Australian Catholic University Neighbourhood Policy

1. Introduction

Universities occupy a significant position in many communities; as generators of economic activity, as land developers, as neighbours, and as property owners.

For over 20 years the Australian Catholic University (ACU) has provided an educational institution at the Strathfield campus. Over this time the university has strengthened it presence in the community. Consequently, ACU Strathfield has a long standing commitment to effectively consult with its community on matters, issues and activities that may impact upon them.

The recent master planning process identified a number of opportunities for the University to contribute to the Strathfield community and complement the work of Council. ACU is committed to working with the community on all levels to address issues of concern. Active involvement is the key to creating and maintaining a strong relationship with the surrounding community.

2. Purpose

To establish a neighbourhood policy to create and maintain a strong relationship with the surrounding community.

3. Relationship to Master Plan

The Australian Catholic University Neighbourhood Policy will form part of ACU's Strategic Plan and will complement the Master Plan for ACU's Strathfield Campus.

4. Vision

ACU Strathfield aims to contribute to the well being and development of the campus and the community in which it is located, in a way that is consistent with the goals and objectives of ACU's Strategic Plan and will respond when possible to the expectations of the surrounding community.

ACU's vision is: "to enrich people, communities and the environment by making original and creative connections across disciplinary, social and cultural boundaries".

5. Policy Scope

ACU has responsibility towards a multitude of services and facilities, as well as managing the economic and social aspects of the university. In addition to operating efficiently, ACU have a responsibility to control the development of the university with regard to various interests and the surrounding community.

The Neighbourhood Policy will manage the interaction between ACU and other sections of the University community, and address and monitor the direct impact on the surrounding community.

6. Policy Objectives

As part of this Neighbourhood Policy, the following guiding objectives apply:
- To value and respect all members of the community;
- To promote educational, academic and cultural values in the general community and foster recognition of the University as an academic, educational and general resource;
- To provide a rich cultural environment for staff and students, which is consciously spread into the local communities around the campus;
- To sustain a strong and visible commitment to the community;
- To build University linkages with public, private and community sector organisations;
- To identify opportunities for the University to contribute to the resources of the Strathfield community and complement the work of the Council.

7. Commitments, Goals and Actions

ACU neighbourhood policy addresses the following areas:
- Safety and security;
- Waste;
- External Relations;
- Social;
- Economic;
- Traffic and Transport; and
- Catchment

The following outlines the goals and actions of each of the key areas

Goal	Action
Safety and Security	
Dedicate University resources to maintain a safe and secure environment.	Security services will be responsible for providing a safe environment for the immediate and surrounding ACU community.
	Establish security monitoring services for the University and surrounding neighbourhood and run a range of programs to educate the community and university members on safety and security.
Waste	
Implement a waste management strategy that is maintained with the University campus and surrounding neighbourhood.	A waste management plan will be developed, to demonstrate how the university will monitor and minimise waste in the surrounding residential area.
	Ensure staff, students and visitors are informed and aware of their roles in implementing waste management.
External Relations	
Encourage and support research and resource collaboration with key Australian universities, public agencies and industries.	Develop, in appropriate areas, a number of strategically important collaborative relationships with key national institutions in the area of resourcing
	Broaden access to information by encouraging collaboration with other universities and seek an appropriate balance in transfer of electronic resources and print material.
Social	
Enhance the degree of community engagement on campus, and foster relationships with student, faculty, staff, alumni and the wider community.	Provide opportunities that allow the community to comment on issues of public concern and actively invite community participation.
	Facilitate engagement of faculty and students in public policy development.
	Increase student, faculty, and staff participation in community service learning, community based research, and service to the community.
	Increase community use of learning, cultural, and outdoor venues and ACU's campuses and sites.
	Actively market and promote to the local community lectures, workshops, fine and performing arts performances, and athletic programs
	Improve the ability of members of the external community to access the Australian Catholic University.
	Encourage and support activities on campus that provide venues for community involvement.
	Increase community access to University

		resources, such as the library facilities, gym, etc.
Economic		
Explores and exemplifies all aspects of economic sustainability.	Promote the value of the University in the local area so that it has a positive value on the economic value of the neighbourhood	
	Sponsor community programs.	
	Where feasible build linkages and partnerships with local businesses.	
Traffic and Transport		
Be a facilitator in assisting in the proper and effective management of parking and traffic on ACU campuses.	Inform staff, students, visitors to, and tenants of ACU of their responsibilities when they park within and around ACU.	
Endeavour to improve the sustainability of the environment by reducing the demand for car parking through supporting other forms of transport, while providing designated vehicle parking areas.	Provide end-of-journey facilities to support forms of other transport other than single occupant motor vehicles.	
	ACU to encourage alternative options of transportation.	
Catchment		
Ensure the aims and objectives of the University encompass not only the immediate University campus, as well as the surrounding residential neighbourhood.	The University will continuously review, allocate and manage its space and physical assets to reflect the ACU Strategic Plan objectives.	

ACU has also identified a number of opportunities for the University to foster its relationship with the community including access to university facilities, events, services and community activities.

It should be noted, while on campus, individuals are required to uphold the University's code of conduct.

8. Community Engagement

The University will focus its community engagement on activities where the communities themselves derive clear benefit from their engagement with the University.

The University is committed to engaging with the community through consultation that actively seeks the views of the community and utilising the knowledge gained to make well-informed decisions about major developments and strategic directions for the University, as well as developing mutual beneficial projects with the community.

9. Feedback

ACU needs to actively inform the community as to why decisions have been made, how community views have influenced the outcome and why certain views or ideas may or may not have been adopted. Informing the community should be undertaken as soon as possible after the final decision has been made.

10. Delegation

Overall responsibility for the application of this policy is held by AVC (Sydney), and this person responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

This policy will be subject to periodic review.