This policy supports employees in promoting the role of the Board of Studies NSW as a provider of educational leadership through the development of quality policies, programs and practices in school curriculum, assessment and examinations and in the registration and accreditation of non-government schools.

1. OBJECTIVES – POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 The education of students from Year K to Year 12 attracts considerable media attention and the Board of Studies NSW sees the media as a valuable channel to communicate with the community.

1.2 The Board of Studies NSW supports proactive engagement with the media to maximise awareness of the service we provide and minimise the appearance of misleading and/or incorrect information.

1.3 All employees should ensure they meet their responsibilities under this policy and also those contained in the Board of Studies Code of Conduct and Ethics.

2. THE COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLISHING BRANCH

2.1 The Communications and Publishing Branch consists of three units: Communications, Publishing and Liaison.

2.2 The Communications Unit provides services related to internal and external communication including media management.

2.3 The Communications Unit offers a 24-hour media advisory service with duties including media liaison and critical issue management.

2.4 The Communications Officer should be the first point of contact for all media enquiries. For current contact details see item 7.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

3.1 Public comment by employees includes public speaking engagements, comments on radio and television or in letters to newspapers, and expressing views in books, journals or notices if it is expected that the comments will spread to the community at large. (See also the Board’s policy on Social Media in section 6.)
3.2 Employees, as individual members of the community, have the right to make public comment and enter into public debate on political and social issues. However, there are some circumstances where this is inappropriate. For example, situations when the public comment, although made in a private capacity, may appear to be an official comment on behalf of the Board of Studies. In such circumstances, employees should preface their remarks with a comment that they are made in a private or union capacity and do not represent the official view of the Board of Studies.

3.3 As a general rule, employees can disclose official information that is normally given to members of the public seeking that information, but should only disclose other official information and documents when:
- proper authority has been given
- required to or authorised to do so by law, or
- called to give evidence in court.

In these cases, comments made by employees should be confined to factual information and should not express an opinion unless required to do so (for example, when asked to do so in court).

3.4 All staff engaging in public comment through the media should adhere to this policy and the Board of Studies Code of Conduct and Ethics.

4. SPEAKING TO THE MEDIA

AUTHORITY TO COMMENT

4.1 The President, Chief Executive and Head, Communications Unit have the authority to directly provide comment in accordance with Board policies and be quoted as spokespersons in the media. Board of Studies Liaison Officers may also provide media comment in accordance with established Board policies to regional or local media.

4.2 The Communications Unit is the primary point for the distribution of information to media outlets and/or journalists.

4.3 All requests received from the media should immediately be referred to the Communications Unit.

4.4 The Communications Unit will then ask the media representative to detail the information they seek and any relevant deadline, and to identify their accreditation and media organisation.

4.5 The Communications Unit will then coordinate all content for the response in liaison with the relevant Board officer/s for that request.
4.6 All responses will be edited by the Communications Officer and prepared for the approval of the President and/or Chief Executive prior to dispatch to the media by the Communications Unit.

4.7 A copy of the final information provided to the media will be relayed to the relevant Board officer for their records.

4.8 Any subsequent media coverage received will be recorded and sent to relevant staff.

4.9 The Communications Unit also undertakes a proactive stance to media liaison and besides attendance at executive meetings they regularly consult with Board officers to prepare information for the media on areas of interest to a wider audience.

5. RELEASE OF ANIMATED AND STATIC IMAGES

5.1 Approval is to be sought for all images of Board officers and members of the community prior to release. A template for gaining approval is attached at Annexure A.

5.2 Approvals will then be stored with their images by the Communications Unit.

5.3 Images of students under the age of 18 require parental approval prior to release to the media.

6. SOCIAL MEDIA

6.1 The Board of Studies encourages use of social media technologies to enhance communication, collaboration and information exchange in support of organisational and NSW Government objectives.

6.2 The use of social media technology follows the same standards of professional practice and conduct associated with all communication activities in the public sector. Board officers are expected to use commonsense and judgement when making comment on social media and adhere to Item 5 of the Board of Studies Code of Conduct and Ethics - ‘Public comment on the work of the Board or the Office’.

6.3 The Board of Studies includes use of social media channels as part of its broader communications strategy and ensures that all activities are guided by a comprehensive plan detailing rationale for use of social media, planned commencement and end dates, and detailed plans for the update and ongoing moderation of comments and feedback.

6.4 The Board of Studies reserves the right to edit social media contributions that:
- are defamatory, abusive or hateful
- include offensive, obscene or abusive language
- violate copyright or other forms of licences and consents
- encourage conduct that might constitute a criminal offence or give rise to civil liability, or otherwise violates any local, state, national or international law
- contravene the information security policies, code of conduct, communication/social media policies of the Board of Studies
- discuss or identify specific personal or departmental related information.

7. MEDIA CONTACT
   Communications Officer
   Board of Studies NSW
   P: 02 9367 8308
   F: 02 9367 8035
   M: 0400 998 856

8. DOCUMENT HISTORY AND DETAILS

   Approval Date:

   Approving Officer: The Chief Executive, Board of Studies NSW

   Implementation Date:
Photograph and audiovisual release form

I, ..........................................., grant to the Board of Studies NSW (‘the Board’), its representatives and employees the right to take photographs or audiovisual recordings of me (or my child) and to use such materials with or without my name for any lawful purpose, including but not limited to:

- Information provided by the Board to news media
- Print and online publications produced by the Board of Studies
- Material posted by the Board to social media sites

I waive any right to inspect or approve the finished product, including written copy, wherein my (or my child’s) likeness appears.

These materials may be used for the abovementioned purposes by the Board for an unlimited period.

Subject’s name............................................................................................................................................

Parent’s or guardian’s name .......................................................................................................................

Signature .....................................................................................................................................................

Date...........................................................................................................................................................

Address.......................................................................................................................................................

Phone........................................................................................ Mobile...................................................................

Email ..........................................................................................................................................................

Description of material ............................................................................................................................

Third party (photographer/filmmaker) approval:

I, ..........................................., agree to the Board’s use of material created by me under the conditions described above.

Signature..................................................................................Date............................................

Board of Studies NSW
Level 7, 117 Clarence Street, Sydney 2000
GPO Box 5300, Sydney 2001