



*The National Association of Australian University Colleges  
Freedom of Speech Review – Submission*

The National Association of Australian University Colleges (NAAUC) has been the peak body for students living on university campuses for the last 50 years. With over 230 residences from each state and territory of Australia, NAAUC's membership base comprises of over 100,000 students living on campus around the country.

Currently, no team members, guest speakers or delegates have raised issues with free speech regarding NAAUC related events. Indeed, as an organisation we aim to facilitate free discussion about difficult topics throughout all our events and programs. As per our equity policy, our goal is that everyone associated with our organisation is “confident that they will be walking into a safe, inclusive and friendly environment”.

NAAUC strives, and will continue to strive to provide spaces where people are free to express their views or opinions in a polite, courteous and respectful manner. That is to say, attendees and team members are free to speak on any topic, and challenge any or all ideas, with the only caveat being that they do so in a respectful manner.

As an organisation that represents students, and is run by students, we will always support debate on topics regarding student welfare. We hope to create spaces and opportunities for these debates, providing that discussion is evidence-based, and respectful. We support student activism, and we hope to actively encourage students' voices to be heard.

However, NAAUC acknowledges that in the future, some religious residences may consider their freedom of speech an issue. The primary points of difference between students and residences will likely relate to sex, sexuality, and gender.

NAAUC respects both the residences and the students views in such matters, and we strongly believe that each group should be able to communicate and discuss their positions. However, while we acknowledge that freedom of speech is important to students and residences, we also recognise that it can be used to defend discriminatory beliefs and practices, or result in policies which may harm student's welfare. Unfortunately, this is an issue our organisation does not yet have the answer to. As we have said, we support the right of someone to express their views respectful manner, however, we also support students living in residences free from discrimination and harm. We will endeavour to continue this debate with our members, as we acknowledge that this is becoming a contentious political issue.

Should our Association be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Jonty Boshier  
President



## NAAUC Equity Policy

National Association of Australian University Colleges Incorporated. When delegates attend the Conference, they can be confident that they will be walking into a safe, inclusive and friendly environment. To that end we have created an Equity Policy to be administered by the Management Committee during the Conference.

This policy applies without exception to all persons attending any part of the Conference, whether it is in the capacity of a delegate, Management Committee Member, staff member, guest or any other capacity.

The Management Committee are committed to a policy of equal opportunity in all areas of college life. The Management Committee accept that it is their responsibility to promote an environment free from discrimination and to ensure that a principal of merit is able to operate free from regard to irrelevant criteria.

Discriminatory conduct or irrelevant criteria may include but are not limited to sex, marital status, pregnancy, race, age, religion, sexual preference, political beliefs, impairment, family responsibility and family status. These criteria are not intended to be exhaustive and will include any conduct to which a person indicates they are uncomfortable with or which the Management Committee believe to be inappropriate.

People are to be treated fairly as individuals with rights and responsibilities that are to be respected. No person is to be unfairly discriminated against, abused or exploited. The Management Committee aim to promote a just environment whereby all members are able to access any opportunities they may wish and to facilitate full participation in college community.

For more information on this Equity Policy or how it may be administered in your college, please do not hesitate to contact the NAAUC President.