

# THE campus backbone

CPSU - University Of Newcastle



An Introduction to The General Staff Union

September 2011

There are several industrial unions at the University of Newcastle and some confusion, particularly amongst new staff, on just who and what each union represents, and why you should join

## The General Staff Union

**Exclusively the General Staff** – professional, administrative, clerical, technical, library, research, student support, security, craftsmen and tradesmen employees of the University of Newcastle. **We are here for you!**

The **Community and Public Sector Union** or “CPSU”, federally-registered, covers universities and federal public sector employees. The **CPSU** is the specialist union representing the **general staff** in universities and works exclusively to advance general staff interests, collectively and individually. The **CPSU** is also the largest university general staff union in Australia, with delegate networks across the sector. The **Public Service Association of NSW** or “PSA”, state-registered, covers NSW state and public sector employees. You get two unions and pay only one fee.

**We’ve been here from the start.** The **PSA/CPSU** has had coverage of general staff here since Newcastle University’s foundation in the 1960s. We have a long history, close to a century of cumulative industrial experience in Australian universities.

**We are a grassroots union.** We are proud of our strong democratic structure: the local branch works wholly and solely to protect the interests and working conditions of the General Staff at the University of Newcastle. **General Staff Members**, supported by advice from industrial staff of the union, are responsible for debating and reaching decisions on all important issues. This independence was amply demonstrated in the recently concluded Enterprise Agreement where Newcastle general staff decided by democratic vote on a different mix in their salary increase from that recommended by the academics union.

**We know the University from the inside out.** The **local CPSU Branch** operates through a cohort of active delegates and contact people who are experienced general staff members of the University spread throughout the various faculties, units and entities of the University <http://www.thegeneralstaffunion.org.au/index.php/newcastle-contact/> providing vital localised information on current industrial issues. Branch delegates have been major negotiators in all six EB rounds to date and will ensure the best outcome for general staff in the future. The wording of many of the conditions clauses common to the General Staff, Academic and Teachers Agreements is based on drafts originally submitted by the **CPSU bargaining team** during General Staff bargaining, **that’s how good they are!** The local branch is complemented by a local union organiser (a former general staff member of the university) and by widely experienced industrial staff at PSA/CPSU headquarters in Sydney.

In addition to representing staff in industrial issues **CPSU** membership also provides **value-added services and benefits** such as:

- Advice on your rights and entitlements simply by contacting your union or workplace delegate
- A way to be involved in decision-making in the workplace regarding your employment conditions
- Help gaining permanency if you are temporary or casual
- Assistance with grievances and disputes
- Assistance from staff specialised in women's and indigenous employment issues, workers' compensation, occupational health and safety
- Free trade union training courses, and
- a range of union-sponsored [value-added non-industrial services](#).

Value added services provided by the PSA include:

[PSA/CPSU Provident Fund](#)  
[Group Accident Insurance Scheme](#)  
[Group Accident Insurance Scheme Family Cover](#)  
[PSA Scholarships.](#)

Services sponsored or arranged for members include:

[ACTU movie voucher deal](#)  
[Union Shopper](#)  
[PSA Legal Service](#)  
[SGE Credit Union](#)  
[Welfare Rights Centre](#)

[Workers Health Centre](#)  
[Evatt Foundation](#)  
[ACTU Member Connect](#)  
[Entertainment discounts](#)  
[Labour news and information services](#)

# 10 REASONS (and more) TO JOIN THE CPSU

<p>1. <b>The CPSU is the specialist union</b> for general staff in universities and we work exclusively for general staff. Our primary goal is to collectively represent and advance general staff interests. The CPSU is also the largest union in Australia representing general staff, with strong delegate networks across the sector.</p>	<p>2. <b>The Union movement has won</b> every important condition that Australian workers enjoy today. These include annual leave, paid parental leave, family leave, paid overtime, flexi time, redundancy pay, long service leave, superannuation and much more. Employers will never willingly hand out entitlements.</p>
<p>3. <b>CPSU membership gives you a voice and a vote in determining your working conditions.</b> CPSU members have won all the benefits general staff currently enjoy. CPSU members are involved in and consulted on all important work place restructuring and changes in University policy.</p>	<p>4. <b>The more people who choose CPSU membership mean a more powerful voice.</b> The reason we continue to win excellent conditions is that as an organised group of workers we can achieve far more than as individuals. As a democratic union with a grassroots structure, we know what general staff want and we know how to get it.</p>
<p>5. <b>You will always get a better deal at work if you join the CPSU.</b> We support members have their say in a way that management will take notice of. We campaign and negotiate to protect jobs and make your job better – <b>better paid and with better conditions.</b> Our expert bargaining team (led by general staff members) has recently negotiated a new and improved collective agreement for general staff at this university.</p>	<p>6. <b>Most people join a union because they want protection at work.</b> CPSU membership gives you protection and support against discrimination, unfair dismissal, reclassification, unilateral increases in workloads, bullying and harassment, and representation in disciplinary matters. While some CPSU members are lucky to work in good workplaces that are fair and reasonable, the only protection you have against a bad workplace is being a CPSU member.</p>
<p>7. <b>The CPSU works hard to ensure that your workplace is safe</b> by providing expert OH&amp;S and workers compensation advice, representation, and ensuring that laws are adhered to. The CPSU is not afraid to prosecute employers for OH&amp;S breaches. It is comforting to know that if you are injured at work our industrial experts will be there for you.</p>	<p>8. <b>The CPSU provides specialist and expert training,</b> which is free for CPSU members and workplace delegates, on issues such as:          Dealing With Workplace Bullying          Role of the Delegate          Speaking in Public / Meeting Skills          Women In The Union</p>
<p>9. <b>We campaign on many social justice issues,</b> including          labour rights / women's rights /          gay and lesbian rights / the environment /          refugee rights / indigenous rights / anti-racism /          overseas aid through APHEDA/Union Aid Abroad.</p>	<p>10. <b>Membership gives you access to a range of other benefits like:</b>          a \$3,500 provident fund          accident insurance          university scholarship          financial services          union shopper          we can also provide access to legal services, which could save you thousands of dollars</p>

AND

11. CPSU membership fees are also fully tax deductible.

**Get some feel-good vibes! If your mate sitting next to you is a member, contributing to and supporting the work of the union, you'll feel better knowing that you're doing your bit to keep the Union strong – after all, you wouldn't let all of your mates pay their shout at the pub and not pay yours!**

## JOIN US NOW AND SUPPORT YOUR COLLEAGUES

<http://www.thegeneralstaffunion.org.au/index.php/newcastle>



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