

## Policy – Social Media

Version/Review History	
November 2019 (MC)	Updated references to old Job Titles

Last Review Date – November 2019

### 1 Policy statement

- 1.1 We recognise that social media provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and to communicate information. However, employees' use of social media can pose risks to our confidential and proprietary information, brand, reputation, and can jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations.
- 1.2 To minimise these risks and to avoid loss of productivity we expect employees to adhere to this policy.

### 2 Who is covered by the policy?

- 2.1 This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff [and volunteers] (collectively referred to as **"staff"** in this policy).
- 2.2 Third parties who have access to our electronic communication systems and equipment are also required to comply with this policy.

### 3 Scope and purpose of the policy

- 3.1 This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including but not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Wikipedia, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube and all other internet postings, including blogs.

- 3.2 It applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during office hours or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff.
- 3.3 Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and grievance investigation. Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours, and regardless of whether our equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.
- 3.4 Staff may be required to remove postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

## 4 **Compliance with related policies and agreements**

- 4.1 Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies. If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, employees are prohibited from using social media to:
  - 4.1.1 breach our Information and communications systems policy;
  - 4.1.2 breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;
  - 4.1.3 breach any obligations they may have relating to confidentiality;
  - 4.1.4 defame or disparage the organisation or its affiliates, customers, clients, business partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders;
  - 4.1.5 harass or bully other staff in any way **OR** breach our Zero Tolerance Policy
  - 4.1.6 unlawfully discriminate against other staff or third parties **OR** breach our Equal opportunities policy;
  - 4.1.7 breach our Data protection policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague online);

- 4.1.8 breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).
- 4.2 Employees who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action which may lead to termination of employment.
- 4.3 If you see content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on our organisation or our stakeholders, you should contact the Chief Executive Officer and the Marketing & Communications Manager.

## 5 **Personal use of social media**

- 5.1 Swansea University Students' Union recognises employees may work long hours and occasionally may desire to use social media for personal activities at work at appropriate times. We authorise such occasional use so long as it does not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content, does not interfere with your working responsibilities or productivity and does not jeopardise our reputation.

## 6 **Monitoring**

- 6.1 We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring of your use of such resources and systems. This might include, without limitation, the monitoring, interception, accessing, recording, disclosing, inspecting, reviewing, retrieving and printing of transactions, messages, communications, postings, log-ins, recordings and other uses of the systems as well as keystroke capturing and other network monitoring technologies.
- 6.2 We may store copies of such data or communications for a period of time after they are created, and may delete such copies from time to time without notice.
- 6.3 Do not use our IT resources and communications systems for any matter that you wish to be kept private or confidential from the organisation.

## 7 **Business use of social media**

- 7.1 If your duties require you to speak on behalf of the organisation in a social media environment, you must still seek approval for such communication from the Marketing and Communications Manager, who may require you to undergo training before you do so and impose certain requirements and restrictions with regard to your activities.
- 7.2 If you are contacted for comments about the organisation for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, direct the inquiry to the Marketing and Communications Manager and do not respond without approval. In the absence of the Marketing and Communications Manager, the Chief Executive Officer may give approval.
- 7.3 The Marketing and Communications Manager must have administrative access to all Swansea University Students' Union social media accounts and reserves the right to edit and delete any postings on such accounts should they be deemed damaging to the Students' Union reputation and brand.

## 8 **Recruitment**

We may use internet searches to perform due diligence on candidates in the course of recruitment. Where we do this, we will act in accordance with our data protection and equal opportunities obligations.

## 9 **Responsible use of social media**

- 9.1 The following sections of the policy provide staff with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely.
- 9.2 Protecting our business reputation:
- 9.2.1 Staff must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:
    - 9.2.1.1 our organisation;
    - 9.2.1.2 our clients; suppliers and vendors; and
    - 9.2.1.3 other affiliates and stakeholders,

but staff should also avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage our business reputation, even indirectly.

Student members must not have permanent access to social media accounts under any circumstances. Temporary access may be granted by the Marketing and Communications Manager.

- 9.2.2 Staff are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media. Remember that what you publish might be available to be read by the masses (including the organisation itself, future employers and social acquaintances) for a long time. Keep this in mind before you post content.
- 9.2.3 If you disclose your affiliation as an employee of our organisation, you must also state that your views do not represent those of your employer. For example, you could state, “the views in this posting do not represent the views of my employer”. You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to clients and colleagues.
- 9.2.4 Comments must not be made which may be considered to include commercially sensitive information about the financial or commercial performance of the Union.
- 9.2.5 If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from making the communication until you discuss it with the Marketing and Communications manager.
- 9.3 Respecting intellectual property and confidential information:
  - 9.3.1 Staff should not do anything to jeopardise our valuable trade secrets and other confidential information and intellectual property through the use of social media.
  - 9.3.2 In addition, staff should avoid misappropriating or infringing the intellectual property of other companies and individuals, which can create liability for the organisation, as well as the individual author. Do not use our logos, brand names, slogans or other trademarks, or post any of our confidential or proprietary information without prior written permission.

9.4 Respecting colleagues, clients, partners and suppliers:

9.4.1 Do not post anything that your colleagues or our members, clients, business partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders would find offensive, including discriminatory comments, insults or obscenity.

## 10 **Monitoring and review of this policy**

10.1 The Marketing and Communications Manager in conjunction with the Senior Management Team shall be responsible for reviewing this policy to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.