

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS AND THE MEDIA

(AMENDED 28.11.2011)

Section	Institute Governance and Management		
Approval Date	18.05.09	Approved by	Senior Management Team
Next Review	Oct 2014	Responsibility	Chief Executive
Key Evaluation Question	6	ITPNZ Quality Standard	1

PURPOSE

To ensure external communications and media releases, correctly and clearly, convey Institute policy or its agreed position.

To provide authorities for the release of information and promotional material to the news media.

SCOPE

All correspondence including: verbal; documented; electronic (includes email and fax) or recorded communication, with the media, any other outside organisations and the public. Information released to the news media related to policy, resources, administration and courses but excluding routine advertising (refer to Marketing Communications).

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Executive is responsible for:

- Policy and planning issues
- Opinion
- Politically sensitive issues
- Responses to external organisations (eg Ministry of Education, MPs etc)
- Resource and budget issues.

Directorate member approval is required for:

- Course related publicity (eg: courses completed, certificates awarded, accreditations gained etc.)
- Student or staff related personal interest items
- School visitors
- Research and seminar activities
- New facilities within faculties (excluding major developments)

POLICY

USE OF EMAIL

Do not use email for confidential or sensitive correspondence as email travels via the internet which is an insecure medium. The correspondence could be accessed by users other than the intended recipients.

CORRESPONDENCE ON POLICY OR SIGNIFICANT RESOURCE ISSUES

Refer to the Chief Executive (CE) or the Directorate member responsible, who shall sign correspondence on behalf of the Institute to organisations such as:

- Ministry of Education
- New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)
- Tertiary Education Commission (TEC)
- Institutes of Technology and Polytechnic Quality (ITPQ)
- Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics in New Zealand (ITPNZ)
- Government agencies
- Site unions

OTHER CORRESPONDENCE OF A POTENTIALLY SENSITIVE NATURE

Refer to the Director member responsible.

Managers should be aware that an apparently routine request for information from the media or the public may have policy implications because of the unreasonableness of the request or the cost/time in preparing a response. For example, statistical information relating to Institute performance may have strategic significance. If in any doubt refer a draft response to the Chief Executive.

CAMPUS, SCHOOL OR SUPPORT TEAM PUBLICITY

A campus, school or support team is encouraged to develop media releases relating to:

- Programmes and courses (eg certificates awarded, approvals gained)
- Student or staff related personal interest items
- Research or seminar activities
- New facilities (excluding major items)
- Visitors

One person with the school, campus or support team should co-ordinate publicity and liaise with the Marketing Team.

DEVELOPMENT OF MATERIAL

All staff members should be encouraged to draft possible news items and forward copy to the school, campus or support team coordinator for consideration and/or assistance.

Supporting comment should be sought from appropriate industry or community groups.

For further guidance refer to Appendix One, *Media Release Brief Form*.

AUTHORISATION

The content of media releases shall be authorized by the appropriate Directorate members except where they are opinion and comment which is politically sensitive (policy, resources, student numbers, future developments , etc) where they shall be authorised by the Chief Executive (CE).

RELEASE

The Central Marketing Administrator shall distribute all media releases. Copies of all media releases shall be sent to the Central Marketing Administrator, who will retain a central file copy.

RESPONDING TO PHONE INQUIRIES

Journalists will often follow up a media release with a telephone request for further information. Care should be exercised in making verbal responses, give the normal reluctance of the media to allow subsequent copy to be checked.

For further guidance refer to procedures below.

CENTRAL PUBLICITY

The Chief Executive is responsible for coordinating publicity and media releases relating to:

- Policy and planning issues
- Opinion
- Politically sensitive issues
- Responses to local/central politicians
- Ministry of Education and other external agencies
- Resource and budget issues
- Council issues

The Chief Executive may delegate preparation of media releases to appropriate Directorate members.

AUTHORISATION

Directorate members may authorise media releases related to their area of activity, except where the media release is opinion and comment which is politically sensitive (policy, resources, student numbers future developments etc) where they shall be authorised by the Chief Executive.

RELEASE

The Central Marketing Administrator shall distribute all media releases. Copies of all media releases shall be sent to the Central Marketing Administrator, who will retain a central file copy.

Contact central marketing for advice and contact details for Media writing contractor.

PROCEDURES

IF THE MEDIA CONTACTS YOU

1. Are you the right person to handle the enquiry? Refer to Responsibilities above.
2. Give yourself a few moments to prepare – ask to call the journalist back.
3. Write down any key points.
4. Anticipate questions and formulate answers.
5. Respond before the journalist's deadline.
6. Stick to what you want to say and say it clearly.
7. If you don't want it reported, don't say it.
8. Relax, you know more about the subject than the journalist.

IF YOU HAVE NEWS FOR THE MEDIA

1. Are you the right person to release the news? Refer to the Responsibilities above.
2. Get the media release topic approved by the relevant Directorate member.
3. Decide whether to supply the brief direct to the reporter. Discuss with Marketing Services Manager or Director of Marketing and Student Management Systems. Draft the media release yourself or use media writing contractor. Note there may be a cost to use media writing contractor.
4. If using a media writing contractor:
 - a. Complete Media Brief (refer to appendix)
 - b. Provide completed media brief to the Central Marketing Administrator.
 - c. A media writing contractor will then contact you directly for more information, supply a draft and final media release.
5. Provide the release to the Central Marketing Administrator for distribution.
6. The Central Marketing Administrator will then post the Media Release on the NMIT website.
7. The Central Marketing Administrator will then email the media release to all staff.

REFERENCES

INTERNAL

Use of Tutors Name in Promotional Material
Marketing Communications

APPENDICES

Media Release Brief Form

MEDIA RELEASE BRIEF FORM

<p>Today's date:</p>	
<p>Your name, job title & contact details:</p>	
<p>What is happening? (Provide detailed description of story idea/event etc – about 50 – 100 words)</p>	
<p>If it is an event or a photo opportunity, give details of date, time & venue</p>	
<p>Contact people for the story apart from yourself <i>(provide full names, job titles and contact details and ensure they are willing to be contacted)</i></p>	
<p>Contact people for approval (provide email addresses of this who will need to sign this off)</p>	
<p>Why is the event newsworthy? <i>(Who would it be of interest to? Why should the media cover this story?)</i></p>	
<p>What is the target audience for this story? (teenagers, parents of prospective students, community leaders, current students, school leavers etc)</p>	
<p>What are the key messages you wish to get across to the public? <i>(These are vital to ensure the release communicates effectively. This simple statement/s such as – “this NMIT programme is a first for the region”; “the quality of teaching is second to none in the country”; “we’ve got a national reputation for this”.</i></p>	
<p>Identify media that should be contacted: <i>(make sure you keep your target audience in mind – what publications do they read, how can we best reach them?)</i></p>	<p>All local media</p> <p>Select local media (please specify)</p> <p>All local media plus selected national (eg trade publications – please specify)</p> <p>National media (story need to be of national interest)</p>