

SOCIAL MEDIA

Guidance for employees

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UNIVERSITY OF
WINCHESTER



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Social media guidance for employees

Introduction

This guidance should be read alongside the *Policy on employee use and misuse of social media*.

This policy exists to encourage positive engagement with social media and good practice in the responsible use of it. While acknowledging the right of employees and students to freedom of expression, the University has an obligation to protect the wellbeing and reputation of individual employees, students as well as the reputation of the institution as a whole.

This policy and guidance sits alongside the *Policy on student use and misuse of social media*. Employees are encouraged to make themselves familiar with this policy also.

Three Principles for social media use

The University has three principles to guide employees when using social media:

Principle 1 - The University believes social media is a positive tool for engagement and all employees are encouraged to use it to improve the way they communicate, reach out and interact with the different communities we serve. We are committed to ensuring employees have access to training and guidance to support this.

Principle 2 - Employees are expected to operate within both the law and University policy in their interactions with social media just as much as in all other aspects of their work and life.

Principle 3 - Employees may be perceived to be representing the University when they post online, whether they are doing so from a University account or their own personal accounts. Employees must be careful not to behave in such a way that could damage their own reputation or bring the University into disrepute through unlawful discrimination, harassment or untruthful posts.

About the policy

The *Policy on employee use and misuse of social media* is a new policy, published in July 2018 following extensive consultation and development. If you have any questions about the development of the policy, please contact the Director of Communications and Marketing, Sam Jones.

Social media training and bi-monthly Social Media forum

There will be training available for employees throughout the year – keep an eye on the L&D Intranet page for details. All are welcome to attend the bi-monthly Social Media Forum. Open to all, this is an opportunity to share news, gain best practice tips and ask questions direct to the central Digital Marketing team. Details will be posted on the intranet. RSVP to social.media@winchester.ac.uk



Responsible use of social media

The University recognises that social media is an excellent way for employees to communicate and engage with others. While the University respects the rights of employees to use social media, it is important to be aware of your responsibilities as an employee of the University, as well as the risks and consequences of inappropriate use of social media.

What is put online has the potential to be understood in a way that the author did not intend and to reach a wider audience than intended or expected. Therefore, employees should be mindful of the potential impact and permanence of anything posted online and should avoid posting anything that they would not wish to be in the public domain.

It is up to you how you use social media and what you aim to get out of it. The guidance below, together with the *Policy on employee use and misuse of social media*, will help you get the most out of it while limiting the risks.

Consider your goals and audience

Social media works best when you know what you want to get out of it and the audience you are engaging with. Consider how social media offers real value to your work. Be aware of the varied nature of your potential readership – which may include potential, current or past students, colleagues or research/business partners.

Post great content

Be mindful of your audience. Interact positively. Post visually-appealing content (videos, photos help with visibility of your posts). Use a tone of voice that is appropriate to the social media platform and audience.

Be professional and respectful

Social media is a great way to engage in discussion and debate. As with any activity employees are involved in, what you post on social media should be done in a way that is respectful of others' views and opinions. Consider your audience and how you will be perceived when posting. Remember, you are more likely to achieve your goal, whatever that may be, if you are able to communicate in a constructive and respectful way.

Dealing with urgent or sensitive situations online

There may be times when you find yourself dealing with or becoming aware of a serious situation or issue over social media. It is generally good practise to look for an alternative and private way of communicating, such as email or a telephone call, if an individual contacts you via social media. If you become aware of safeguarding or welfare issues you should **alert Security, Director of Communications and Marketing & Director of Student Services.**



Responsible use of social media (pt 2)

Be transparent

Make it clear in your personal profile that you are speaking on your own behalf and not on behalf of the University. All employees are advised to include a disclaimer in their personal social media profiles such as “*All views are my own and not those of my employer*”. Please note, however, that this is not a catch-all defence against statements that contravene University policy. You should not express views on behalf of the University via social media unless prior approval has been given from the Communications and Marketing Department or you are using an official University social media account set up with the Communications and Marketing Department.

