



Media Relations

POL-COM-06

Statement

The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod 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 enquiries are dealt with in a coordinated manner and continue to uphold, protect, and further enhance the professional and credible image of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.

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
- all ministry agents and all members of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.

Compliance is achieved through adherence to the principles.

Principles

1. The Moderator is the only person authorised to speak and issue media releases in the name of the Queensland Synod on public issues on behalf of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod (see regulation 3.6.3.2(g)); and issue media releases in the name of the Queensland Synod on matters of public interest (Qld By-Law Q2.3.5(h)).
2. The General Secretary is authorised to speak on activities and topics relating to Queensland Synod office.
3. The CEO UnitingCare Queensland is authorised to speak on UnitingCare Queensland issues, activities and topics.
4. 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.
5. Presbytery Chairs are authorised to make comment on their regional church topics and activities; and people in congregational ministry are authorised to make comment on their local church topics and activities. This should not be done without first notifying the Manager Communications and Marketing and the Communications Coordinator.
6. Other identified 'specialist speakers' who have undergone media preparation and training through Communications and Marketing can address topics and activities relating to the work of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland, if authorised by the Moderator or their delegated person.
7. Members of the Queensland Synod as defined in the scope of this policy are not permitted to make any form of comment to the media about the church as representatives of staff, or officials of the Queensland Synod, unless approved (refer principle 2).



8. Should media representatives contact staff directly seeking information or comment, staff must not divulge information or attempt to answer questions. No comment is to be made citing "I am not authorised to make comment" and the matter referred. They must take down the name, contact details and the reason for the enquiry and pass the information immediately to the Manager Communications and Marketing and the Communications Coordinator. A media enquiry form for this purpose is available on the Intranet.
9. Please refer to the media relations process ([PRO-COM-06](#)) for detailed guidelines.
10. To support the implementation of this policy and process, Communications and Marketing will:
 - a. maintain a list of contact numbers for all relevant media outlets
 - b. ensure that all material produced for the media is of the highest quality in presentation, accuracy and content.
 - c. maintain positive relationships with media representatives.

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"> i. police investigations ii. protests iii. problems arising from agency or business unit activities iv. emergencies that threaten the physical wellbeing of staff, or congregation members; or other situations that generate public interest and demand a public response
Topics	Areas of general or specific interest that are not public issues relating to the Uniting Church in Australia
Activities	Any organised events, celebrations, gatherings, forums, conferences

References & Related Documents

- [POL-0001 Privacy Policy](#)
[POL –PEO-14 Social Media Policy](#)
[PRO-COM-06 Media Relations Process](#)

Revisions & Reviews

#	Date	Reason	Author / Reviewer	Approved
1.0	30.08.17	New policy	R. O'Rourke (consultant)	(date)



#	Date	Reason	Author / Reviewer	Approved
2.0	12.02.18	Edit new policy	Phillip Hay, Manager Communications and Marketing	
DUE	01.01.20	Review cycle – every 3 years	Phillip Hay, Manager Communications and Marketing	