



MEDIA POLICY (STUDENTS)

INTRODUCTION

Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS (UTP) is a prominent institute of higher learning and as a consequence, it often attracts considerable interest from local and national media. Media attention has the potential to enhance, as well as undermine, the overall reputation of the University. It is important, therefore, to manage the University's engagement with the media positively, constructively and professionally.

The overall responsibility for the University's media relations rests with the Head of Corporate Communications.

The Media Policy sets out the principles which underpin the University's approach to media relations, and the procedures for coordinating and managing students' interactions with media.

SCOPE

The Policy recognises that students may have occasion to interact with the media in two primary capacities:

- as a private individual, or
- as an alumni or graduate
- All of these roles, and the responsibilities associated with them, are addressed in the Policy.

Media Policy covers any form of electronic and print media such as television, radio, newspaper, magazines as well as social media.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

1. Student Disciplinary Rules and Regulations
2. Personal Data Protection Act 2010

PART 1 – PRINCIPLES

1. UTP is an institute of higher learning that is accountable for its actions.
2. The University responds promptly to media enquiries and is always truthful when dealing with the media.
3. The University is proactive in developing positive media coverage to allow it to communicate with the community it serves, build support for its core objectives and enhance its reputation.
4. The University responds quickly to limit potential damage to the University caused by adverse or incorrect media coverage.
5. The University has an obligation to protect itself and its students from unfair intrusion by the media.

PART 2 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS TO THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE UNIVERSITY

6. Notwithstanding the rights of individuals to freedom of speech within the law, students of the University have an obligation, expressed in UTP Student Disciplinary Rules and Regulations to act in the best interests of the University at all times.
7. Students are expected to fully adhere in University's rules and regulations on any official University matters and to refrain from debating opinions on such matters through the media.
8. Students must not
 - (1) express views and opinions in the public domain with the intention of discrediting the University.
 - (2) express views on behalf of the University unless authorised to do so by the Vice Chancellor.
9. In circumstances where a student considers there to have been serious wrongdoing by the University, he or she is advised to follow internal procedures for the proper investigation and resolution of such matters, as provided under UTP Student Disciplinary Rules and Regulations.

PART 3 - CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA BY STUDENTS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

10. The University affirms the right of students to interact with the media as private individuals.
11. When students discuss with the media, or write about, matters outside their areas of work, they must make it clear that they are speaking as private individuals and not as students of UTP. The use of University's name is prohibited in this context.
12. When students speak to the media on their own behalf, University property must not be used as a backdrop for filming or photographic purposes.

PART 4 - CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA BY ALUMNI OR GRADUATES

13. The University affirms the right of Alumni or Graduate to interact with the media to the best interests of the University.
14. In exercising this right, alumni or graduates must ensure that they do not claim or imply that they speak on behalf of the University, or express views on other official University matters (see Part 7 below).
15. If the University's name is to be used or quoted, it must be in consultation with the Corporate Communications.
16. The University may be held liable for defamatory comments or libelous statements made by an alumni or graduate. Alumni or graduate must therefore take the utmost caution to ensure any comment and statement do not have legal consequences for the University.

PART 5 - CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

35. Confidential University information must not be disclosed to the media under any circumstance. Requests for information that is confidential must be referred to the Vice Chancellor's Office and the Corporate Communications, so that they can be considered within the provisions of Personal Data Protection Act 2010 or other relevant acts.
36. Information about individual students may only be given to media with the explicit consent of the individuals concerned, except in exceptional circumstances with guidance from the Corporate Communications.
37. Any student, alumni or graduate who receives a request for information, from the media or any other party, which seem confidential, must forward it immediately to the Vice Chancellor's Office/the Corporate Communications which will respond on behalf of the University.

Appendix I

Media Guidelines

The Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS's Media Policy governs interactions between students and the media. The guidelines set out in this appendix to the policy provide additional information to assist students to maintain and develop effective relations with the news media.

Contacting the Corporate Communications

The Head of Corporate Communications is responsible for media relations at the University and manages this through the Branding & Communications. Initial contact with the Corporate Communications can be made through the direct line to the department. In urgent matters, any member of the Corporate Communications will be able to take the initial contact.

The role of the Branding & Communications Corporate Communications

The Branding & Communications Corporate Communications coordinates ongoing information-sharing processes between all areas of the University about issues affecting or potentially affecting the University's media and public relations.