Nothing is truly private; anything can be permanent

Remember, no social media use is ever guaranteed to be completely private, however much you are on top of your privacy settings. What you put online has the potential to be understood in a way that you did not intend and to reach a wider audience than you intended or expected (for example, anyone who sees your post can take a screenshot of it or share it more widely). Therefore, you should be mindful of the potential impact and permanence of anything you post online and should avoid posting

anything that you would not:

- (a) wish to be in the public domain
- (b) be willing to say personally to the face of another individual.

Using social media to complain or raise concerns

It is best to avoid using social media to raise concerns, formal complaints or let off steam. If you have a concern or complaint, follow it up using the formal internal routes within your Faculty or Department or by making use of the Complaints Procedure. For complaints or concerns about external organisations or suppliers linked to the University, consider the formal routes to raise these directly with them rather than using social media.

Comply with social media platforms

Make yourself familiar with the rules, regulations and policies of the social media platforms you are using.



Responsible use of social media (pt 3)

Bullying and harassment on social media

The University does not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment by or of members of University employees or students, whether online or in person.

The following examples illustrate the types of behaviour which the University considers to have the potential to be forms of cyber bullying (according to the Crown Prosecution Service Guidelines on what constitutes cyber harassment):

- a) Maliciously spreading rumours, lies or gossip
- b) Threatening or obscene emails, text or other messages or postings.
- c) Spamming, where the offender sends the victim multiple junk emails.
- d) Live chat harassment or 'flaming', a form of online verbal abuse.
- e) "Baiting", or humiliating peers online by labelling them as sexually promiscuous.
- f) Leaving improper messages on online forums or message boards.
- g) Unwanted indirect contact with a person that may be threatening or menacing, such as posting images of that person's children or workplace on a social media site, without any reference to the person's name or account.
- h) Posting "photoshopped" images of persons on social media platforms
- i) Hacking into social media accounts and then monitoring and controlling the accounts.
- j) Sending electronic viruses.
- k) Sending unsolicited email or other communication.
- l) Cyber identity theft

Cyber bullying and harassment may take place via many means of electronic communication including email, text and instant messaging. The University does not tolerate this and may result in further investigation or disciplinary action being taken.



Responsible use of social media (pt 4)

Be aware of the consequences

Failure to comply with University policies will be dealt with in the same way regardless of whether it relates to behaviour online, in person or in print. Misuse of social media may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the University's Disciplinary Procedure Policy.

Finally, think before you post

In summary, if uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement, posting or message you are about to make, refrain from posting it. Three good questions to ask before posting are:

1. **“Is this how I behave in person?”**
2. **“Would I be happy with anyone else seeing this?”**
3. **“Would I want to be on the receiving end of this?”**



Communicating with students via social media

Introduction

You are not required to use social media to communicate with students. If you do wish to use social media to communicate with current or prospective students, you should do so via official University accounts rather than your own personal accounts.

Canvas, University email and Intranet first

Any direct communication between employees and students should be directed through Canvas or University email and not through social media. Canvas must be used to promote activity related to a course, for example an event or interesting article. Social media may only be used to impart course information in addition to the formal channels of Canvas, University email and the University Intranet. Once a message or details have been posted on Canvas it can be shared using social media via University accounts.

Be inclusive

If you wish to use social media in addition to Canvas to communicate with students, then you should do so with entire cohorts, not to selective groups. This should be done via an account or page set up for the relevant area, with the support of the Communications and Marketing Department, not via your own personal social media account. If an entire cohort cannot be communicated with in this manner then it should be avoided. There is a real problem of others in the cohort feeling excluded and, arising from that,

perceptions of unfairness and accusations of bias.

