

Social Media Policy

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Department:	Marketing & Communications
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Related policies:	Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech Data Protection Policy Dignity at Work and Study Policy Ethics Policy Fitness to Practice Harassment and Bullying Policy Information Security Policy Intellectual Property Code Student Policies and Regulations, Student Charter
Related procedures:	Student complaints procedures: http://www.surrey.ac.uk/registry/what/oscar/ http://www.ussu.co.uk/advice/Pages/Complaints.aspx

Version History

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Approval History Equality Analysis

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1			

Committee Sign Off

Version	Committee Name	Date of Sign Off
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1	<h2>Introduction</h2>
	<p>The University recognises that social media is an important part of everyday life for many students; it can bring real benefits and is a valuable means of communication. Through social media activity and engagement, students can enrich not only their personal lives, but also their learning and career opportunities.</p> <p>However, the use of social media also brings with it risks. This policy has been compiled to help students understand the reputational, legal and ethical implications of social media usage and what happens when it is misused – whether intentional or otherwise. Furthermore the policy seeks to encourage best practice when using social media along with the accompanying guide.</p>
1.1	<h3>Purpose</h3>
	<p>The purpose of this policy is to help and encourage students to develop an online social media presence which is ethical and legal, while maximising the benefits of these channels when communicating with others.</p> <p>It seeks to protect students, the University and its staff from the misuse of social media and clarify where and how existing University policies and guidelines apply to social media. The accompanying guide encourages University of Surrey students to use social media for positive benefit (e.g. career networking, fundraising) and gives guidance on how best to make the most of the key channels.</p>
1.2	<h3>Definitions</h3>
	<p>According to the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR), social media is: “The term commonly given to internet and mobile-based channels and tools that allow users to interact with each other and share opinions and content. It involves the building of communities or networks and encouraging participation and engagement.”</p> <p>This is the recognised definition for the purpose of this document. Social media channels covered by this policy include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, blogging platforms, online forums and review sites, Google+ and Tumblr. It does not include the hosting and management of personal websites, the regulation of which is subject to both UK and International laws.</p> <p>This policy refers to two different types of social media account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal Account – used by an individual primarily for non-study purposes. ● Students’ Union Club or Society Account – an account run by a Students’ Union Club, Society or Group
1.3	<h3>Scope</h3>
1.3.1	<p>This policy has been produced for all University of Surrey students. The scope of this policy extends to all students who engage in online conversations or share content in the context of a social networks.</p> <p>The policy extends to students’ use of social media in a personal capacity, where this impacts the University, its students, staff or the wider community (as outlined in 2.1.1). Furthermore it outlines the responsibilities of students who use social media associated with a University or Students’ Union Club, Society or Group.</p> <p>The policy does not cover social media usage by University staff, which is covered in a separate policy (see social media policy for staff).</p>

1.3.2	<p>Within the terms of this policy, a student is any person who fulfils one or more of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Those registered as a University of Surrey student and studying for a University award ● Those registered for one or more credit-bearing modules offered by the University but not registered for a University award ● Those registered for a non-award-bearing programme or non-credit bearing course offered by the University ● Those registered as a student with another organisation operating in collaboration with the University and using University facilities, for example, Surrey International Study Centre (SISC). <p>Students registered with one of the University's Associated or Accredited Institutions to study for an award of the University, or students on distance learning programmes at partner institutions located outside the UK do not come within the scope of this policy.</p>
1.4	<h3>Equality Analysis</h3>
	<p>There is potential for social media channels to be used for bullying and harassment of individuals. It is therefore important that the policy is considered alongside the Dignity at Work and Study Policy which can be viewed on the Equality and Diversity pages on SurreyNet.</p>
1.5	<h3>Legislative context</h3>
	<p>Where it is found that a student has misused social media (as outlined in 2.1.1.1 and 2.1.2.1 below), it may be regarded as a disciplinary offence in accordance with existing Student Policies and Regulations and the Student Charter.</p> <p>The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places an obligation on the University to have due regard to its duty to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.</p>
1.6	<h3>Health & Safety Implications</h3>
	<p>There is potential for social media channels to be used to cause emotional harm or mental distress to others. By producing this policy and its accompanying guide, the University hopes to minimise any distress to its students, staff or the wider public caused by the misuse of social media.</p>
2	<h2>Policy</h2>
2.1	<h3>Principles</h3>
2.1.1	<h4>Personal use of social media</h4>
2.1.1.1	<p>The University recognises that many students will make use of social media in a personal capacity. Students using social media in a personal capacity should make sure that their communications do not do any of the following, if they wish to avoid facing potential disciplinary action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do anything that may be considered discriminatory against, or bullying and harassment of, any individual. See Dignity at Work and Study Policy for details.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breach copyright. For example, using someone else's image or written content without their permission; failing to give acknowledgement where permission to reproduce something has been obtained. • Breach the terms and services of the social network. Each social network has different terms of use and community guidelines, to prohibit users from doing anything that could be considered defamatory, posting inappropriate pictures or videos or using the network to engage in criminal activity. All terms of use must be followed. • Reveal confidential information about the University, its students or staff on social media.
2.1.1.2	All students should be conscious of the risk that misuse of social networks could pose to their employability as a placement year student or graduate. If a student is identifiable in a piece of online content that is available in the public domain, it could be accessed by future employers, professional bodies or academic institutions.
2.1.1.3	When undertaking a Professional Training Placement, students should familiarise themselves and comply with their employer's social media policy in addition to the University's social media policy. Students who undertake paid duties as an employee of the University must also comply with the Staff Social Media Policy.
2.1.1.4	<p>Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with privacy settings for each social media platform and choose a privacy level that they consider to be appropriate. Full information on how to choose and amend privacy settings is clearly signposted on each social media platform.</p> <p>When selecting privacy settings, students should consider how much of the information on their social media profiles will appear in the public domain and the impact this may have, particularly when applying for jobs and placements.</p>
2.1.1.5	To avoid confusing its audiences, the University prohibits using its logo(s) in on social network profile pictures, background images or cover photos, without the permission of the Marketing and Communications Department. Contact socialnetworks@surrey.ac.uk to receive a response to your request within two working weeks.
2.1.1.6	The University prohibits the use of its name or derivatives thereof within the account name or remit statement of a social network account, by individuals or organisations without the permission of the Marketing and Communications Department. Contact socialnetworks@surrey.ac.uk to receive a response to your request within two working weeks.
2.1.1.7	Official complaints made by students regarding social media usage should be made using the official complaints channels of either the University or the Students' Union, depending on the context of the complaint. Guidance for students on the use of these channels can be found on the students' union website. Any complaints received from students via social media will be directed to this guidance.
2.1.1.8	If social media is used as part of a research project, the ethical requirements and considerations of the University and course, as outlined in the Ethics Policy and Academic Regulations, should be adhered to.

