



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

**GOVERNING PRINCIPLES:
STUDENT CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS**

Purpose: Establishes governing principles to guide effective student consultation and engagement in each school.

Responsible Executive: Vice Chancellor

Responsible Office: Head of Campus with Deans

Effective Date: 19 January 2018

Review Date: 19 January 2021

1 Context

The University is committed to providing informal and formal opportunities for all students to represent their needs and interests to University management and staff, to contribute to enhancing student life and course experiences, and to contribute to the University's pursuit of its Objects.

The University formally recognises and tangibly supports two Student Associations (SA) – The Notre Dame Sydney Student Association and The Notre Dame Fremantle Student Association each operate under a Constitution that has been approved by the Vice Chancellor. The Student Associations exist to provide an organisational mechanism through which the student body on each campus can collectively contribute to University decision making, encourage student engagement, and promote the wellbeing and interests of students.

Mechanisms for Student Engagement and Consultation at University and Campus Levels

At the University and campus levels, student representation is facilitated through a range of formal governance committees including:

Student Board – Chaired by the Vice Chancellor, the Student Board is established under the University Statutes as a Standing Committee of the University and includes elected and non-elected student representatives. Functions include providing a student perspective in decisions concerning or affecting all students of the University.

Student Affairs Committee – established under the University Statutes on each campus of the University, each Committee is Chaired by the relevant Head of Campus or nominee and includes elected and non-elected student representatives. Functions include advising, monitoring and appraising all aspects of student life on the campus and promoting effective relationships and communication between the Offices of the University, the Student Associations, and students on the relevant campus.

Informal mechanisms also exist to facilitate student representation and engagement such as regular liaison between the Student Association and relevant officers and departments of the University.

2 Governing Principles – student consultation and engagement in schools

The University Statutes require that each School have a School Committee that consists of a student representative appointed by the Dean.

In addition to the student representative on the School Committee, each Dean has discretion as to other governance mechanisms to be used to facilitate student engagement and participation in academic and other matters affecting students and their interests at a School level. Current examples include school student/staff consultative committees; student focus groups; and Deans Consultative Committees.

Irrespective of the mechanism(s) chosen, student engagement and consultation should be governed by the following principles.

2.1 Meaningful and collegial communication

2.1.1 Students are asked what engagement and consultation mechanisms work best for them, and this is taken into account in determining mechanisms to be used by the School.

- 2.1.2 Transparent and adequate information is provided to students to support student consultation.
- 2.1.3 Students have an opportunity to comment on school-wide issues that affect them.

2.2 A spirit of cooperation, inclusion and mutual respect

- 2.2.1 Students have an opportunity to voice ideas, concerns and issues aimed at enhancing and improving the quality of student life, in a manner consistent with the ethos of a Catholic university.
- 2.2.2 Student input is considered in reaching decisions.
- 2.2.3 Participants act courteously and with respect, care and diligence.
- 2.2.4 Students can provide considered, honest and open input in a mutually respectful manner.
- 2.2.5 Participants maintain appropriate confidentiality and do not make improper use of information acquired for personal advantage or to cause detriment to the University.

2.3 Appropriate representation of student cohorts

- 2.3.1 The recognised student representative body for the School, or where there is no recognised body, the Student Association for the relevant campus in which the School is located, is invited to nominate one student representative to be involved in formal consultation and engagement mechanisms at each school.
- 2.3.2 Students involved in consultation and engagement mechanisms represent the range of student cohorts across the school.
- 2.3.3 Those involved in consultation take account of equity and fairness to all students in the school.
- 2.3.4 Students involved in consultation and engagement mechanisms at the school level ensure that regular reports on these activities are provided to the Student Association on the relevant campus.

2.4 Regular and timely consultation

- 2.4.1 Formal student consultation and engagement mechanisms are conducted at least three times per annum.
- 2.4.2 Additional consultation occurs as needed in order to facilitate timely student input to major decisions affecting students across the school.

2.5 Formal records

- 2.5.1 Minutes, notes or other formal records of student consultation mechanisms are kept by the School.
- 2.5.2 Records provide an accurate reflection of the student input provided, who was present, and outcomes of consultation.

2.6 Monitoring and reporting of effectiveness

- 2.6.1 Each Dean formally reports on student engagement mechanisms held and compliance with the principles listed in this document. This report is provided to the Head of Campus by the end of July and end of November each year, for reporting to the Student Board.
- 2.6.2 Students and staff involved in the engagement mechanisms are given opportunity to provide input and feedback about effectiveness.

2.7 Regular review and improvement

2.7.1 Feedback from participants in student engagement mechanisms is used to identify ways to enhance and improve future engagement mechanisms.

Version	Date of approval	Approved by	Amendment
1	19 January 2018	Vice Chancellor	New Principles