

# Global Network Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose and Context

(1) Western Sydney University's object and functions broadly support the conduct of education and research activities both throughout Australia and overseas, with particular emphasis on Greater Western Sydney. The University supports education throughout these communities by building relationships and maintaining a local presence, including the establishment of campuses and other facilities.

(2) The purpose of this Policy is to establish a framework known as the Western Sydney University Global Network with a common set of high level policy statements and principles to reflect the shared interests and core values and expectations for operation of all campuses throughout Australia and overseas where Western Sydney University degrees and other awards are offered either directly or with a third party provider (including dual award degrees).

(3) Network Members are listed in the attached Schedule and comprise:

- a. Western Sydney University; and
- b. University controlled or associated entities and other structures (such as partnerships with other organisations) who operate university campuses and teaching and research activities on behalf of the University and who accede to this Policy.

(4) The Policy Statements in Section 3 are principles to which all Network Members must adhere and which are in line with standards imposed on higher education providers under the HES Framework. It is acknowledged that in some cases, there may be a conflict between Australian and overseas laws, standards and cultural norms, in which case these will be carefully considered taking into account the nature and extent to which these conflict.

## Section 2 - Definitions

(5) HES Framework means the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) established under the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011](#) (Cth).

(6) Network Members means those higher education providers listed in the Schedule.

(7) University means Western Sydney University.

(8) Western Sydney University Global Network or WSU Global Network means Western Sydney University and Network Members.

## Section 3 - Policy Statements

(9) The following set of principles are designed to reflect minimum requirements for the WSU Network Members consistent with the HES Framework.

(10) Corporate Governance – All Network Members who must have appropriate governance structures in place that:

- a. provide both strategic and management oversight and are accountable for operations, including effective academic governance and assurance of academic standards; and
- b. develop and support an institutional culture and environment in which freedom of speech and academic freedom are upheld and protected and the wellbeing of staff and students is paramount;
- c. establish and maintain effective systems of control and other mechanisms that promptly identify and respond to risks to operations and compliance, including cyber security risks;
- d. ensure access to information and independent advice for informed, ethical and competent decision-making;
- e. establish defined roles with appropriate levels of delegated authority;
- f. establish and maintain effective business, financial and other records systems;
- g. undertake independent reviews of the effectiveness of governance arrangements on a regular basis.

(11) Academic Governance – The University's Academic Senate is the peak academic body for academic debate, policy making and decision-making and reports to the University's Board of Trustees. This is in recognition of the fact that there are important interdependencies between corporate and academic functions. The functions and responsibilities of the Academic Senate are set out in the [Academic Governance Policy](#). All Network Members must have in place policies, systems and processes that:

- a. clearly delineate between corporate and academic functions to ensure independence, integrity and quality of academic standards and to manage risks appropriately;
- b. ensure students have an opportunity to participate in academic governance;
- c. monitor and report on academic standards, values and quality assurance;
- d. ensure sufficient oversight and management of student progression and early identification of students at risk;
- e. ensure sufficient oversight of recruitment of appropriately qualified and experienced academic staff and their performance including the opportunity to review feedback about their teaching and research supervision;
- f. recognise and encourage relevant and continuing scholarship for academic staff and students;
- g. monitor academic collaborations and partnerships;
- h. ensure that all programs and subjects are accredited and approved in accordance with applicable academic and professional standards (including those required by external professional accreditation bodies);
- i. ensure equivalency in student outcomes and student experience including through monitoring and seeking feedback from students;
- j. ensure that students have access to suitable placement and work integrated learning opportunities as part of their academic program;
- k. promote research quality and development;
- l. governing bodies of Network Members can be assured of effective and sustainable oversight of academic, research and engagement activities.

(12) Employment and Organisational Culture – Working effectively with equity, diversity and inclusion is part of the University's mission and achieving its goals, by ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination or other grounds irrelevant to decision-making in relation to staff, students and others. Network Members must:

- a. build a culture that promotes:
  - i. equity and is diverse, inclusive and reflects the expectations, needs and ambitions of staff, students and local communities, including local Indigenous communities; and
  - ii. an environment where employees share a strong sense of purpose, are aligned with organisational core values and are highly motivated and accountable;
- b. implement and maintain policies, processes and strategies that promote equity, encourage diversity and contribute to an organisational culture that is inclusive across all activities, including the delivery of education services;

- c. ensure that recruitment, selection, engagement and performance management of staff is done in a fair and transparent manner, is merits-based and does not involve unlawful discrimination;
- d. ensure that all individuals, including staff, students and visitors, are treated with fairness, dignity and respect;
- e. ensure payroll compliance including payment of salaries and wages in accordance with all relevant laws and employment agreements or regulations;
- f. ensure that there are systems and controls in place to appropriately monitor, manage and respond to behavioural and other workplace risks; and
- g. ensure that all Network Member partners and suppliers are aware of these requirements.

