Communications: External and Internal Communications & Media Related Activities			
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1   Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Communications Policy is to ensure that all Ara Institute of Canterbury communication and media engagement related activities position and enhance the reputation of Ara as a leader in applied tertiary education. This is integral to Canterbury's future as defined by the institute's strategic plan including vision, values and outcomes.

1.2 Scope and Application

This policy applies to the publication and distribution of all Ara communications to external and internal Ara stakeholders relevant to marketing associated activity as defined by this policy.

Ara Brand Standards apply to all Ara internal and external communications and documentation.

1.3. Formal Delegations

The holders of the positions detailed in the table below are authorised to approve communication activity and speak on behalf of Ara on the matters described in the following schedule.

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Ara Position	Associated Authority
Ara Council Chair	Media Spokesperson • Council Chair or under express permission delegated to another Council Member as related to media interest around government policies, the strategic direction of Ara and governing policies.

Ara Chief Executive	Media Spokesperson(s)
	• The Chief Executive is the primary spokesperson for all Ara media activities and:
	  ▪ may nominate /delegate any further media Ara spokesperson (s) roles as relevant to the media enquiry.
	  ▪ May refer matters related to Māori to the Kaiārahi (See Kaiārahi below)

Kaiārahi	Media Spokesperson • The Kaiārahi is the primary Ara spokesperson for all Māori education and Treaty related-issues and activities
Marketing Manager	• Liaises, develops and actions any Ara media related activity, media releases and corporate positioning statements in consultation with or as delegated by the Communications Manager.
Communications Manager	• Liaises, develops and actions any Ara media related activity, media releases and corporate positioning statements in consultation with the Council Chair and the Chief Executive as appropriate.

1.4 Definitions

a   **Ara Brand Standards:** Approved brand standards which ensure that the Ara brand is communicated correctly through consistency of design, messaging, typography, imagery and tone of voice.

Brand Standards currently exist for: Ara logo, Ara colour palette, imagery, typography, stationery, internal use of Ara brand, template publications, staff recruitment advertisements, bi-lingual signage, online and offline multi-media marketing and communication platforms, corporate documentation and presentation templates. Brand Standards also cover the use of Ara sub-brands. NZBS and NASDA.

b   **Internal & External Stakeholders:** For the purpose of the Communications Policy, our stakeholders are defined as:

i   Internal: Council Members and all Ara staff;

ii   External: All public persons, commercial and community entities not employed by Ara, including but not limited to; general public; students; prospective students; graduates; industry; tertiary organisations; news media; government agencies; Members of Parliament; Ministers of the Crown; Civil and regional authorities.

c   **Marketing Activities:** Includes all Ara marketing, promotional, advertising, communication, media and recruitment related activities, the publication and distribution of all Ara branded information to the external and internal stakeholders of Ara and including:

i   Multi-Media Platforms: Refers to any existing and emergent offline and online marketing, advertising and communication platform or tool currently available in the market place. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Offline: newspapers, magazines, billboards, posters, bus backs, bus adshells, flyers, newsletters, reports, documents, signage, banners, publications, merchandise, CDs, DVDs.
- Online: websites, web microsites, mobile phones, IPods, online newspapers, online magazines, social media (Facebook, Twitter,

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YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, other Apps, blogs), television, radio, cinema, Ad roll, programmatic advertising and proximity advertising.

    ii   News Media: Refers to reporters, employers or representatives of any organisation involved in the public distribution of information, comment or visual images through any multi-media platform.

d   **Marketing Services:** Ara Marketing Services is an organisational unit that sits within Business Development, directed by the DCE Customer Experience & Engagement and managed by a Marketing Manager.

    i   Marketing Services has the responsibility for student recruitment and positional advertising design & development, media buying and placement, brand development, reputation management, media and public relations, corporate sponsorship, internal and external communications, domestic student recruitment. Marketing Services works collaboratively with Engagement services, EAR, other divisions and Ara wide staff with liaison and student related service responsibilities.

    ii   Marketing Services liaise, manage, design, develop and produce multi-media advertising and promotional campaigns, stakeholder communications, media releases, sponsorship arrangements and events to an agreed annual Ara Marketing Budget aligned to institute priorities as set by the Ara Council Strategic Plan, Ara Chief Executive, DCE Customer Experience & Engagement and/or the relevant DCEs.

    iii   Marketing Services liaise, manage, design, develop and produce all Ara news and social media related activity with responsibility for publishing and distributing media releases, and advising the business on how to deal with the media. It is responsible for ensuring all Ara marketing and communication initiatives gain maximum positive media coverage.

    iv   Engagement Services has a role in communicating with schools, businesses and non-governmental organisations as part of their responsibility for student recruitment.

e   **Members of staff** shall include all Councillors and all staff and employees of Ara.

f   "**Speaking**" includes all forms of communication that could be reasonably regarded being in the public domain. For the purpose of clarification this includes all forms of electronic communications and social media.

