



Use of the University's Name

These guidelines deal with how and when it is acceptable for individuals to use the name of the University when communicating with the public or other external audiences. For example, when speaking to print, online or broadcast media, in scientific articles, in extra mural lectures, in student recruitment material, or on social media or other digital/online platforms.

While we do not propose rigid regulation, it is important to have guidelines in place to reduce the risk of occasions or content that might give rise to misunderstanding.

In these guidelines we cover:

- Persons authorised to speak for the University
- Spokespersons for units within the University
- Academic and professional comment
- Personal opinions

Persons authorised to speak for the University

1. The only persons who may publish statements or express views in the name or on behalf of the University are:

- (i) the Vice-Chancellor and members of the University's Executive Group, or such members or officers of the University as may be authorised by them for that purpose (Statute II);
- (ii) the Chief Operating Officer as Secretary of the Court, Council and Senate (Regulation 6.i);
- (iii) University External Relations staff;
- (iv) other senior leaders, as directed by the Director of External Relations or Associate Director of Communications and Digital.

2. External Relations staff have a central role in the University's day-to-day relations with the media, politicians, donors/funders, supporters and other internal and external stakeholders. Other University colleagues must not seek to speak for the University and should refer any enquiries they receive to the External Relations division.

3. The External Relations division exercises editorial control over University prospectuses, the University website, main social media channels and other centrally produced materials, both printed and digital. Material produced by other teams and units should adhere to University standards regarding branding, style and strategic approach, as set out by the External Relations division.

Spokespersons for units within the University

4. Most bodies within the University - from Schools, departments and other academic units to campus trades unions and the Students' Union - will from time to time publicise activities

they are promoting or for which they are responsible. They may also receive external enquiries.

5. In routine communication with stakeholders, the heads or other duly authorised officers of units are free to provide information, make statements or express views on behalf of the body they represent. However, on sensitive issues or those that could impact on the reputation of the unit or University – for example, when the enquiry has come from a journalist or MP - the heads or other duly authorised officers of units are required to co-ordinate the response with the External Relations division.

Academic and professional comment

6. Academic and professional services staff are free to publicise and comment on their own work and areas of expertise, provided they are clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the University.

For example, an academic researcher is authorised to speak about their own research but not to provide an official statement on the University's research strategy.

When the opinion expressed is not directly related to the author's own area of academic or professional expertise, members should not use the name or address of the University.

Personal opinions

7. It is fundamental that all staff and students of the University shall be free to express publicly their personal views; equally, the University must protect itself from any implication that such views necessarily reflect those of the University. Hence, Statute 6.2 refers to the following guiding principle:

"to ensure that academic staff have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial and unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges".

Any such expressions must be made explicitly in their own name and not in that of the University.

8. In the event of individuals failing to make their position clear, the External Relations division will be free to do this in their place and to take other steps to protect the University's reputation.

Chief Operating Officer's Office September 2020