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|  | **Name of Item**  briefing on the CAUL constitution – objects of the association | **Agenda Item**  (office use only) |
| **Paper for CAUL Executive 2018/6**  **28 November, 2018** | **From:** Harry Rolf (8/11/2018)  **Name of Sponsor:** | |
| **Draft resolution(s)**  **That the CAUL Executive:**  Recommend to CAUL that the CAUL constitution’s objects be updated as follows:  1.3 Objectives:  1.3.1 To act for the benefit of its members by serving their needs and interests;  1.3.2 To represent the needs and interests of its members to government, the community and other organisations;  1.3.3 To promote the sharing of practice, information and ideas among its members;  1.3.4 To encourage participation in national and international debate on relevant topics, issues and public policy developments.  1.3.5 To advance the progress and activities of Australian university libraries;  1.3.6 To plan, implement and monitor cooperative activity between Australian university libraries. | | |
| The objects of CAUL At the 2018/5 Executive Committee meeting I asked the following question in relation to CAUL’s incorporation:  *Do the aims, objectives and purpose adequately describe CAUL, can they in their current form be used to justify our activity or do they need revision?*  Upon review I believe that these statements need updating to reflect CAUL’s current membership model, mission and purpose. The statements should be general in nature to allow CAUL to operate flexibly in pursuit of its mission, and so that they do not require regular updates. CAUL’s current statements are listed at the end of this document. Background Incorporation requires that CAUL submits a set of objects (objectives and purpose statement) to Access Canberra, they are normally included in the constitution. These statements will bind CAUL’s activity as an association – particularly in relation to what CAUL raises funds for and expends them on.  The objectives listed in CAUL’s current constitution along with CAUL’s purpose statement (Revised after the 2016 strategical planning) can be used, but it is worth updating them to ensure that they support the kinds of activity that CAUL wants to undertake as an incorporated association.  In 2016 I prepared a briefing for the Executive Committee about the construction of ‘statements about CAUL[[1]](#footnote-1)’, it offered specific guidance on the construction of these statements in CAUL’s 2017-19 strategic plan.  Particularly it listed the kinds of statements that can be made and their purpose.   1. **Mission** – why the organisation exists 2. **Purpose** – how the organisations approaches its mission 3. **Vision** – a statement about where the organisation aspires to be 4. **Goals** – what the organisation wants 5. **Objectives** – how the organisation achieves its goals 6. **Values** – the desired organisational culture 7. **Principles** – statements that capture the values and provide direction   In CAUL’s case there is a set of objectives (although they are a little mixed) and a statement which covers the purpose, values and vision.  For the purpose of incorporation CAUL’s objects simply need to be a statement (or series of statement) that address why the organisation exists (and what it exists to do). This is a combination of a mission statement, goals and objectives.  I have included statements by the ACGR and ALIA as examples as both organisations take different approaches.   |  | | --- | | **Examples** | | **ALIA[[2]](#footnote-2)**  **3.2 OBJECTS**  a) To promote the free flow of information and ideas in the interest of all Australians and a thriving culture, economy, environment and democracy.  b) To promote and improve the services provided by all kinds of library and information agencies;  c) To ensure the high standard of personnel engaged in information provision and foster their professional interests and aspirations;  d) To represent the interests of Members to governments, other organisations and the community; and  e) To encourage people to contribute to the improvement of library and information services through support and membership of the Association.  f) To endorse the principles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 19 and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals in response to the many challenges faced by the world today and into the future.  **ACGR**[[3]](#footnote-3)  **3. OBJECTIVE**  3.1 The mission of the Australian Council of Graduate Research is to promote excellence in research training and scholarship and to promote high standards for all higher degree by research programs nationally.  3.2 The areas of focus for the Council are:   * Developing and promoting quality research training across the sector * Interacting with Government and influencing development of policy, standards and reference points related to research training * Providing a forum for networking and practice sharing between leaders of graduate research nationally * Engaging with equivalent bodies internationally   3.3 The Council provides Graduate School Deans, Directors and industry partners with an opportunity to share ideas, exchange professional development resources, and network. |   The ACGR statement uses a mission statement, while ALIA’s objects are broken down in to a series of statements (similar to CAUL’s objectives). Both ACGR and ALIA use broad and general language when describing their organisations objects.  CAUL’s objectives are a mixture of broad statements with specific elements. The board parts of these statement could be separated to make them less prescriptive.  For example statement 1.1.1:   * [Keep] to advance the progress and activities of Australian university libraries * [Remove] in support of teaching, learning and research at their institutions;   The contextual part can be constructed and maintained as part of another statement (purpose, values etc.) outside of the constitution so that it can easily be updated. In this way the objectives can form a set of foundational statement on which others can built.  My review of CAUL’s membership model has also highlighted the need to balance statements about CAUL’s members with those about libraries, so that these statements reflect CAUL’s hybrid professional/industry association model.  **Recommendation to the Executive:**  Based on this assessment I recommend that the Executive Committee consider updating the organisation’s objects as follows:  **From CAUL’s current constitution:**   * 1. The objectives of the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) shall include:      1. to advance the progress and activities of Australian university libraries in support of teaching, learning and research at their institutions;      2. to plan, implement and monitor cooperative activities between Australian university libraries, including assuming responsibility for the coordination or operation of such activities as agreed by the members;      3. to provide an effective forum for information exchange between Australian university libraries;      4. to encourage participation in Australian and international debate on relevant developments in higher education and libraries and information services;      5. to foster communication with Universities Australia and other relevant national committees and organisations; and      6. to establish and pursue a strategic plan and to do such other things as are conducive to the achievement of these objectives.   **To CAUL’s new constitution:**  **1.3 Objectives:**  1.3.1 To act for the benefit of its members by serving their needs and interests;  1.3.2 To represent the needs and interests of its members to government, the community and other organisations;  1.3.3 To promote the sharing of practice, information and ideas among its members;  1.3.4 To encourage participation in national and international debate on relevant topics, issues and public policy developments.  1.3.5 To advance the progress and activities of Australian university libraries;  1.3.6 To plan, implement and monitor cooperative activity between Australian university libraries;  *[\*Statements 1.1.5 and 1.1.6 will be kept but have been moved to be part of the Board’s function in the Constitution].*  **Other Current Statements about CAUL (for reference)**  That society is transformed through the power of research, teaching and learning. University libraries are essential knowledge and information infrastructures that enable student achievement and research excellence. CAUL makes a significant contribution to higher education strategy, policy and outcomes through a commitment to a shared purpose:  **To transform how people experience knowledge – how it can be discovered, used and shared.**  University libraries and library organisations broadly play a leading role in enabling fair, affordable and open access to knowledge. They are also instrumental in building society’s capacity for digital dexterity – fluency in the use of digital technology, skills and essential literacies.  **The membership benefits of CAUL include:**   * Advocacy and promotion of Australian university libraries, and their enabling of student achievement and research excellence; * Representation of views and interests to government, regulators and other key stakeholders; * Establishing and fostering collaborations with allied organisations within Australia and internationally; * Skilled negotiation for sector-wide agreements for the procurement of electronic information resources; * Access to leading and innovative models and resources for the advancement of university libraries; * Access to an extensive program of events and special interest groups. | | |
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1. <https://www.caul.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/caul-planning/caul-statements2018guidance.docx> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.alia.org.au/node/426/laws> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.acgr.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/f39714_5746f0b1ac234e11956ace9c2e5e6fa5.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)