Related Ara Procedures	Related Ara Policies
• Marketing procedures for requests, approvals, brand and logo use *(included within this policy document)* • Informed consent for electronic communications *(included within this policy document)* • Ara Brand Standards *(controlled documentation held by Marketing Services)*	• CPP105 Acceptable Use and Conduct for ICT Users • CPP109 Disclosing Personal Information about Students and Staff • CPP122 Social Media • CPP208 Resolving Staff Performance or Conduct Issues • CPP211 and CPP211a Code of Professional Practice
Related Legislation or Other Documentation	

2   Principles

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2.1 The publication and distribution of all written and verbal information, comment and visual images provided to the external and internal stakeholders of Ara, in the name of Ara, via any Ara multi-media platform will:

a   Effectively reflect the vision, values, and strategic outcomes of the Strategic Plan of Ara and how these are demonstrated in the operations of the institute.

b   Adhere to Ara Brand Standards.

c   Demonstrate the commitment of Ara to the use of Te Reo in all the appropriate marketing communications of Ara.

d   Demonstrate a commitment to best practice, collaboration, communication, and stakeholder engagement.

e   Include only approved content, which is current, consistent, accurate, and timely.

f   Meet legal requirements, including the copyright, trademark, intellectual property rights and privacy of individuals, at the time of publication or distribution

g   Target the level of detail, tone and imagery appropriate for the intended audiences and platforms.

h   Ensure communications are contextualised within strategic multiplatform communications plans.

i   Be sensitive to the domestic, international and cultural communities of Ara.

j   Build a positive profile of Ara, its staff, students, graduates and stakeholder partnerships.

k   Ensure collaborative communications plans with strategic partners embody the communications principles of Ara.

2.2 Every Ara staff member has a commitment to promote the Institute positively as part of their responsibility to ensuring all activities align to the Strategic Plan of Ara - vision, values and strategic outcomes.

3   Associated procedures for Ara Corporate Policy on Communications

Contents: 3.1   News Media: Media Releases/Relationships
3.2   Public Communications and Statements
3.3   Ara Online Communication
3.4   Breaches of Policy

3.1 News Media: Media Releases/Relationships

a   Ara is committed to openness of information that is factual, appropriate, complies with legislation and is in the best interest of Ara.

b   The communications team provides media training and preparation for interviewees.

c   For communications advice, Ara staff should contact the Marketing Manager, Communications Manager or relevant marketing advisor.

d   All Ara media releases will be prepared and distributed by the Marketing Services Communications Team. The Communications Manager has oversight of all Ara related media activity and therefore any media releases or activity drafted outside of this team must be submitted for approval prior to distribution.

e   No person, unless a designated spokesperson, may send 'letters to the editor' that imply the content of the letter is the official view of the organisation. If a 'letter to the

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editor' is a personal view and not one held by the organisation, the author of the letter should not include their position at Ara in their sign off.

d   Any spokespeople will consider the potential impact on Ara of any information, comment or visual images they provide or authorise. They must ensure that any impact is beneficial to the interests of the Institution.

e   The Communications Manager and/or Chief Executive must be informed of any proposed contact with news media reporters .

f   All media releases must be forwarded to the Communications Manager for confirmation of approval and distribution.

g   **Consideration of Privacy Issues**

i   Members of staff engaged in any media related activity will be familiar with the policy CPP109 *Disclosing Personal Information about Students and Staff.*

ii   Written release to use photographs, testimonial statements of any person in communications or promotional material or any multi-media platform must be obtained using the release form available through Marketing Services.

iii   Whenever an identifiable individual is to be mentioned, that person's authorisation or the permission of the Privacy Officer must be obtained prior to mention being made.

iv   Special consideration needs to be given if any images or pictures are taken at either the Ara Early Learning Centre or Te Waka Huruhurumanu ki Otautahi. Please contact the relevant centre manager prior to any images or picture being taken.

h   All requests for official information held by the Institute are referred to the Official Information Officer. The Official Information Officer will notify the Chief Executive and advise the Communications Manager as appropriate with regard to potentially contentious issues.

