

CHRIST CHURCH
**STUDENTS'
UNION**



**‘to better student life and enrich student experiences
at Canterbury Christ Church University’**

STUDENT MEDIA EDITORIAL POLICY

Officer Champions	President (Student Activities) President (Sports)
Staff Champions	Membership Services Manager Communications & Development Manager
Approval bodies and date passed	Board of Trustees, 24th June 2016
To be reviewed by	June 2019

[Student Media in Context](#)

[Policy Outcome](#)

[Editorial Standpoint](#)

[Conduct and Behaviour](#)

[Editorial Board](#)

[Editorial Control](#)

[Complaints](#)

1. Student Media in Context

- a. Student Media is media produced by the students of a university or college. Student Media can include printed newspapers or magazines, online content, television output or radio productions and is a central part of the student movement.
- b. Student Media provides opportunities for students to gain new experiences and develop their skills, keeping students entertained and informed about what is happening on their campus, at their college or university, locally or in the student movement at home and abroad.
- c. Student Media also plays a key democratic function – holding the University, the Students' Union and NUS to account, raising awareness about what they do and supporting the democratic functions of these organisations.
- d. Just as national media outlets are seen as the 'fourth estate' of any society and crucial to informed citizenship, student media outlets are the fourth estate of the student movement – and a vibrant, high-quality and engaged student media makes the student movement all the stronger.

2. Policy Outcome

- a. The objective of this Policy can be summarised by two points:
 - i. To ensure successful, vibrant and diverse Student Media at Canterbury Christ Church University; and
 - ii. To ensure Student Media is editorially independent from the Students' Union but operates within the current legal and policy context relevant to the production, publication and dissemination of all forms of media and content.
- b. Successful Student Media:
 - i. Includes varied and pluralistic news that appeals to a variety of audiences.
 - ii. Reflects student's' interests rather than copy the national news agendas or just follow students' union policies.
 - iii. Thinks locally, how national issues affect students locally and how local news fits in or affects the national news agenda.

- iv. Campaigns – student media should be at the forefront of media campaigns for students. That may mean supporting students' union campaigns or it may mean campaigning for students' union action when none is forthcoming.
- v. Promotes elections – student media is ideally positioned to generate more interest in students' union elections, union democracy and accountability. Student journalists can help to question and convey what candidates stand for when trying to get elected and the same applies to students' union meetings, decisions, AGMs etc.

3. Editorial Standpoint

- a. The ethos of Student Media at Christ Church Students' Union is that it should be independent from the Union in terms of editorial control and content. However, as Student Media is part-funded by Christ Church Students' Union the legal onus is on the Students' Union to ensure compliance with the current legal and policy context relevant to the production, publication and dissemination of all forms of media and content.
- b. Christ Church Students' Union therefore has overall control of all Student Media content, but only with regard to matters of potential;
 - i. Libel - “a published false statement that is damaging to a person's reputation”; and
 - ii. Defamation - “the action of damaging the good reputation of someone; slander or libel”.

4. Conduct and Behaviour

- a. The conduct and behaviour of Student Media Members is regulated by;
 - i. the Bye-Laws of Christ Church Students' Union;
 - ii. The Code of Conduct; and
 - iii. The Societies Handbook.
- b. At all times Student Media Members should adhere to Code of Conduct for Journalists as devised by the [National Union of Journalists](#).
 - i. At all times upholds and defends the principle of media freedom, the right of freedom of expression and the right of the public to be informed;
 - ii. Strives to ensure that information disseminated is honestly conveyed, accurate and fair;
 - iii. Does their utmost to correct harmful inaccuracies;
 - iv. Differentiates between fact and opinion;
 - v. Obtains material by honest, straightforward and open means, with the exception of investigations that are both overwhelmingly in the public interest and which involve evidence that cannot be obtained by straightforward means;
 - vi. Does nothing to intrude into anybody's private life, grief or distress unless justified by overriding consideration of the public interest;

- vii. Protects the identity of sources who supply information in confidence and material gathered in the course of their work;
 - viii. Resists threats or any other inducements to influence, distort or suppress information and takes no unfair personal advantage of information gained in the course of their duties before the information is public knowledge;
 - ix. Produces no material likely to lead to hatred or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age, gender, race, colour, creed, legal status, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation;
 - x. Does not by way of statement, voice or appearance endorse by advertisement any commercial product or service save for the promotion of their own work or of the medium by which they are employed;
 - xi. Shall normally seek the consent of an appropriate adult when interviewing or photographing a child for a story about their welfare; and
 - xii. Avoid plagiarism.
- c. Student journalists should also be aware of their legal and ethical responsibilities including specific regulations for broadcasters, print and online (or across different media platforms) where appropriate.
- d. Training will be provided by professional journalists where possible in news, features, web-writing, sub-editing and production, radio and TV production and editing, and in the law affecting journalists.

5. Editorial Board

- a. The Union will create an Editorial Board to consider the proposed publication or broadcast of sensitive material which:
- i. Relates to the employment, capability or performance of Union employees;
 - ii. Makes a judgement about or includes a view on an individual that is potentially open to legal challenge;
 - iii. Makes a judgement about or includes a view on an external organisation or company that is potentially open to legal challenge;
 - iv. Contravenes an existing Union policy;
 - v. Is regarded as having the potential to be in breach of media law; and
 - vi. May bring the Union into disrepute or constitute a breach of Charity Law.
- b. The Editorial Board shall be made up of three persons independent of Christ Church Students' Union and Canterbury Christ Church University.

6. Editorial Control

- a. All content of all publications and broadcast shall be considered in the first instance by the Editor or Station Manager who has received appropriate training in media law. It is the responsibility of Editor or Station Manager to refer any sensitive material to the Editorial Board for consideration.

- b. The Editorial Board shall be free to take external advice from appropriately qualified persons. If the content relates to the University advice will be sought from staff external to the Students' Union and University.
- c. The Editorial Board will confirm their decision, and the reasoning behind their decision, in writing to the contributor. This decision shall be final.

7. Complaints

- a. Complaints about or regarding the operation of Student Media are to be dealt with via Editor or Station Manager in the first instance.
- b. If the complainant is still not satisfied the complaint shall be referred to be dealt with as per the Bye-Laws of Christ Church Students' Union.