(13) Health, Safety and Wellbeing – All Network Members have a duty of care to ensure safe places of work, study and other activities for their staff, students and visitors. Network Members must:

- a. implement and maintain an environment that promotes and supports high standards of health, safety and wellbeing;
- b. implement and maintain processes for effectively managing critical incidents and complaints of bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination;
- c. audit, monitor and review measurable targets to achieve continuous improvement to health, safety and wellbeing capabilities;
- d. implement support services that can be easily accessed by staff, students and visitors;
- e. monitor and review health, safety and wellbeing systems and controls to ensure these remain suitable, effective and compliant with relevant laws;
- f. provide comprehensive and relevant health, safety and wellbeing training for staff and other relevant people;
- g. manage unwell or injured staff through prompt intervention and rehabilitation to support their safe return to work;
- h. coordinate activities to achieve positive outcomes for health, safety and wellbeing of staff, students and visitors.

(14) Ethics and Integrity – As a public university, the University has a strong tradition of ethical conduct as part of its mission to advance learning, teaching and research in Greater Western Sydney, throughout Australia and overseas. The University accepts its responsibility to adhere to the highest standards of moral and ethical values and principles through the personal and professional behaviour of its leaders and staff. The University also champions freedom of expression and academic freedom through open inquiry and debate in the best interests of education, learning and research. Network Members must:

- a. adopt codes of conduct and ethical frameworks that clearly set out organisational expectations of leaders and staff about honesty and transparency as well as requirements to always:
  - i. act in the best interests of the organisation and ensure that conflicts of interests are declared and managed appropriately;
  - ii. consider and have regard for the rights and responsibilities of others and for differences across cultural backgrounds, beliefs and abilities; and
  - iii. behave civilly and respectfully towards others even when this involves robust debate;
- b. ensure that decisions are consistent with organisational missions, values and beliefs; are made for the greater public good and with particular regard for the region's needs and aspirations; exemplify the values and highest professional standards and are based on current and accurate information and supporting evidence;
- c. insist that objectives of student learning are not compromised and that students understand and appreciate that learning is the most important goal;
- d. reject academic dishonesty in all learning and research, and have in place robust systems, controls and processes to identify and appropriately manage dishonesty in learning and research;

- e. carry on research in accordance with recognised codes and statements, including the University's [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#), Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, [Singapore Statement on Research Integrity](#) and [Montreal Statement on Research Integrity in Cross-Boundary Research](#).

(15) Indigenous Education and Employment – Western Sydney University's strategic plan commits the University to creating partnerships with Indigenous Australian students, staff and communities to ensure a culturally rich, relevant and engaged learning experience with embedded Indigenous Australians' heritage and culture. The University's [Indigenous Australian Education Policy](#) explains the principles and objectives for development and delivery of education to Indigenous Australians. Network Members operating overseas are similarly committed to engaging with their local Indigenous communities through meaningful dialogue and active participation in local development and delivery of education.

(16) Modern Slavery – Network Members are committed to providing a work environment that is free of any violation of human rights that exploits a person for personal or commercial gain, including slavery, servitude, forced compulsory labour, child labour and human trafficking. This extends to implementing systems and controls to:

- a. identify potential areas of risk, particularly with supply chains; and
- b. work with suppliers and other organisations with whom Network Members have dealings to eliminate or minimise those risks and ensure compliance with applicable Australian and overseas Modern Slavery laws.

(17) Complaints – As providers of higher education in Australia and overseas, Network Members must have in place policies and procedures that encourage staff and students with concerns or grievances to make a complaint. Network Members are committed to:

- a. treating all concerns and grievances seriously and investigating them proportionately and appropriately;
- b. ensuring all students and staff are aware of complaints resolution policies and processes and understand their responsibilities when handling, resolving or reporting complaints;
- c. apologising when a mistake has been made, explaining what happened and what will be done in response to the complaint;
- d. keeping statistics on complaints and using these to identify and action areas of risk or opportunities for improvement.

(18) Accountability, Regulation and Reporting – The University is a registered charity and public body established in New South Wales, Australia and, as such, its activities are monitored and scrutinised under a range of Commonwealth and State laws. As a public body it is formally accountable to the NSW and Australian governments. All Network Members must:

- a. conduct their activities in accordance with their local regulatory requirements and, to the extent where there is no conflict, with the University's own regulatory compliance and policy regimes;
- b. establish robust reporting mechanisms that are compliant with both University and local reporting requirements. These include annual reports, corporate plans, financial and management statements and other reports.

