Web Governance and Standards Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy outlines a centralised web governance framework for Macquarie University that ensures consistency, security, compliance and brand integrity, while enabling authorised local teams to manage specific Content within approved guidelines.

(2) The Policy sets principles for governance, Content management, branding and user roles across the University's digital ecosystem.

Background

(3) Effective website management ensures each site remains functional, secure and aligned with strategic and operational goals, maintains accurate Content, supports user needs (students, staff and external partners) and integrates essential tools and resources to enhance engagement and accessibility.

(4) This is achieved through:

a. governance and compliance;
b. Content management;
c. platform performance;
d. security and privacy;
e. user experience (UX) and accessibility;
f. SEO and analytics;
g. continuous monitoring and improvement; and
h. training and support.

(5) The primary platforms owned, managed and operated by the University include selected public-facing websites and related digital platforms, such as corporate, student, health, and community-focused sites.

(6) The GEM design system provides a unified approach to creating, maintaining and scaling digital experiences.

(7) The benefits of GEM include consistency, efficiency, scalability, quality control, improved user experience, accessibility, brand alignment and future-proofing.

(8) GEM principles promote functionality over aesthetics, simplicity over volume, collaboration over isolation, consistency over bespoke and evolution over legacy.

Scope

(9) This Policy applies to corporate public-facing websites, portals and digital platforms owned, managed and operated by Macquarie University (the University) and all members of the University Community with associated roles and responsibilities.

(10) This Policy is applicable to all users involved in creating, managing, or publishing Content on any or the primary

platforms outlined in clause 5.

Section 2 - Policy

Governance and Compliance

(11) The University operates a centralised web governance model with localised Content management by Faculties and Offices where appropriate, blending central oversight with decentralised execution for efficiency and consistency.

Centralised oversight (Governance Team)

(12) The central web team retains control over:

a. Platform infrastructure – CMS, hosting, domain structure and technical SEO;
b. Branding and design standards – ensuring the Global Experience Macquarie (GEM) design system maintains uniform templates, fonts, colours and corporate identity;
c. Content production – creating clear, engaging and purposeful Content that meets audience needs and aligns with business goals;
d. Content review and quality control – ensuring published Content is accurate and meets agreed best-practice guidelines; and
e. Security and IT policies – access controls, cybersecurity measures and compliance monitoring.

Localised Content updates

(13) Faculties and Offices are empowered to manage and maintain their own website Content within approved frameworks and governance standards. They are responsible for the accuracy, timeliness and compliance of the information they publish, ensuring alignment with University brand, accessibility and policy requirements.

(14) Where appropriate, the central web team (including specialist digital copywriters) manages updates on behalf of business units. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) applies where minor updates submitted via OneHelp are actioned within two business days. Larger requests are assessed by the central web team and a time estimate will be provided.

Roles and responsibilities

(15) The University utilises a role-based CMS (Squiz Matrix) with defined access and permissions:

a. Admins – oversee governance, security, compliance and Content management to ensure a consistent, secure and optimised digital presence;
b. Producers – manage and optimise website Content for accuracy, compliance, SEO and brand consistency, collaborating for efficient publishing;
c. Editors – update localised Content (e.g. news, events, Content pages) without modifying design, security settings or branding elements;
d. Developers – build, maintain and optimise functionality, integrations and performance with appropriate security; and
e. SEO and analytics specialists – optimise visibility, track performance, analyse behaviour and implement data driven strategies.

(16) To maintain platform security and data integrity, user access to the CMS is reviewed annually. Any user who has not performed an update within the preceding 12 months will have their access automatically removed. Reinstatement requires a OneHelp request and may only be approved following verification of current training completion and business need.

Content management

(17) The principles of effective Content management include:

a. Content strategy – clear goals, audience analysis and a Content calendar;
b. Creation – quality over quantity, SEO optimisation and purposeful multimedia;
c. Organisation – clear structure, categorisation, tagging and internal linking; and
d. Maintenance – regular updates, periodic audits and performance tracking.

(18) Content governance should ensure consistency and alignment with University goals through:

a. Content guidelines – tone and voice, style guide and brand messaging;
b. Roles and approvals – creators, editors/reviewers and a clear approval process (peer review recommended; larger projects follow an established production process with milestones);
c. Workflow support – central web team assistance with planning, drafting and iterative editing by digital copywriters; and
d. Audits and inventory – central web team conducts reviews, fixes broken links, enhances SEO and maintains an owner-mapped Content inventory with annual review notifications.

