

# Political Donation Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) The University recognises the importance of maintaining integrity and public confidence in the University as a publicly funded institution with regard to its relationships with government.
- (2) In alignment with the [Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom](#), the University is committed to the principle of academic freedom, including free and open discussion of political ideas and opinions, and acknowledges the right of University staff and Council members to participate as individuals in the political process.
- (3) The University acknowledges that, in accordance with the [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#), an amount paid as a student services and amenities fee to the University (or by the University to other persons or organisations, including student organisations), cannot be used to support political parties, or to support a person in a federal, state or local council election.
- (4) Within this context, the purpose of this Policy is to set out the University's position in relation to political donations.
- (5) This policy should be read in conjunction with the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and [Staff Code of Conduct](#).

## Section 2 - Application

- (6) This Policy applies to all University staff, students and members of the University Council.

## Section 3 - Policy Principles

- (7) The University maintains a position of impartiality with respect to party politics, and does not endorse any political party or candidate at any level of government.
- (8) The University's policy is not to make political donations using University resources. This includes the use of resources that support direct fundraising for political parties and campaigns.
- (9) The University does contribute to and support public policy debate on issues that affect the University and the higher education sector.
- (10) The University respects the right of individuals to participate in the political process. This Policy does not restrict University staff, students or members of the University Council from having political views or associations (including membership of political parties, attendance at political events, or making political donations) in a personal capacity on their own time.
- (11) University staff, students and members of the University Council participating in political activities (including making political donations) should do so in such a manner that makes it clear that they are not representing the University, and must not use University resources to engage in such activities.

## **Section 4 - Roles and Responsibilities**

(12) All staff and students are to be familiar with this Policy and act in accordance with the Policy at all times. Staff, students and Council members may be subject to disciplinary action if they do not comply with this Policy.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	27th January 2021
<b>Review Date</b>	27th January 2024
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice-Chancellor
<b>Approval Date</b>	18th January 2021
<b>Expiry Date</b>	12th August 2025
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Alex Zelinsky Vice-Chancellor alex.zelinsky@newcastle.edu.au
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## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Political donation"** - Includes a gift or payment made to, or for the benefit of: (a) a political party; (b) an elected member of Parliament or of a local council; or (c) a candidate or group of candidates in a federal, state or local council election. Examples of political donations include: (a) a donation of money; (b) a contribution, entry fee or other payment to participate in a fundraising event or function which is primarily a political fundraiser and payment forms part of the proceeds of the event; (c) gifts or prizes for a political fundraiser or purchasing items at a political fundraiser; and (d) use of University facilities at no cost or at a reduced fee to political parties or political candidates for the purpose of political fundraising.

**"University"** - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

**"Council member"** - A person who is a member of the University Council as described in Section 8B of the University of Newcastle Act, 1989.

**"Student"** - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

**"Candidate"** - With regard to Higher Degree by Research it has the same meaning as student. For all other instances it is a person considered for appointment to a position.

**"Disciplinary action"** - When used in relation to staff of the University, this is as defined in the applicable and current Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, or the staff member's employment contract. When used in relation to students of the University, this refers to the range of penalties that may be applied under the Student Conduct Rule.

**"Staff"** - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.