

Public Interest Disclosure Rule

Section 1 - Overview

(1) The purpose of this Rule is to establish an internal reporting system for staff to report wrongdoing without fear of reprisal. UNE is committed to protecting employees who report wrongdoing in the workplace. Some reports of wrongdoing may be classified as public interest disclosures under the [Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 \(NSW\) \(PID Act\)](#). This Rule specifically addresses those types of reports.

(2) This Rule is designed to complement normal communication channels between supervisors and staff. Staff are encouraged to raise matters of concern at any time with their supervisors, but also have the option of making a report about a public interest issue in accordance with this rule and the [Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 \(PID Act\)](#).

(3) The internal reporting system established under this rule is not intended to be used for staff grievances, which should be raised utilising the appropriate provisions in the UNE Enterprise Agreements current at that time. If a staff member makes a report under this rule which is substantially a grievance, the staff member will be advised that the matter should be lodged with People and Culture to be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate provisions in the UNE Enterprise Agreements current at that time.

Section 2 - Scope

(4) This Rule applies to all UNE Representatives.

Section 3 - Rule

Principles

(5) The University of New England (UNE) is committed to:

- a. creating a climate of trust, where staff are comfortable and confident about reporting wrongdoing;
- b. encouraging staff to come forward if they are aware of or suspect wrongdoing within the university;
- c. keeping the identity of the staff member disclosing wrongdoing confidential, where this is possible and appropriate;
- d. protecting staff from any adverse action resulting from making a report;
- e. dealing with reports thoroughly and impartially and if some form of wrongdoing has been found, taking appropriate action to address it;
- f. keeping staff who make reports informed of their progress and the outcome;
- g. encouraging staff to report wrongdoing within the university, but respect any decision to disclose wrongdoing outside the University in accordance with the provisions of the [PID Act](#);
- h. ensuring managers and supervisors at all levels in the university understand the benefits of reporting wrongdoing, are familiar with this policy, and are aware of the needs and concerns of those who report wrongdoing;
- i. reassess/review the rule periodically to ensure it is relevant and effective; and

- j. provide adequate resources to:
 - i. encourage reports of wrongdoing;
 - ii. protect and support those who make them;
 - iii. provide training for staff about how to make reports and the benefits of internal reports to the authority and the public interest generally;
 - iv. properly assess and investigate or otherwise deal with allegations;
 - v. properly manage any workplace issues that the allegations identify or that result from a report; and
 - vi. appropriately address any identified problems.

Authorisation

(6) This is a Council Rule and vested authority is granted for decisions made under this Rule to the nominated parties. The Council retains discretion over decisions made under this Rule.

(7) The Director Audit and Risk is the nominated authority to administer this Rule and to coordinate the creation of procedures that apply under this Rule. The procedures must be consistent with this Rule.

Compliance

(8) All UNE Representatives must comply with this Rule. A failure to comply with this rule may amount to misconduct/serious misconduct and/or unsatisfactory performance.

General

(9) This Rule takes effect as a rule of Council pursuant to [Section 25 of the By-law](#). To the extent this rule conflicts with the UNE Act or UNE By-laws, the Act or By-law prevails to the extent of the conflict and this rule must be read down accordingly. This Rule operates as a delegation by Council under [Section 17 of the Act](#).

Section 4 - Definitions

(10) University means the University of New England.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	27th July 2015
Review Date	10th December 2017
Approval Authority	Audit and Risk Committee
Approval Date	10th December 2014
Expiry Date	30th September 2021
Unit Head	Kate McNarn Director Governance and University Secretary
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"UNE Representative" - Means a University employee (casual, fixed term and permanent), contractor, agent, appointee, UNE Council member, adjunct, visiting academic and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories.

"UNE Act" - Is the University of New England Act 1993 (NSW).

"UNE By-laws" - Means the University of New England By-law 2005 (NSW).

"Council" - Means the Council of the University of New England, being the governing body of the University.