i   **Role of Council**

From time to time the media may approach members of Council to comment on a particular issue. The following points outline the expectations of Council members in responding to the media:

i   The Chair of Council is the first point of contact for the official view on any matter concerning the affairs of Council.

ii   The Chair of Council may refer any matter to the relevant committee chairperson or the Chief Executive for their comment.

iii   If the Chair of Council is contacted by the media to comment on operational issues at Ara, the enquiry will be re-directed to the Chief Executive.

iv   No other Council member may comment on behalf of the Council without having prior approval from the Chair.

v   Appointed/Elected members are free to express a personal view to the media provided it is made clear that this view does not necessarily represent the views of Council.

vi   No member of Council may speak to the media regarding matters deemed to be confidential.

vii   No member of Council may publicly criticise a member of staff. This includes Council meetings conducted in open session, when media may attend.

viii Council agendas, minutes and papers will be made available to the media before meetings.

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3.2 Public Communications and Statements

To provide guidance for staff speaking publicly as part of their role at Ara Institute of Canterbury.

a   Ara as a whole is represented publicly by the Ara Council, through the Chair and by the Chief Executive or their delegates.

b   Members of staff of Ara may speak publicly in one of three roles:-

- As an academic or expert speaking publically on a matter related to their area of expertise and their role at Ara.

- As an official of Ara or delegate of the Council Chair or Chief Executive representing the official view of Ara.

- As a private individual speaking publicly about matters not related to their area of expertise and/or their role at Ara without identifying themselves as an employee of Ara.

c   **Policy**

i   When speaking publicly members of staff should consider in which role they are acting and identify clearly to the recipients of that communication that role – as an academic or expert, as an official of Ara or as a private individual.

ii   Speaking as an academic or expert: Staff can make statements to the media, or respond to media queries, or make public statements in subject areas where they have recognised special expertise or recognised competence, provided it is made clear that when making such a statement or communication that it is not made by or on behalf of Ara. Such statements should implicitly, or preferably explicitly, refer to the recognised expertise or competence. Members of staff making such statements or communications must advise Ara Communications Manager or the PR and Communications Advisor.

iii   Representing Ara: No staff member or student is to speak for, or to publicly commit Ara as an entity on any issue, as to any expenditure, or to create any liability for Ara unless that person has an explicit delegation to do so, flowing either from the Council or the Chief Executive.

iv   Speaking in a private capacity: When speaking in a private capacity or when representing another organization that is not connected with Ara, staff members should not include in the communication any material that may suggest that this communication relates to their role at Ara. An Ara title or honorific should not be used where a staff member is making a statement or communication that is intended to be, or submitted as, speaking or writing in that person's private capacity.

v   Private Communications: Members of staff should conduct private communications such that a recipient is in no doubt that the staff member is writing or communicating in their private capacity and not on behalf of Ara. Particular care must be taken in using any Ara email or web address when communicating in a private capacity. Private communications are not to be carried out using an Ara email or web address in circumstances where there might be a perception that such communications are on behalf of Ara. Where communicating (in hard copy, emails, electronically or online) in their private capacity, members of staff must not use, for example, Ara letterhead, paper, business cards, envelopes or sign offs whether electronic or otherwise. All members of staff should be aware that all Ara communications, whether sent as part of official Ara business or for private purposes, are subject to discovery as

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part of an official investigation or as a result of a request under the Official Information Act. Members must be mindful that communications made using Ara resources (letterhead or email or similar) must not in the normal course be representing or reproducing third party logos, advertising, or affiliations.

3.3   Ara Online Communications

This refers to the websites at Ara, infoweb, social media, email, and any new and emergent online media platforms.

a   Strategic planning, visual design, content management processes, content development and performance delivery of the online marketing of Ara and communications presence as defined above is the responsibility of Marketing Services and will be developed, maintained and managed with the oversight and approval of the Marketing Manager within the approved annual marketing budget.

b   Source and implementation of any ICT related software to support marketing and communications initiatives and activities will be a carried out in conjunction with the Ara Information Technology Division

c   Any development decision or strategic direction that relates to or interfaces with any ICT online platform and/or Ara business system will be made in consultation with the relevant Directors and the Director, Corporate Services.   Recommendations are required to be referred to the Ara ICT Governance Group for consideration and approval.

d   **Websites** (Extranet) - Ara will have one website, www.ara.ac.nz as its primary public website interface. This website and any Ara web microsites must be aligned to the Ara website Purpose and Vision, Ara Brand Standards.

   i   Website Vision – Ara website will be perceived as accurate, current, leading edge, innovative and referred to as an exemplary tertiary website.

   ii   Website Purpose - Ara website will be an effective marketing and communications channel that:

   - Provides accurate, relevant and timely information on Ara activities, educational pathways, outcomes and opportunities

   - Supports students in their decision to enrol and engage with Ara

   - Showcases and brings to life the Ara strategic vision, values and outcomes

   - Provides a platform for effective communities of engagement with various stakeholders

   - Meets the identified demands of the student, stakeholder and staff users.

