

15 December 2019



The Hon Robert S. French AC
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Allendale Square
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Perth WA 6000

Griffith University
Student Representative Council
170 Kessels Road
Nathan QLD 4111

Dear Mr. Robert French AC

Thank you for your correspondence dated 7 December 2018 regarding the *Freedom of Speech Review* into higher education institutions. Please accept my sincerest apologies for the delayed response. After much consultation with several members of Griffith University, I can provide information that may be of assistance to your review. I must note, however, that the majority of Griffith University's codes, practices and policies are available for public viewing via the Griffith University website.

Firstly, I refer you to the policies surrounding the [Staff Code of Conduct](#) that outline the role and responsibilities staff members have in relation to teaching and delivering lectures to students. I also provide the policies that regulate student conduct at Griffith University for your perusal. This [Student Charter](#) is a statement of the University's aspirations and mutual expectations involving staff and students, as they work collectively to achieve the University's Mission. It also details the partnership between the University and its students. Freedom of expression occurs through respectful interactions of all members of the University community, fair student representation and active participation in University life.

I also direct you to the Griffith Policy Library, which contains officially approved policies, procedures, forms and legislation of the University. Should you have any further inquiries in this regard, please contact the Policy Library Manager at the link mentioned previously. Each of the policies concerning freedom of speech and expression contain various related documents that provide further information. These vital sources are available on the public record and can all be easily accessed through Griffith University's website.

Finally, I refer you to an article in relation to issues concerning freedom of speech within the political arena. It provides information pertaining to the contested topic of freedom of speech and offers recommendations as to how the outstanding problems can be addressed. The article was published in the [Griffith Review](#), a high quality publication that delivers insight into the issues that matter.

As President of the Student Representative Council, I wish to add some remarks with respect to Griffith University's approach to freedom of speech. I understand that the freedom of speech and expression remains a contentious issue amongst students and staff of the University. One of the fundamental purposes of undertaking a tertiary education is to debate and challenge beliefs, whilst also exploring and putting forth ideas in a learning environment. Each of these elements depend on the receptiveness and tolerance to have a healthy debate and argument. This does not mean in any way that individuals may articulate whatever they desire. Different members of the University community will find that conflict may arise when expressing differing ideas and opinions. Although Griffith University encourages expression and discourse, staff and students are responsible for maintaining an environment of mutual respect and healthy debate.

As a result, Griffith University may restrict expression that violates the law, falsely defames an individual or speech that constitutes harassment, privacy invasion or a breach of confidentiality. It is of utmost importance that these matters will not eventuate in a manner that is inconsistent with the University's ongoing commitment to a free and transparent discussion of ideas.

I trust that the aforementioned information would be of some value. Please advise if I could be of further assistance to the review you are conducting.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Bansraj" with a stylized flourish underneath.

Melissa Bansraj
President of the Student Representative Council
Griffith University, Nathan Campus
Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Government & International Relations