Shared content must not violate University media embargos.

(35) Where shared or created content indicates the creator is acting as a University spokesperson:

a. the spokesperson must be an authorised delegate; and
b. the Director, Communications & Engagement must be consulted prior to sharing or posting.

(36) Sharing or posting of content must not:

a. breach confidentiality or misuse University information or knowledge; or

b. constitute serious maladministration or corrupt conduct.

(37) Social media engagements must not place the University's reputation or brand at risk.

Professional Social Media Engagement

(38) The University acknowledges social media as an important engagement and communication tool, and encourages staff to actively engage on social media platforms to promote research, share academic and professional insights, and highlight professional achievements and experiences.

(39) Professional social media engagement must clearly identify that the content is made in the person’s capacity as an employee of the University, or its controlled entity.

(40) The content of information posted on social media for the purposes of professional engagement must be within the scope of the creator’s professional expertise.

Personal Social Media Accounts and Engagement

(41) Staff and student personal social media accounts, and personal social media engagement, must not imply official University endorsement.

Section 8 - Advertising

(42) All paid advertising (including retargeting) on behalf of the University must be booked by Communications & Engagement, with the following exemptions:

a. Human Resource Services is permitted to book and coordinate all staff recruitment advertising, using templates approved by Communications & Engagement;
b. Future Students (Domestic) is responsible for booking advertising campaigns relating to the recruitment of prospective international and domestic students; and
c. all social media advertising that does not relate to the recruitment of prospective international students and domestic students must be approved by the Communications & Engagement team.

(43) All advertising on behalf of the University must:

a. comply with the University's Brand Guidelines;
b. include TEQSA provider ID: PRV12056 (Australian University) to our digital platforms and major publications;
c. comply with all relevant legislation;
d. be approved in accordance with the delegations of authority (see Delegations Register); and
e. not place the University's reputation at risk.

External Media Agencies

(44) Communications & Engagement may appoint an external media agency to provide professional advice and purchasing of University advertising.

(45) Requests to use an external media agency must be directed to Communications & Engagement.

University-owned channels

(46) Advertising of third party services on University-owned channels must relate to the strategic objectives, activities or functions of the University and be formally approved under delegated authority, which can be facilitated by

emailing brand@newcastle.edu.au.

Section 9 - Media and Public Comment

(47) The University regularly engages with media outlets. Communications & Engagement is solely responsible for managing relationships with all local, national and international media outlets. Staff who have been directly contacted by a media outlet should advise Communications & Engagement via media@newcastle.edu.au.

(48) Comments made by a spokesperson on behalf of the University (such as, but not limited to University operations, finances, achievements, announcements and offerings) can only be made by an authorised delegate in consultation with Communications & Engagement. Persons making such comments are required to identify themselves as a representative of the University, including their role.

(49) Staff are encouraged to communicate the outcomes and implications of their research work. If a staff member wishes to reach out proactively to media outlets or engage third party services they must contact Communications & Engagement via media@newcastle.edu.au prior to comment, commencement of any communications work and expenditure of University funds.

(50) Media requests requiring an immediate response should phone +61 438 837 166.

(51) All media representations must comply with all relevant University policies, including but not limited to the Staff Code of Conduct, Student Code of Conduct and the Code for the Protection Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom.

Section 10 - Third Parties

Third Party Services

(52) Engagement of third parties to produce materials designed to enhance reputation, expertise, and/or offerings of the University must be undertaken in consultation with Communications & Engagement, prior to commencement of any work and expenditure of University funds.

(53) Third-party suppliers, providing services defined in Clause 53 of this policy must be provided the Brand Guidelines prior to commencement of any work and expenditure of University funds. Brand Guidelines requests or brand advice can be provided by emailing brand@newcastle.edu.au.

Sponsorships

(54) Sponsorship (in-kind or financial) of third parties by the University or sponsorship (in-kind or financial) of the University by a third party must be approved in accordance with the University delegations of authority (see Delegations Register) and the Community Partnerships Framework.

Partnerships

(55) Partnerships between the University and third parties must be in accordance with the University delegations of authority (see Delegations Register) and Brand Guidelines.

External Engagement Activities

(56) All external engagement activities undertaken by the University must be delivered in accordance with the University Brand Guidelines.

Testimonials

(57) Testimonials by the University to endorse a third party may be issued where:

a. the service engagement with the third party is based on a formal contract;
b. there is no conflict of interest (as per Disclosure of Interest Policy); and
c. the third party does not present any risk to the University's reputation.

(58) Testimonials by the University must:

a. accurately reflect the University's satisfaction with the third party;
b. not misrepresent the University, the third party, or the mutual relationship; and
c. not breach any relevant University policy, legislation or regulation.