   Any future domain names must be approved by the TKM.

   All approved academic programme, course and specialisation detail displayed on the Ara website, will be pulled automatically from the Ara central repository system.   This Ara Repository contains all Ara course and programme documentation as approved by the Ara Academic Board and therefore is the central source of accurate, up-to-date and approved programme information.

e   **Infoweb** (Intranet) – The Ara Infoweb will be designed, developed, maintained and supported to position and drive staff to the Infoweb as the primary communication channel providing detailed information to staff.

   i   Content will include, but not be limited to; corporate updates, news, successes, policies, procedures and the institute's progression toward achieving its vision, values and outcomes.

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ii   Responsibility for management and maintenance lies within Marketing Services, with specific delegated responsibilities to the Communications Manager. In doing so, opportunities for Ara wide feedback, consultation and continuous improvement will form part of the Marketing Services annual communication plan.

f   The Infoweb's development will involve delegated content authors with responsibility for adding and maintaining content.

g   **Social Media** – The Ara Communications Manager is responsible for the development and continuous improvement of Ara social media presence and engagement. A separate Social Media Policy (CPP122) with associated procedures exists to protect and enhance the reputation of Ara.

h   **Electronic Communications**: - This type of communication refers to email and text communications.

All electronic communications sent by any Ara Staff or Council member sent from an Ara email account identifies the sender as associated with Ara. Therefore all electronic content must be in accordance with this Communication Policy and represent Ara in a positive and professional manner.

All emails must adhere to the Ara Brand Standards and include the approved Ara email signature as specified in the Brand Standards. The approved, correct Ara email signature template should be obtained from Infoweb or Marketing Services.

Ara staff must not create their own visual imagery, taglines or substitute brand logos as part of their Ara email signature.

All permission based electronic communications should comply with current legislation such as the Unsolicited Electronic Messages Act 2007. Unsolicited bulk emailing is prohibited. In the case of mass marketing or commercial communication purposes, informed consent will be obtained by prior permission or providing the recipient with an opportunity to "opt out".

i   **Bulk Emailing to students**

Communication with students using bulk email can only be used to impart information, not to push marketing material or event promotion.

Regular dates for bulk emails to be issued to students will be agreed between Marketing and Student Services. A calendar scheduling the dates for these communications will be scheduled at the beginning of the year and published.

Quarterly general emails will be posted to students containing institution wide information from Student Services Division (SSD), Facilities Management (FM), Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Academic Division. An agreed calendar scheduling the dates for these communications will be published at the beginning of the year

Point of collation and distribution will be with the Marketing Communications team. There will also be one point of contact in each area of business. This person will be responsible for collating and forwarding information to Marketing Services for inclusion in the general email to students.

Sending emails to all students through Ara student email addresses need to comply with the following:

- Bulk emails are not permitted to have attachments.

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- Bulk emails will include links to Campus life/Ara website.
- Format of the email will provide a brief overview. A full more detailed communication will be available on the websites
- The word limit maximum is 250 words.
- Content will include advice of any new services, apps or service delivery model changes.
- Emergency emails e.g. campus closures. These will be issued by Marketing Services or ICT as required.
- Bulk emails will not be sent if the content or information already exists on the website.
- Bulk emails will not be used as reminders or prompts.
- Any other proposed communication not covered above will need to be approved by a TKM DCE and the Communications Manager informed.

j   **Limited Departmental emails to students**

Departments wishing to advise a defined cohort or group of students about further study options must discuss with their Marketing Advisor.

k   **Video material**

This type of communication refers to video material produced in house by the Communications Team to support recruitment campaigns, brand profile, showcase the Ara experience, news stories and Department profiles.

The video material will conform to Ara brand standards and align with Ara strategic outcomes and present Ara in a positive and engaging manner.

3.4 Breaches of Policy

a   Infringement of this policy by staff may lead to disciplinary action which will be carried out in consultation with the appropriate Director or Department Manager or with the Chief Executive or delegate, as covered by CPP208 *Resolving Staff Performance or Conduct Issues policy.*

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