2.1.1.9	<p>When utilising a personal social networking site, students should not declare, imply or indicate that their content or views are representative of those of the University.</p> <p>If the University can be identified, you should make it clear that you are speaking on your own behalf. You should note that the presence of a disclaimer will not necessarily mean that disciplinary action cannot be taken</p> <p>The University may request the removal of content if it is deemed that the content poses a risk to the reputation of the University or to that of one of its staff/students.</p>
2.1.2	Social media usage on the behalf of a Society, Club or Group
2.1.2.1	<p>Students using social media on behalf of a society, club or group should take care that their communications do not do any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breach copyright. ● Do anything that may be considered discriminatory against, or bullying and harassment of, any individual. ● Breach confidentiality. <p>Breach the terms and services of the social network.</p> <p>Misuse as outlined above may be regarded as a disciplinary offence (See 2.2.1).</p>
2.1.2.2	<p>Students using social media in a professional capacity on behalf of a society, club or group should use the same safeguards that they would with any other form of communication in the public sphere. These safeguards may include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● getting an appropriate person to check the content before it is published ● seeking advice if unsure of the objectives or required outcomes. <p>All social media activity on behalf of a Student Union club society or group is subject to University of Surrey Students' Union byelaws.</p>
2.1.2.3	<p>Where a society, club or group account has two or more users, one user should be nominated as the lead administrator. This person will be responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● making sure that the login details are shared only with those who have a real need to use the account ● revoking access to the account where necessary, such as if a student leaves the society, club or group ● ensuring that all content produced for the social media account is in line with this policy and points discussed in 2.1.1.1.
2.1.2.4	<p>Social media users who receive enquiries/approaches from media sources (newspapers, radio, TV) are encouraged to notify the University's PR & Communications Team for guidance about how to respond (as they would if they received approaches from the media via any other channel).</p>
2.1.2.5	<p>All students using social media in an official role at the University of Surrey are encouraged to read the Student's Social Media Guide, which accompanies this policy.</p>
2.2	Procedures
2.2.1	<p>Where it is found that a student has misused social media, it may be regarded as a disciplinary offence in accordance with the <u>Student Disciplinary Regulations</u>. Examples of misuse are outlined in 2.1.1.1 and 2.1.2.1</p>

2.2.2	The University monitors mentions of its brand name and associated terms in order to identify any risks to reputation and to gather customer feedback. Only content that is available in the public domain is subject to monitoring. Data monitored is processed anonymously for analysis purposes and is not held by the University. Students are advised to read the privacy guidance provided in 2.1.1.3.
3	Governance & Directory Requirements
3.1	Responsibility
	<p>This policy is owned by the University’s Social Media Working Group. This is currently chaired by the Director of Marketing & Communications. It will be the responsibility of the group’s Chair to ensure that the policy is implemented, communicated and reviewed on an annual basis. The group will regularly review the impact of the policy and the accompanying toolkit and ensure that any subsequent issues relating to the use of social media are dealt with through the most appropriate channels.</p> <p>Specific responsibilities for social media across the University are as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reputational risk created by social media – Head of PR & Communications ● Response to customer enquiries – Head of Market Insight & Data ● Marketing opportunities – Head of Marketing & Campaigns ● Social media development – Social Media Co-ordinator ● Social Media Monitoring infrastructure – Head of IT Services ● Disciplinary proceedings relating to social media – See Disciplinary Regulations below
3.2	Implementation / Communication Plan
	Once approved, this policy will be available on the University’s website and communicated to students via internal communications channels including: the Students’ Union, Current Students’ Website, SurreyLearn and on campus. It will also form part of Welcome Week communications.
3.3	Exceptions to this Policy
	In all cases where it is believed that this policy has been breached, considerable judgement will be exercised to consider the context behind the issue and the impact of the action, particularly when it impacts on the right to protest. However, where it is found that a student has misused social media, it may be regarded as a disciplinary offence in accordance with the University Disciplinary Regulations .
3.4	Supporting documentation
	<p>This policy should be read in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech ● Data Protection Policy ● Dignity at Work and Study Policy ● Ethics Policy ● Information Security Policy ● Intellectual Property Code ● Student Policies and Regulations, Student Charter