



# Media Issues Policy

A/4.5

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## Purpose

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 ensures 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 (brand) of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

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

Compliance is achieved through adherence to the principles.

## Policy

1. The Moderator and General Secretary are promptly notified of all issues that are likely to create media attention before public statements are prepared and made.
2. Communications and Marketing factually assess all issues and engage with the Moderator and General Secretary with a detailed brief and a recommended approach and agreed pathway forward
3. The Queensland Synod's response may include:
  - a. assessing the level of potential impact
  - b. undertaking appropriate immediate mitigating action via a comprehensive strategic communications plan to restore clarity / confidence / order
  - 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 on public issues on behalf of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod (regulation 3.6.3.2(g)); and issue media releases in the name of the Queensland Synod 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. Congregational ministers are approved to speak on issues relevant to their local congregation and community, provided they contact Synod office Communications and Marketing prior to advise of the enquiry and seek advice on the approach, associated key messaging and support.
7. The CEO UnitingCare Queensland, Wesley Mission Queensland and Property Trust Schools are authorised to speak on applicable issues, activities and topics. With respect to matters of life, religion and politics, liaison with Synod office Communications and Marketing is required.
8. Refer to the Media Issues Process ([link](#)) for guidelines for responding to media issues.



## Related documents

A/4.5.1 Media Issues Process

A/4.6 Media Relations Policy

[POL-0001 Privacy](#)

## Definitions

Term	Meaning
<b>Queensland Synod, we or us, or the Church</b>	Queensland Synod means the functions and activities of the Uniting Church in Australia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• within and in relation to the bounds of the Queensland Synod; and</li><li>• outside the bounds of the Queensland Synod (where managed by parts of the organisation located within the bounds of the Queensland Synod), under the Uniting Church in Australia Act 1977 (Qld).</li></ul>
<b>Media</b>	Refers specifically to external sources, be they radio, television, newspaper, digital or online
<b>Members</b>	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.
<b>Ministry Agents</b>	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
<b>Lay staff</b>	All employees of the Queensland Synod
<b>Volunteers &amp; contractors</b>	People who are not employed directly by the Queensland Synod, but are working for it in either a paid or unpaid capacity

## Revisions

Document number	A/4.5				
Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
2.0	06.03.2020	Executive Director, Shared Services	06.03.2020	Manager, Communications and Marketing	Communications Coordinator
Next scheduled review	28.02.2022				