

TYPE: Administrative
TITLE: Media Relations
NO.: ADMIN-275
RESPONSIBILITY: Associate Vice-President, Communications and Marketing
Chief Administrative Officer
APPROVED BY: Durham College Leadership Team
EFFECTIVE DATE: June 2020
REVISED DATE(S):
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1. Introduction

A strategic approach to media relations is critical to building and maintaining positive relationships with media. These relationships help ensure Durham College's (DC) reputation remains strong in Durham Region, the Greater Toronto Area, and beyond. It is through these connections that the College encourages positive coverage that aligns to DC's key messages and brand.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the media relations policy and procedure is to:

- Provide employees with guidelines for dealing with the media.
- Ensure incoming media inquiries are responded to promptly, by the appropriate individuals to provide accurate and consistent messaging.
- Ensure proactive media relations activities are managed.

3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. Communications and Marketing (C+M) is responsible for managing the College's media relations. By working collaboratively with employees, C+M ensures that information originating from the College is accurate, thorough and reflects DC's key messages.
- 4.2. Requests from media are to be directed to the manager, Communications.
- 4.3. Media relations are guided by DC's mission, vision, values, brand and strategic goals.

5. Procedure

- 5.1. C+M co-ordinates media interviews, works with senior leadership to determine the appropriate spokesperson(s), and keeps the Office of the President, senior leadership and, as appropriate, executive deans informed of key media relations activity.
- 5.2. C+M communicates with internal stakeholders (where appropriate) before a story is made public. In some cases, where time-sensitive information is involved, communications may be released simultaneously.

5.3. Addressing media inquiries

- 5.3.1. C+M is the primary contact for media requests which often require accurate and timely responses. Employees are encouraged to respond to incoming media requests from C+M promptly.
- 5.3.2. Once a media opportunity is confirmed, C+M will provide media relations support to the identified spokesperson(s). This may include interview coordination, assistance with key messages and the provision of potential interview questions and/or the interview focus. Media training may also be provided, as needed.
- 5.3.3. Employees who are directly contacted by media are required to notify C+M, and where possible, forward the media inquiry and contact details to C+M for follow-up. Details should be forwarded to the manager, Communications. In rare situations where employees respond to the media without the knowledge of C+M, they are required to notify the department immediately following an interview.
- 5.3.4. Exception: Employees are encouraged to respond directly to DC's student media and publications, which may include The Chronicle, Riot Radio, and Reflections. Following an interview, employees are asked to advise C+M to help ensure awareness of student media activity happening on campus.

5.4. Identifying media opportunities

C+M proactively seeks opportunities to share DC news and activities with the media. Employees are responsible for notifying C+M, as far in advance as possible, about newsworthy opportunities so C+M can determine the best approach to generate media coverage, if appropriate. Details should be forwarded to the manager, Communications as soon as available.

5.5. Media relations related to individuals under 18

5.5.1. DC hosts several on-campus events for younger audiences (eg. high school students, elementary school students) that are appropriate for media attendance. In addition, the College coordinates media interactions with individuals under the age of 18 from time to time. In order for those individuals to participate in interviews, the College must have parental consent via a signed media relations release form.

5.5.2. The media relations release form is available in the forms section of ICE under the C+M team page.

5.6. Media relations during times of crisis or emergency

C+M is responsible for contact with the media during a crisis or emergency situation. If an employee receives a media inquiry during a crisis or emergency situation, they are advised not to respond and instead immediately forward the request to DC's manager, Communications for appropriate action.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1. Communications and Marketing

6.1.1. The associate vice-president, Communications and Marketing is responsible for overseeing the strategic development and execution of DC communications.

6.1.2. The manager, Communications, in consultation with the associate vice-president, Communications and Marketing, is responsible for overseeing the strategic development and execution of proactive and reactive DC media relations activities.

6.1.3. C+M is responsible for monitoring media coverage of DC via various communications tools including the Internet and social media.

6.1.4. Employees in C+M are required to uphold the confidentiality of information pertaining to DC.

7. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Accessibility Plan (ADMIN-203).

8. Non-compliance implications

Non-compliance with this policy and procedure could negatively impact the current and prospective College community with both external stakeholders and the media, which could lead to significant financial loss and damage to the College's reputation.

9. Communications plan

A message will be posted on ICE alerting employees when new or revised policies and procedures are added to ICE.

A message will be posted on MyCampus alerting students when new or revised policies and procedures are added.

10. Related forms, legislation or external resources

- Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation ([CASL](#))
- Media Relations Release form
- Photo, Video, Multimedia Consent form