(59) The testimonial must be approved in writing from the Director, Communications & Engagement.

University website and sub domains

(60) Logos other than the official University logo must not appear on any University website or subdomains unless approved by an authorised delegate (see Delegations Register). Written authorisation must be provided by the third party before use.

(61) Links to websites of companies sponsoring or partnering official University conferences or projects are permitted, provided they do not imply endorsement beyond the partnership context.

(62) Mention of a sponsor's contribution is permissible where the sponsorship is approved by an authorised delegate (see Delegations Register) and is for an activity relevant to the strategic goals of the University, and relevant to the content of the web page. The sponsor must give written consent.

(63) Advertisements by entities not owned or controlled by the University are not permitted on the University website or sub domains, with the following exception:

a. the University's Employability and Enterprise team is permitted to place internal and external recruitment advertising on the University's Career Hub sub domain exclusively.

Section 11 - Merchandise

(64) Merchandise, including the production of promotional items must adhere to the promotional products guidelines, within the University's Brand Guidelines.

(65) Uniforms, including for staff, students and clubs, must adhere to the uniform guidelines.

(66) The University logo, and/or name, must be included on all merchandise.

(67) For designs outside of the Brand Guidelines, approval must be sought via Section 14 – Relaxing Provision.

Section 12 - Direct Communications

(68) Direct communications (eDM and SMS) must be done using Digital Technology Solutions approved programs only.

(69) Direct communications (eDM and SMS) must comply with the Brand Guidelines and the University Privacy

Management Plan.

Section 13 - Non-Compliance

(70) Failure to comply with legislation and regulations applicable to marketing and communication activities (including Australian Consumer Law) is a serious matter and may result in criminal or civil penalties and corrective orders as well as subsequent reputational damage.

(71) Non-compliance with the provisions of this Policy is a serious matter. Depending on the severity and implications of the breach, action may be taken to:

a. remove the offending material;
b. invoke the misconduct or serious misconduct provisions of any relevant agreement;
c. commence student disciplinary proceedings; or
d. impose sanctions which may include a warning or counselling.

(72) Breaches of this Policy may also result in referral to, and action being taken by, a statutory authority and/or agency.

(73) The Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 establishes penalties relating to the exclusion of CRICOS provider code on materials, which includes infringements, and 6 months imprisonment and may result in the University being unable to recruit overseas students.

Section 14 - Relaxing Provision

(74) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any case, the Director, Communications & Engagement may relax any provision of this Policy, provided that the relaxation:

a. does not compromise compliance with external obligations (including but not limited to contractual, legislative or accreditation requirements);
b. does not override a decision made under a formal delegation of authority;
c. does nto replace a decision that is subject to a formal delegation of authority; and
d. gives due consideration to the principles of procedural fairness.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	13th July 2026
Review Date	19th June 2029
Approval Authority	Senior Compliance Manager
Approval Date	8th July 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Nathan Towney Deputy Vice-Chancellor Engagement and Equity +61 2 4055 3001
Enquiries Contact	Communications & Engagement

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Risk" - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

"Asset" - Any tangible or intangible item (or group of items) that the University owns or has a legal or other right to control and exploit to obtain financial or other economic benefits.

"Controlled entity" - Has the same meaning as in section 16A of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Personal information" - Has the same meaning as in the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW).

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Disciplinary action" - When used in relation to staff of the University, this is as defined in the applicable and current Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, or the staff member's employment contract. When used in relation to students of the University, this refers to the range of penalties that may be applied under the Student Conduct Rule.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"Social media channels" - The University of Newcastle operates a number of social media channels including blogs, Facebook pages, X accounts and an official YouTube channel. The University's official social media channels refer to all channels established by a University staff member/business owner that supports University matters.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Domestic student" - A student (as defined by the University) who is an Australian citizen, Australian Permanent Humanitarian visa holder, Australian Permanent Resident or New Zealand citizen (or dual citizenship holders of either Australia or New Zealand).

"International student" - A student (as defined by the University) who is not an Australian citizen, Australian

Permanent Resident or New Zealand citizen (or dual citizenship holders of either Australia or New Zealand). This includes students who will be studying offshore and those who will be studying onshore and have a student visa, provisional residency, temporary residency, bridging visa, or any other category of non-permanent visa for Australia.

"Foreign interference" - Foreign interference occurs when activities are carried out by, or on behalf of, a foreign actor that are coercive, clandestine, deceptive or corrupting and are contrary to Australia's sovereignty, values and national interests.

"Delegate" - (noun) refers to a person occupying a position that has been granted or sub-delegated a delegation of authority, or a committee or body that has been granted or sub-delegated a delegation of authority.

"Delegated authority" - refers to the specific description of the authority that is delegated or sub-delegated to a holder.