



PRIFYSGOL BANGOR UNIVERSITY

Guidance on working with the media

Institutional Enquiries

All press enquiries regarding the institution should be dealt with by the University's press office. Colleagues are requested to forward any enquiries to press@bangor.ac.uk

Role of the press office

Strong relations with the media are important for raising the University's profile and reputation nationally and internationally. The Press Office has corporate responsibility for media relations and is happy to offer advice and practical support with all aspects of media liaison – from the production of news releases to tips on dealing with the media and giving successful interviews. The Press Office also organises media training for staff.

General principles:

- In principle, the press office should normally be the first point of contact in all communications with the media.
- Members of staff have complete freedom of speech within the law in talking to the media about their research, it would however be appreciated if colleagues who, on occasion, choose to respond directly to media enquiries rather than referring them to the Press Office would keep the press office informed.
- Members of staff, students and employees should be wary of commenting to the media on aspects of the University's work about which they have no direct knowledge, and should not divulge information of a confidential nature (such as certain personnel and contractual matters);
- No member of staff, student or employee should engage with the media for the purpose of discrediting the College;
- For security reasons and health and safety reasons, programme-makers, film crews, photographers and reporters should be accompanied throughout their visit to the University premises. The Press Office can do this by arrangement.
- Do let the Press Office know if you have provided comment for a publication or have been interviewed to help us keep track of all media coverage

General advice on dealing with media enquiries:

The way and the speed in which you respond to media enquiries will influence the media's perception of you and your institution:

You should:

- take full details of the enquiry including the journalist's name, contact details, publication and deadline and request whether they require a response in Welsh or English (or both).

- respond to the journalist in full by their deadline. If this is not possible, give a holding statement until a full response is available.
- be helpful, polite and positive
- make sure you or an appropriate colleague is available for an interview and fully briefed
- never send out a release without ensuring somebody is available to respond to enquiries
- stick to the facts and do not speculate
- avoid going off the record, as what you say can still be used, even if it is not directly attributed to you
- A small proportion of media enquiries will be hostile, and these need to be handled carefully to limit potential damage to you and the research. Ensure any statements to hostile enquiries are cleared within your organisation and send them in writing.

Points to consider in the event of a crisis

If dealing with a bad news story you should:

- act quickly – a speedy response and good statement will help limit the damage and sometimes kill off an inaccurate story altogether
- never say ‘no comment’ – if there is not enough factual information to give out, or if there are reasons to keep the information confidential, give a holding statement that puts the story in context
- be honest and open
- not try to deceive the journalist – they will usually find out and it will make the story twice as hard to deal with
- if there has been a genuine mistake, apologise swiftly and sincerely and explain what you are doing to put it right.
- make sure the appropriate spokespeople are available for interview and are fully briefed.