The Department is available to help students regarding the interactions with media. The Department is also a resource to assist students to make media statements, give interviews and deal with media inquiries, as a way of building media profile for University activities. The Department is also available to prepare students for media interviews.

Interacting with the Media

Should you interact?

Students, alumni or graduates can only interact with media regarding the University matters with the approval and consultation from the Corporate Communications. Unless they are giving inputs to media as public individuals which the University's name will not be mentioned or implied indirectly such as "a private university in Seri Iskandar".

Key messages

When preparing a media strategy, getting ready for an interview or producing information for media, decide what are the main points or "key messages" that you want to get across.

The process of developing key messages helps you to focus on what is important. It can also help you to decide on how best to explain or get across these key messages simply, particularly if the journalist you are speaking to is in a hurry and/or does not have a good understanding of the area you are talking about.

A useful practice is to write down your key messages and supporting notes beside them that explain the points. Using these to develop media statements or oral comment is preferable to simply supplying a journalist with a large amount of information and hoping they will highlight what you think is important.

For newspaper or radio interviews, it is recommended you have your key messages written down in front of you, along with supporting information. These notes give you something to refer to if your mind goes off track during an interview. However, it is best not to refer to notes during television

interviews. So, for TV interviews, in particular it is very useful to do a practice run through with a colleague. (When a radio or TV interview is pre-recorded for a small segment of it to be included in a news story, for example, it is generally fine to stop and start your answer again.)

The more frequently you say something during an interview the better the chance it will be reported, so keep repeating the key messages where appropriate. The journalist may not have heard them properly the first time.

It is also a very good idea to anticipate what 'difficult' questions may be asked during the course of an interview and what your response will be. Don't assume media will want to stick to your 'agenda' during the course of an interview.

Availability

Media are more inclined to write a story that best reflects the University's position if they get a response within a reasonable time. That way the journalist concerned has more time to incorporate your views into an article. If they get your response at the last minute they may only have time and space to include a small bit of what you say. However, don't be pressured into hasty responses. Journalists usually understand it will not always be possible to get the requested response or information within their time frame if the reason is explained to them.

When talking to media, the following guidelines can be useful for students:

1. **Always** make sure who the journalist is and where he or she is from. This information will help you to understand the likely media treatment of the issue. It may also help you to decide whether or not to give the interview.
2. **Before** you answer questions **find out** what they want to know, why they want to know it, who they've spoken to already and what others have said, whether they plan to speak to anyone else, when their deadline is and when the story/item will appear. If the journalist objects to all the questions, explain politely that you're practicing your rights and ask whether answering the questions is a problem.
3. **Don't** feel obliged to respond immediately. Unless you're sure of your facts, ask for a bit of time to check out/think about the matter and say you'll get back to the reporter by an agreed time. This response enables you to consult with the Corporate Communications Department if necessary, gather your thoughts and/or clarify information, decide what you will say and what your key messages are. Ask a support person to rehearse you before you call back if you think this will help.
4. Providing '**off the record**' comment is very risky. Different journalists have different understandings of what 'off the record' means. A useful thought to bear in mind is that if you don't want something reported, don't say it. However, the Corporate Communications can be useful sources of advice if you think giving the journalist 'off the record' comment may be useful.
5. Saying '**no comment**' may give the impression that individuals or the University are not being accountable or not prepared to engage on matters of public interest. But there may be legal or commercial issues, for example, that prevent comment being made now. An example of saying no comment in a helpful way is: "I can't comment in detail on that specific issue at the

moment for confidentiality reasons, please consult my University's Corporate Communications for details."

6. **Don't** assume media know everything. Explain things as simply as possible. It can often be difficult to put complex subjects into simple language. But explaining things in clear words, without resorting to jargon, is the most effective way of ensuring that media clearly understand what you are telling them and that you receive good coverage of your views.
7. If you accidentally give out **too much information** or say something you later think is inappropriate, the Corporate Communications can be used as a source of advice about what to do.

Proactively managing bad news

When we know 'bad news' is coming up, it can be best to:

- Consult the Corporate Communications.
- Reserve any comment until you receive advice from the Corporate Communications.
- Be ready to acknowledge fault or say sorry and spell out what, if anything, we will do to correct the situation/make amends.

The Corporate Communications is available to help develop proactive or reactive media strategies.

Contact Information

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