**Media relations: protocols, support and training**

**Our Media Protocols**

The Press Team, under the Head of Press and Public relations, is responsible for developing and managing relationships with local, regional, national and international media. The team serves as the point of liaison between the University and the media, maintaining our public relations functions and disseminating information from within the University.

In order to support this activity, the Press Office maintains media protocols ([available in full on the Press Office webpages](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/securestaff/cams/MEDIA_PROTOCOL_FULL.pdf),) by which all colleagues are expected to abide. The protocols set out the channels and processes for delivering information, news and public relations materials externally, in a consistent and cohesive manner. They detail the standards for media relations, the writing and issuing of press releases, and procedures for releasing information to the media. The protocols set out who should speak to the media on behalf of the University, and include details for senior managers, academics and researchers, support staff, professional services colleagues, members of Council, Emeritus Professors, honorary staff and visiting lecturers.

Maintaining a positive media profile depends on the creation of strong, professional relationships with the media, with connections based on mutual trust. To maintain valuable relationships with media contacts, the Press Office relies on the full support of colleagues in ensuring that relationships with media contacts are protected and respected. Colleagues should:

* Remember that when dealing with the media, they are representing the University
* Ensure that they honour their commitment to agreed media work (and not cancel once work begins, which can cause significant damage to hard-won relationships)
* Familiarise themselves with University policies and positions in advance of media contact
* Seek the guidance and permission of the Press Office before briefing any media contact. The Press Office can help by preparing briefing notes on specific topics, giving advice, and offering media training.

**Media training**

The Press Office offers training to colleagues who are expected to speak directly to the media:

* All colleagues in this group should have attended training within the last five years.
* Training for academics, senior managers and other colleagues likely to undertake media work, which will familiarise colleagues with the requirements of media work, give advice on how to deal with difficult questions, and provide opportunities to practise being a spokesperson.
* Training is a requirement for colleagues who may have to speak on sensitive or strategic issues, and it is expected that all senior managers with responsibility for the delivery of corporate strategies undertake training
* Colleagues likely to speak to the media about their own work will also find the training useful, especially in areas that are likely to generate interest.

**Social Media**

The digital team manages the University’s corporate social media channels, oversees the use of social media by colleagues, and has established a [social media policy for employees](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/hrpoliciesatoz/socialmedia/). The University encourages colleagues to engage, collaborate and innovate through social media, but all colleagues should aware of the potential impact on both themselves and the University. The social media policy is intended to minimise the risks associated with social media, which can have an impact on the wellbeing of students and staff, as well as the reputation of the University. To support this policy, the digital team offers training and support for colleagues managing social media on behalf of the University.