

# Social Media Policy

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## 1. Introduction

At Strathclyde, we recognise the fantastic opportunities and benefits that social media brings. It lets us connect with our students, colleagues, partners in business and a range of other organisations locally and across the world. It also allows us to promote the great work that we do with the rest of the world.

Social media has lots of advantages but there can also be risks if it isn't used appropriately. We want to protect you from these risks wherever possible.

In this policy you'll find out more about how we can use social media, the key things you should think about when using it inside and outside of work and much more.

Please note, if this policy refers to additional guidance, FAQs, online forms, or training, these are accessible to University colleagues on our [People Hub](#).

## 2. Who is Covered by this Policy?

- All members of staff holding a contract of employment, honorary staff and staff from other organisations on placement or visiting the University.
- Contractors working at the University.
- Individuals working or acting on the University's behalf including suppliers of goods and services.

## 3. Use of Social Media

Social media is digital technology that allows us to create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas with others in a range of formats. This can include text, visuals such as photographs, or videos that we share with others through virtual communities and networks.

There are a wide range of social media platforms including (but not limited to):

- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- X (formerly known as Twitter)

- YouTube
- Snapchat
- Whatsapp
- TikTok

Just so you know, this policy covers all online communications using the platforms listed above or any other social media channel out with our own University website.

## 4. Using Social Media at Work

We know social media is a powerful tool and encourage all staff to use social media as appropriate to benefit their work. This might be to:

- Provide teaching and learning support and to enhance the student experience.
- Create new ways of collaborating and communicating with others inside or outside the University.
- Enhance our public profile and engage with prospective and existing students, staff, and industry colleagues.
- Recruit student and staff by publishing opportunities on relevant platforms and through suitable networks.
- Build relationships and maintain contact with graduates.

When you're using social media for work purposes, there are a number of things to consider.

You **should**:

- Be aware that you're representing Strathclyde and that any communication should be for a purpose, be accurate, respectful in tone and benefit the University.
- Take care when expressing views and opinions on a social media site you're using for work, regardless of whether you are referring to the University or not.
- Be mindful when you're interacting with students. The staff-student relationship can become more informal on social media. You should consider this when connecting online.

- Take care when considering posting personal information, including images, of people that can be identified. This could be students, colleagues, University partners or other third parties. Where appropriate, you should get consent before posting to avoid any data protection implications.
- Interact in a way that aligns with the [Strathclyde Community Commitment](#) and our [Dignity & Respect Policy](#). This includes ensuring that you don't post content that could be considered derogatory, offensive, sexually explicit, defamatory, harassing, bullying or discriminatory to others.
- Be aware that if you manage a social media account that allows individuals to interact or respond to the University, you might receive a request to access information under the Freedom of Information Scotland Act. If you receive this type of request, you should pass it to the relevant colleague at the earliest opportunity.
- Think about whether it might be appropriate to set up an alternative social media account to separate your work and personal use on social media.
- Think about how social media accounts are managed within a team and who has access. This is important when colleagues move on to new roles or leave the University.

**You *shouldn't*:**

- Share information with students or interact with comments or opinions online if you wouldn't normally do this at work or any other public place.
- Breach confidentiality by, for example, revealing information owned by Strathclyde (including intellectual property) or sharing confidential information about colleagues, students, partner organisations or any other University business.
- Bring the University into disrepute. Examples might include criticising or arguing with students, colleagues or partners, deliberately provoking arguments or emotional reactions (known as trolling) or posting inappropriate links or images.
- Breach copyright by using images or content without permission or failing to acknowledge where permission has been given.

## 5. Using Social Media Outside of Work

We know that many colleagues will use social media in their personal life, and you shouldn't be discouraged from doing so. While you aren't representing the University, you should be aware that your conduct is still important, particularly when you're recognised as being an employee at Strathclyde.

When you're using social media for personal purposes there are a number of things to consider.

You **should**:

- Take any necessary steps to protect yourself online. Be aware of things like online scams and identity fraud.
- Take care when posting personal information, including images, of people that can be identified. This could be students, colleagues, University partners or other third parties. Where appropriate you should get consent in advance to avoid any data protection implications.
- Be mindful of discussing work on your own personal social media accounts. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are always clear that any opinions or views belong to you and don't necessarily reflect those of the University.
- Interact in a way that aligns with the Strathclyde Community Commitment and Dignity & Respect policy. This includes not posting content that could be considered derogatory, offensive, sexually explicit, defamatory, harassing, bullying or discriminatory to others.

You **shouldn't**:

- Use social media for your own personal use during paid work time. You can use University equipment and use social media platforms at work, but this should be at a reasonable level and during breaks or non-working hours.
- Use your social media to raise concerns or issues about work. If you've got any concerns, you should raise these with your manager or speak to a colleague in [Human Resources](#). You might also want to refer to our [Grievance Procedure](#) or [Report and Support](#).

## 6. If You Have Concerns

At Strathclyde our priority is the safety, health, and wellbeing of our University community. Unacceptable behaviour online and on social media platforms has no place and won't be tolerated. Using social media inappropriately can potentially harm our reputation and the reputation of others and potentially breach privacy and security and have a negative impact on health and wellbeing.

If we believe that any colleague has acted inappropriately online it may, after investigation, lead to disciplinary action and potentially dismissal on the grounds of misconduct. This includes acts of bullying, trolling or potentially harming our reputation.

We also know that mistakes can happen and therefore if you think you've posted something you shouldn't have you should raise it with your manager.

If you want to raise an issue about inappropriate online behaviour you should speak to your manager in the first instance. Alternatively, you can submit a form through Report & Support, our online tool to report concerns. It might also be helpful to refer to our [Dignity & Respect Flowchart](#) which lays out the options and steps that you can take to resolve your concerns.

## 7. Further Information and Support

If you have any queries about this policy, please talk to your manager or contact Human Resources.

If you feel that you've been impacted by inappropriate behaviour online, you may find it helpful to seek support through our [Employee Assistance Programme](#).

## 8. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed by Human Resources on a regular basis. To see when the next review is due, please see our [Policy Review Schedule](#) (staff login required) on our People Hub.