

Policy on the Expression and Practice of Religious, Political and Other Values, Beliefs and Ideas at UTS

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1. Background and context

The University of Technology Sydney (UTS) is committed to the advancement and integration of knowledge through its promotion of learning. In the pursuit of this vision, it is guided by a strong commitment to intellectual independence and to the richness of cultural and social diversity.

The University therefore recognises that it has a key responsibility to support and encourage the expression and discussion of political, religious, cultural and related beliefs and ideas in a manner that is appropriate to a university setting. This entails respect for all persons and involves the encouragement of, and support for, rational and rigorous discussion and debate in an open-minded and generous spirit. This is underpinned by the traditional university commitment to free enquiry and respect for diversity and the pivotal importance of the pursuit of knowledge.

2. Purpose and scope

2.1 This policy provides a framework that will ensure that the rights and responsibilities of UTS, staff members and students are appropriately exercised and protected. It is based on three fundamental principles:

- i) Religious and political toleration is intrinsic to the democratic traditions and laws from which UTS draws its authority.
- ii) Freedom of enquiry and expression is intrinsic to any university and this may encompass political and religious topics, issues and questions.
- iii) In this context, vilification or denigration of individuals because of their political or religious beliefs, or their expression and practice of these beliefs within the UTS community are prohibited; hence, subject to disciplinary process, the University may penalise any staff member or student who engages in such conduct.

2.2 The Policy complements other UTS policies (see [Section 6](#)) and State and Federal legislation, and should be read in that context.

2.3 The Policy applies to:

- i) all staff members and students of UTS; and,
- ii) where the context permits, all others engaged by UTS (whether as consultants, contractors or otherwise) to provide services to UTS; and,
- iii) all other visitors who may be using the premises or facilities of UTS.

3. Definitions

staff member means an employee or an honorary appointee of the University.

student means any person enrolled in any degree, diploma, course, subject or unit offered by the University whether on a full-time or part-time basis, or at an undergraduate and postgraduate level, or award or non-award student.

University means the University of Technology, Sydney.

UTS campus/es and facilities includes all the campuses of the University and all of its premises and facilities.

visitor means any person who may from time to time enter or use the University's premises and facilities.

4. Policy provisions

4.1 UTS acknowledges the rights of individuals to express their views and beliefs and to practise these beliefs in a manner appropriate to the University setting.

4.2 While acknowledging those rights, UTS does not necessarily endorse the views and beliefs that may be expressed by staff and students or by other visitors. UTS does not explicitly or implicitly make any endorsement by permitting the expression of these beliefs on its premises or in its facilities.

4.3 Accordingly, UTS requires that personal views and beliefs expressed by staff and students be identified as such and not represented to be the views of UTS (refer [Section 6](#), Staff Code of Conduct).

4.4 UTS affirms its status as a secular and non-political organisation and will not sanction or endorse a particular form of religious or faith expression or political or ideological view or doctrine to the exclusion of others. UTS is, however, entitled to, and does, express its values and principles in its Mission Statement, Guiding Principles and University policy documents.

4.5 UTS fully respects the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, (in particular Articles 18 and 19) and the United Nations Declarations on Human Rights and the Elimination of Intolerance and Discrimination

4.6 The expression of views and beliefs on a UTS campus must be exercised in accordance with relevant legislation, UTS Rules and UTS policies.

4.7 UTS will take such steps as are reasonably necessary to prevent any persons or groups, within or external to the University, acting inconsistently with the provisions of this Policy on the UTS campus, or in any events or contexts that are promoted, supported or endorsed by the University. In doing so, UTS will act with fairness, and upon evidence.

4.8 UTS will take such steps as are reasonably necessary to dissociate itself from the actions, statements and claims of any persons or groups whose actions, statements and claims are inconsistent with the provisions of this Policy or with the values or expressed statements of the University or could reasonably be seen as inconsistent with them.

5. Authorities and accountabilities

The Registrar is responsible for the communication, implementation and enforcement of this Policy, and for dealing with any breaches of the Policy, and will recommend to the Vice-Chancellor, for promulgation, the appropriate procedures to follow in respect of implementation of the Policy, including the process for dealing with alleged breaches.

6. Specification of related UTS and other relevant documentation

Related UTS documentation

[Procedures and Guidelines in Respect of the Policy on the Expression of Religious, Political and Other Values, Beliefs and Ideas at UTS](#)

[Enterprise agreements — academic and professional staff](#)

[Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy](#)

[UTS Facilities Hire Vice-Chancellor's Directives](#)

[Prevention of harassment](#)

[Staff Code of Conduct](#)

[UTS Student Rules](#)

[UTS Student Charter](#)

Other relevant documentation

[Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief](#)

[Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities](#)

[International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#)

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

7. Approval and revisions tables

7.1 Approval

Approved by UTS Council	Meeting number and date: 05/8, 12 December 2005
	Resolution no.: COU/05/155
Effective date: 1 January 2006	Review date: 31 December 2010

a. Revision/modification history

Date	Version	Current title	Summary of changes	Approval authority	Resolution or file no.
20/11/2006	2	No change	Minor rewording para 2.1iii)	Council	COU/06/126
10/10/2017	2.1	No change	Consequential changes to align with changes to the Student Rules.	Council (15/10/2014)	COU/14-5/106