(19) The University's compliance and legal requirements include:

a. Accessibility – compliance with WCAG 2.2 Level AA, ensuring screen-reader readability and accessible alternatives for image-presented information;
b. Copyright and licensing – all Content must be licensed appropriately. Canto provides approved imagery and Group Marketing can assist with other media; and
c. Privacy – all staff must adhere to the Privacy Policy.

(20) Performance monitoring involves:

a. the use of analytics tools to track page views, engagement and search visibility, including tailored dashboards that are available to business units; and
b. feedback mechanisms such as Net Promoter Score (NPS) surveys to identify trends and prioritise improvements.

Web Content standards (approval criteria)

(21) Content typically approved for University public-facing websites must meet the following:

a. Strategic alignment – supports business goals, brand messaging and audience needs;
b. Quality and assurance – accurate, error-free, well-structured and sourced;
c. Compliance and legal – copyright and privacy requirements as well as appropriate disclaimers;
d. Accessibility – WCAG 2.2, alt text, captions and readable formatting;
e. Brand consistency – approved logos, colours, fonts and tone;
f. Technical readiness – performance-optimised, mobile-friendly, no broken links;
g. SEO and discoverability – relevant keywords, meta descriptions, structured headings, internal linking and tagging;
h. Security and risk – no sensitive/confidential information; vet high-risk topics; and
i. Audience appropriateness – tailored, culturally sensitive Content.

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Training and development

(22) To maintain consistency, quality and compliance, updates are managed by trained personnel or the central web team.

(23) Authorised teams may perform routine updates within approved guidelines. Editor access is granted only after completing mandatory training.

(24) Mandatory training is to be completed via Workday and includes:

a. Squiz Content Management – CMS page creation, editing and publishing; and
b. Working with GEM – layouts, accessibility and web best practice.

Section 3 - Procedure

(25) Support for approvals, publishing, versioning, archiving and incident handling is performed through the central web team, who can be contacted via OneHelp.

(26) The following writing and production guidelines apply across University websites to ensure clarity, consistency and accessibility:

a. Content – purposeful, audience-focused and aligned to strategic goals; consider whether a web page is the most effective format;
b. Style and structure – use the inverted pyramid; informative, sentence-case headings; correct H1/H2/H3 hierarchy; lists for scan-ability; short, clear, active sentences; positive language; consistent tone (authoritative, friendly, inclusive);
c. Production and layout – use GEM components (images, cards, video, interactive elements) purposefully to aid navigation and engagement;
d. Accessibility – descriptive alt text, proper heading structure, plain language, sufficient contrast and keyboard navigation;
e. SEO – keywords in titles and headings, clear meta descriptions, alt text for images; and
f. Links – descriptive link text (e.g., “Download the undergraduate course guide”, “Explore research opportunities in health sciences”).

Section 4 - Guidelines

(27) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(28) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

a. Admin means a user with permissions to administer governance, security and compliance within the CMS.
b. Canto means the University’s approved image repository containing licensed imagery.
c. CMS (Squiz Matrix) means the University’s Content Management System.
d. Content means information delivered via digital channels (text, documents, data, applications, images, audio, video).
e. Content Creator/Producer means a person responsible for developing and managing website Content.

f. Content Editor means a trained user who updates approved local Content within permissions.
g. Developer means a person who builds and maintains website functionality, integrations and performance.
h. GEM (Global Experience Macquarie) means the University's digital design system (patterns, components and standards).
i. HCD (Human-Centred Design) means a design approach that starts with user needs and iterates to accessible, effective solutions.
j. NPS (Net Promoter Score) means a survey-based measure of user satisfaction and loyalty.
k. OneHelp means the University's support channel for submitting web update requests.
l. SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) means techniques to improve discoverability and ranking in search engines.
m. SLA (Service Level Agreement) means agreed service timeframes (e.g., minor updates within two business days).
n. WCAG 2.2 Level AA means web accessibility standards that University websites are required to meet.

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Eric Knight Deputy Vice-Chancellor (People and Operations)
Responsible Officer	Elizabeth Horbach Chief Marketing Officer +61 2 9850 6355
Enquiries Contact	Nathan Armstrong Head of Digital Operations

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