(19) Finances and Infrastructure – Network Members' incomes are derived from both public and private sources, including government funding for teaching and learning activities. Detailed information about these activities and sources of income can be found in the University's audited financial statements and, where overseas regulatory reporting requirements apply, in reports of Network Members. The WSU Global Network is committed to:

- a. implementing, maintaining and reviewing effective internal systems and controls that monitor, safeguard and record the use of financial and other resources;

- b. implementing effective procurement and other processes to ensure that Network Members obtain value for money in acquisition of infrastructure and other resources;
- c. using resources effectively, efficiently and economically to support the achievement of its objects and goals and in a way that meets high standards of public conduct, manages risks appropriately and complies with all relevant laws;
- d. giving timely, transparent and accurate accounts of its use of resources.

(20) Risk Management – Network Members are committed to managing both strategic and operational risks and embedding risk management in all activities. The University's Board of Trustees has ultimate accountability for ensuring that risks are managed effectively. The Board of Trustees approves the University's [Risk Appetite Statement](#) annually that sets out the desired level of risk-taking for its most significant risks. Network Members must:

- a. establish and maintain risk registers that document all key risks;
- b. embed a culture of risk management to ensure decision-making is informed and that significant risks are identified, understood, assessed and managed appropriately in alignment with (as applicable) the Network Member's or the University's [Risk Appetite Statement](#);
- c. ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in relation to risk management and are trained about how to identify, understand, report and manage risks;
- d. recognise that some risks that fall outside the relevant risk appetite statement may need to be taken but must be managed pro-actively to support achievement of objectives.

(21) Anti-Fraud, Anti-Corruption, Anti-Bribery, Sanctions and Whistleblowing – The University has in place a number of frameworks and policies for reporting and managing allegations of fraud and corruption including a robust whistleblowing process. Network Members must:

- a. establish and maintain systems, procedures and controls to manage risks related to fraud, corruption (including bribery), money-laundering and breaches of Australian and other applicable sanctions;
- b. where activities or transactions involve challenging circumstances or places, assess risks and put in place proportionate and proactive measures to manage those risks;
- c. for activities or transactions involving high risk organisations or individuals, ensure that these are not in breach of any Australian or applicable United Nations or international sanctions, such as those related to terrorist organisations and activities and money laundering;
- d. train staff to ensure they have an awareness of these risks and know when and how to report and manage them;
- e. meet reporting obligations to applicable regulatory authorities.

(22) Data Security and Privacy – Network Members collect and use personal data as part of their educational and research activities. Network Members have legal obligations under applicable Australian and overseas privacy laws with respect to the collection, use, management, retention and security and disclosure of personal (including health) information. Network Members must ensure compliance with relevant privacy laws and manage risks including by:

- a. implementing effective systems of control and strategies (including incident response plans) to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of data that it collects and stores against unauthorised access or fraud, and to meet their legal obligations under applicable privacy laws and contractual obligations;
- b. only collecting the information they need and only sharing it within the organisation in accordance with applicable privacy laws or where consent is given;
- c. allowing people to exercise their legal rights in respect of their personal information, including the right to complain if they believe their information has been mishandled;
- d. ensuring that actual or suspected data or information breaches (including cyber security incidents) are reported

- and recorded internally, investigated and, where required, reported to relevant regulatory authorities;
- e. regularly reviewing and assessing the maturity and effectiveness of its information security systems and controls;
- f. training staff and (as appropriate) students on how to safeguard confidential or personal information, how to identify potential or actual security breaches and how to report them;
- g. applying these standards to supply chains and delivery partners.

(23) Media and Branding – The use of media and branding contributes to organisational objectives by promoting Network Members and the research, educational offerings and other services they offer. Network Members must:

- a. always maintain a professional social media presence in a way that complies with codes of conduct, privacy laws and other relevant guidelines;
- b. ensure that all media and social media communications from Network Members are readily identifiable through appropriate branding;
- c. communicate with media and social media audiences and answer queries in a timely fashion;
- d. ensure staff are aware of the rules they must follow when contacted by the media or engaging with personal or professional media.

## **Section 4 - Review of Policy Statements**

(24) Western Sydney University will, in consultation with Network Members, review these Policy statements regularly to ensure these reflect both Australian and applicable overseas regulatory requirements and good practice.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	19th June 2024
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<b>Approval Date</b>	19th June 2024
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## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Award"** - The qualification granted to a student after completion of all the requirements of a higher education course.