



Media Issues

POL-COM-05

Statement

The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod office is an extensive network comprising Synod enterprises and committees; 19 schools and residential colleges; over 520 health, care and social support services; and eight presbyteries with approximately 250 congregations and their communities.

This policy aims to ensure that media issues are dealt with in a prompt, coordinated manner and continue to uphold, protect, and further enhance the reputation, professional and credible image of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod office.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- all lay staff, volunteers and contractors engaged in work and activities of the Uniting Church in Australia within the bounds of the Queensland Synod office.
- all ministry agents of the Uniting Church of Australia, Queensland Synod office.

Compliance is achieved through adherence to the principles.

Principles

1. The Moderator and General Secretary are to be promptly notified of all issues that are likely to create media attention before public statements are prepared and made.
2. Communications and Marketing will factually assess all issues and engage with the Moderator and General Secretary with a detailed brief and a suggested approach, who will determine whether a communications response is warranted, and advise on other appropriate actions.
3. The Queensland Synod office's responses may include:
 - a. assessing the level of threat;
 - b. undertaking appropriate immediate mitigating action via a comprehensive strategic communications plan to restore order and/or confidence;
 - c. monitoring outcomes;
 - d. In instances where there is a victim of sexual abuse, making reparations to those affected.
4. The Moderator is the only person authorised to speak in the name of the Queensland Synod office on public issues on behalf of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod office (regulation 3.6.3.2(g)); and issue media releases in the name of the Queensland Synod office on matters of public interest (Qld bylaw (h)). Refer to the Media Relations Policy for further information.
5. The General Secretary is authorised to speak on activities and topics relating to the Queensland Synod office.
6. The CEO UnitingCare Queensland is authorised to speak on UnitingCare Queensland issues, activities and topics.
7. Refer to the Media Issues Process for guidelines for dealing with media issues.



Dictionary

Term	Meaning
UCA Qld also called Queensland Synod office, we or us, or the Church	UCA Qld means the functions and activities of the Uniting Church in Australia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within and in relation to the bounds of the Queensland Synod office; and • outside the bounds of the Queensland Synod office (where managed by parts of the organisation located within the bounds of the Queensland Synod office), under the Uniting Church in Australia Act 1977 (Qld).
Media	Refers specifically to external sources, be they radio, television, newspaper or internet-based
Members	Means Uniting Church adherents, confirmed members, baptised members, elders, members-in-association, ministry agents and individuals who are members of any Uniting Church in Queensland church council, commission, committee or board.
Ministry Agents	Includes Church candidates, community ministers, deacons, deaconesses, interns, lay pastors, ministers of the word, pastors, youth workers and ministers from other denominations serving in approved placements
Lay staff	All employees of the Queensland Synod office
Volunteers & contractors	People who are not employed directly by the Queensland Synod office, but are working for it in either a paid or unpaid capacity
Issues	Issues liable to public comment include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> police investigations protests problems arising from agency or business unit activities emergencies that threaten the physical wellbeing of staff, or congregation members; or other situations that generate public interest and demand a public response legal proceedings

References & Related Documents

- [PRO-COM-05 Media Issues Process](#)
- [POL-COM-06 Media Relations Policy](#)
- [POL-0001 Privacy Policy](#)

Revisions & Reviews

#	Date	Reason	Author / Reviewer	Approved
1.0	31/08/17	New policy	R. O'Rourke (consultant)	(date)
2.0	12.02.18	Edit new policy	Phillip Hay, Manager Communications and Marketing	
DUE	31/08/20	Review cycle – every 3 years	Phillip Hay, Manager Communications and Marketing	