



# Foreign Interference Advisory Committee Charter

## Introduction

1. The Australian National University has established the **Foreign Interference Advisory Committee** (“FIAC”) to manage the University’s implementation of the [University Foreign Interference Taskforce \(UFIT\) Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector](#) and compliance with related legislation, providing assurance to the University community on the management of foreign interference risks.
2. This Charter sets out the Committee’s objective, authority, composition and tenure, roles and responsibilities, reporting and administrative arrangements.

## Objective

3. The objective of this Committee is to monitor, advise and provide assurance to the University community on matters relating to foreign collaborations and the management of foreign interference risks, in line with relevant internal policies and the national guidelines to counter foreign interference in the Australian university sector ([the UFIT Guidelines](#)). The Committee will monitor foreign interference matters across all relevant areas including international research and academic collaborations, undergraduate and graduate student programs, and cybersecurity at ANU.

## Authority

4. The Vice-Chancellor authorises the Committee to carry out the roles and responsibilities outlined in this Charter. The committee is further authorised, within the scope of its role and responsibilities, to:
  - obtain any information it needs from any ANU staff and/or external party (subject to their legal obligation to protect information); and
  - discuss any matters with external parties (subject to confidentiality considerations).

## Composition and Tenure

5. The Committee consists of:
  - the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation), as Chair of the Committee;
  - the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic);
  - the Vice-President (Advancement);
  - the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Research);

- the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Infrastructure and Entities);
- the Registrar, Student Administration;
- the Head of Defence Industry Security;
- the Director of the International Office;
- the Chief Information Security Officer;
- Two members, appointed by the Chair, including:
  - One Senior academic from STEM;
  - One Senior academic from HASS;

Additional Non-Voting Observers will be invited by the Chair to attend Committee meetings including:

- A Senior Representative from the ANU UniSafe Team
- Head of Government Relations
- Chief Communications Officer

6. Appointed members serve a term of two years and are eligible for re-appointment. An appointed member may resign from the Committee in writing to the Chair.
7. If an appointed member of the Committee is absent from 3 consecutive meetings of the Committee without the written approval of the Chair, or an appointed member ceases to be eligible for appointment, the Chair may declare the member's position vacant.
8. When a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Committee, an eligible person may be appointed by the Chair to fill the vacancy, and serves the remainder of the former member's term of office.
9. Whenever an opportunity arises for the Chair to appoint a new member to the Committee, the Chair will have regard to the current gender balance of the Committee before making decisions regarding an appointment.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

10. The Committee exercises such roles and responsibilities as may be assigned to it by the Vice-Chancellor from time to time, but only such powers as are explicitly delegated to it.
11. The Committee's responsibilities are to :
  - a. To be the point of contact for the ANU regarding external enquiries concerning foreign interference.
  - b. To provide policy advice on matters relating to possible foreign interference in the activities of the ANU.
  - c. To provide up-to-date advice on matters of foreign interference to the ANU community.
  - d. To monitor and assess compliance with relevant internal policies and national and institutional guidelines, regulations and legislation regarding foreign interference, including adherence to the UFIT Guidelines.

- e. To review and provide advice on proposed international research and teaching collaborations, specifically regarding potential security risks and appropriate mitigation strategies informed by advice from CISO office.
- f. To review and provide advice on collaborative international HDR candidate and student relationships with the ANU.
- g. To receive and review reports on foreign interference incidents (where appropriate) involving student activities, cybersecurity functions as provided by the Registrar and CISO.
- h. Liaise with the ANU UniSafe Security team to maintain Committee awareness of campus security as related to matters of foreign interference.
- i. To oversee and approve ANU responses to requests from government on matters of foreign interference
- j. To respond to any other issues relating to foreign interference as required by the Vice-Chancellor.

## Responsibilities of Members

12. Members of the Committee are expected to understand and observe the legal requirements of the *Australian National University Act 1991*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and University legislation.
13. Members are also expected to:
  - act in the interests of the University as a whole;
  - contribute the time needed to study and understand the papers provided; and
  - apply good analytical skills, objectivity and good judgment.

## Reporting

14. The Committee regularly, but at least once a year, reports to Academic Board via relevant sub-committees, the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee and ANU Council on its operation and activities. The report includes:
  - a summary of the work it performed to fully discharge its responsibilities during the preceding year including:
    - A summary of the risk review conducted on proposed research and teaching collaborations.
    - A summary of foreign interference matters reported to the Committee regarding student activities and cybersecurity functions.
  - details of meetings, including the number of meetings held during the relevant period, and the number of meetings each member attended.
15. The Committee may, at any time, report to the Vice-Chancellor on any other matter it deems of sufficient importance to do so.

## Administrative Arrangements

### Meetings

16. The Committee shall meet fortnightly on dates determined by the Committee.

17. The Chair convenes and presides at all meetings of the Committee at which they are present. When the Chair is unable to preside at a meeting, a senior member of the Research and Innovation Portfolio presides.
18. The procedure at meetings of the Committee is determined by the person presiding over the meeting, taking into account the advice of the Committee members.

### **Attendance at Meetings and Quorums**

19. A quorum consists of at least fifty-percent of committee members including the Chair.
20. Meetings may be held online using an appropriate videoconferencing capability.
21. An ex officio member of a Committee who is unable to attend a meeting of the Committee should make every effort to nominate and send an alternate to attend the meeting on their behalf. The nominated alternate must be a senior member of staff from the same organisational unit as the member.
22. Alternates have the same rights and responsibilities as Committee members.
23. An appointed member of a Committee who is unable to attend a meeting is not able to nominate an alternate.
24. The Chair may request any other ANU staff member and/or external party to attend Committee meetings or participate in certain agenda items.

### **Secretariat**

25. A member of Research Ethics, Integrity and Compliance Team will provide secretariat support to the Committee
26. The Research Ethics, Integrity and Compliance Team and members of the ANU Information Security Team are responsible for preparing papers and risk assessments for the matters considered by the Committee.
27. The Secretariat will ensure the agenda and supporting papers for each meeting are circulated to members at least 24hrs prior to the meeting.
28. The Secretariat will ensure the minutes of the meetings are prepared, maintained and circulated to each member of the Committee.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

29. Committee members must declare any material personal interests, whether they are actual, potential or perceived, at the start of each meeting or before discussion of the relevant agenda item or topic. Details of material personal interests declared by Committee members, and actions taken, are appropriately recorded in the minutes.

### **Assessment and Review**

30. The Chair initiates, every second year, a review of the performance of the Committee, and this Charter, with appropriate input sought from Committee members, the University Executive, College Deans and any other relevant stakeholders. The review of

performance will be conducted on a self assessment basis unless otherwise determined by the Vice Chancellor.