Maintain a professional relationship

Personal social media accounts should not be used to communicate with students. Care should be taken not to communicate with students in a way that implies a social or personal relationship rather than a professional one.



Setting up University social media accounts

Introduction

The University maintains corporate accounts across most major social media channels. These are managed by the Communications and Marketing Department. These corporate accounts have large followings and are a useful way for the University to communicate with the various groups we serve.

Notification of existing social media accounts

If you have an existing University social media account set up, please complete the [Social Media Accounts Notification \(existing accounts\) form](#) to be entered into the central repository of University social media accounts.

Creating a social media presence for your Department or Service

You may wish to create a social media profile for your area, for example an Academic Department or Professional Service. If you wish to communicate with students using social media (see previous section), you should do so using a University profile, rather than your own personal profile.

Before creating a new account or when taking over responsibility for one, you should first meet with the Communications and Marketing Department to discuss branding requirements and best practise for setting up and managing these accounts. Details of the account, including login details, should be maintained centrally by the Communications and Marketing Department.

Process for setting up a University social media channel

The following process should be carried out to create a social media presence for your Academic Department or Professional Service area:

1. Ensure that all communication with students is established using Canvas and University email
2. Consider the objectives and audience you wish to engage with. Will it enhance the reputation of the University and/or the student experience?
3. Fill out the [Setting up a University Social Media account request form](#) and talk with the Communications and Marketing Team about how to set up a social media presence – your first point of contact depends on your area:
 - **Academic departments** - Rebecca Holman (Arts/EHSC) or Karen Landor (BLS/HSS)
 - **Professional departments** - Laura Drew
 - **Research areas** - Sue Wilson
4. All log-in details need to be held centrally within the Communications and Marketing Department, so any changes need to be reported.
5. Create great content (ensuring it complies with University policies and [CMA guidance](#) which stipulates we give students *clear, accurate* and *timely* information) and be mindful of content ownership when using other people's imagery or content.





Branding and naming of University social media accounts

Consistency

To ensure consistency across the University's social media presence, we have an established hierarchy to be applied to all University profiles.



Facebook accounts

	Naming	Visual identity
Primary Corporate Facebook Account	<p>Name: University of Winchester</p> <p>Handle: @UniversityofWinchester</p>	<p>Profile picture: </p> <p>Header image: from brand photography/films</p>
Sub-brand Facebook account (e.g. department or faculty)	<p>Example account for 'Communications and Marketing Department'</p> <p>Name: University of Winchester Communications and Marketing Department</p> <p>Handle (50 character limit): @UniversityofWinchesterCommsandMarketing</p>	<p>Profile pictures (for all sub-brands): </p> <p>Header image: from brand photography / University website</p>



Branding and naming of University social media accounts



Instagram accounts

	Naming	Visual identity
Primary Corporate Instagram Account	<p>Name: University of Winchester</p> <p>Handle: @uniwinchester</p>	<p>Profile picture: </p> <p>Header image: from brand photography/films</p>
Sub-brand Instagram account (e.g. department or faculty)	<p>Example account for 'Communications and Marketing Department'</p> <p>Name: University of Winchester Communications and Marketing Department</p> <p>Handle (30 character limit): @uniwinchestercommsandmarketing</p>	<p>Profile pictures (for all sub-brands): </p> <p>Header image: from brand photography / University website</p>



Branding and naming of University social media accounts

Twitter accounts

	Naming	Visual identity
Primary Corporate Twitter Account	<p>Name: University of Winchester</p> <p>Handle: @_UoW</p>	<p>Profile picture: </p> <p>Header image: from brand photography/films</p>
Sub-brand Twitter account (e.g. department or faculty)	<p>Example account for 'Communications and Marketing Department'</p> <p>Name: University of Winchester Communications and Marketing Department</p> <p>Handle (50 character limit): @UOWCommsandMarketing</p>	<p>Profile pictures (for all sub-brands): </p> <p>Header image: from brand photography / University website</p>

