

Social Media Policy (Code of Practice)

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1. Scope and Purpose

1.1. Social media networks have become a significant and integral part of our day to day lives. These tools provide users with the opportunity to collaborate and share ideas with others holding similar interests or work-related focus. They also provide a very positive way in which to share or promote events and activities through participation in interactive discussions and by engaging with the wider community.

1.2. The college recognises the great value that social media has on our business but is equally aware that employees' use of social media can pose risks to the College's confidential information and reputation, it can also jeopardise the College's compliance with legal obligations.

1.3. To minimise these risks the College expects employees to adhere to the key principles laid out in this policy. It provides clear guidance and advice on the use of social media sites for all employees, by outlining staff responsibilities when accessing and using social media websites.

1.4. This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including full-time and part-time employees, fixed-term employees, consultants, contractors, casual and agency staff and volunteers.

1.5. The distinction between personal and professional can become blurred when using social media, this policy therefore covers the use of these sites for both College and personal purposes whether during working hours or otherwise.

1.6. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using the College's IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff.

1.7. This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including but not limited to, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Wikipedia, all other social networking sites, and all other internet postings, including blogs.

1.8. Breach of this Code of Practice by employees may occur 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.

1.9. Any employee or Third Party suspected of committing a breach of this Code of Practice will be required to co-operate with our investigation.

1.10. Employees or Third Parties may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this Code of Practice.

1.11. Any breach or failure to comply with a request to remove internet postings by employees may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Any breach or failure to comply by a Third Party may result in the termination of any contract under or in connection with services they provide to us.

1.12. If your duties require you to speak on behalf of Wiltshire College in a social media environment, you must complete the eSafety module on eStudy.

2. Accountability

All staff, students, of the College are to be made aware of the policy. Where staff or students are working at premises other than College locations, they will be subject to the policy. The policy covers behaviour on all social media. Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary proceedings.

The Marketing and Careers Manager is responsible for ensuring the policy is regularly updated and reflects ongoing developments in social media.

All staff should report any incidents of inappropriate use of social media to their manager and, where appropriate, the College Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Students should be encouraged to share any incidents of inappropriate use and be assured that they will be taken seriously.

The College is responsible for making sure students are aware of the dangers of social media and guidance and information will be provided through the College induction and tutorial processes.

3. Process / Procedure

3.1. Acceptable use of social media for work

3.1.1. Staff are permitted to make reasonable and appropriate use of social media websites where this is part of the normal duties of their work. Staff responsible for contributing to the College's social media activities should always be aware that they are representing the College. Staff who use social media as part of their job should adhere to the following:

3.1.2. Where a social media account has been created for activity linked to employment at the College the creator of the web presence is responsible for all content posted and must monitor contributions to ensure that they are appropriate, will not cause offence and do not infringe any third parties legal or moral rights.

3.1.3. It is permissible to create a web presence through a blog or social network site for marketing or educational purposes, only if permitted by the Marketing and Careers Manager, who should be contacted in advance of any page or account being set up. The College IT Policy will apply to all aspects of website use.

3.1.4. Details of the social media presence should be recorded and each curriculum / business support area are required to have a record of the account along with passwords so that it is accessible if a person leaves.

3.1.5. If an account is inactive for a period of six months, the college reserves the right to remove it.

3.1.6. Posting any images or information about students is not acceptable unless it forms part of an educational activity and the students' consent has been given. In the case of students under the age of 16 the consent of the parent or guardian should be given.

3.1.7. It is important to note that while using social media at work the following are prohibited: circulating chain letters or spam, circulation of personal religious or political

content, or promotion of outside organisations unrelated to Wiltshire College & University Centre's business.

3.1.8. When using images of students on social media platforms, permission must have been obtained considering recent data protection law changes (GDPR). In addition, should an individual ask for their image/video to be removed, their request should be actioned immediately. See Data Protection Policy.

3.1.9. Admin access must be revoked from all platforms immediately for staff leavers.

3.2. Acceptable use of social media for personal use

3.2.1. The college accepts that staff may wish to use social media channels as a way of communicating personally with the public and / or friends; however, its use at work should be restricted to the terms of this policy. Staff are permitted to make reasonable and appropriate use of social media websites from the College's IT network at certain times. Staff should limit their use of social media in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy.

3.2.2. Staff may wish to use their own personal devices, (including laptops, tablets and smart phones) to access social media websites, while at work. Staff should limit their use of social media on their own personal equipment to their official rest breaks and/or when between appointments when travelling and/or times when they are not on duty (before and after work).

3.2.3. Personal use of social media should not interfere with staff work duties and responsibilities. Excessive personal use of social media websites and abuse of this policy will be considered a disciplinary offence.

3.2.4. Employees must make it clear in social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf, write in first person and use a personal email address when communicating via social media. The use of a Wiltshire College & University Centre email address is permissible if establishing a professional profile.

3.2.5. If you decide to disclose your affiliation with the College you must ensure that your views represent those of the College. You should ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to colleagues. On Twitter, for example, if your personal account bio states you work at the College, it should also include the line "all views are my own". However, if you use your personal account purely for professional purposes, this is not necessary.

3.2.6. Employees must avoid posting comments about sensitive College-related topics, such as our performance. Even if it is made clear that the views on such topics are your own and not those of the College; the comments could still damage our reputation.

3.2.7. Employees should respect confidential information shared at College (such as Ofsted results) before it reaches the public domain and not post related content on their social media sites.

3.2.8. Staff should refrain from answering queries on social media from their personal accounts on, for example, the College Facebook page. Should they wish to respond to a

comment/query, they should contact the Marketing team who will respond via the page admin account.

4. Implementation

The College Senior Management Team and the Marketing and Careers Manager carry the ultimate responsibility, in ensuring staff and students make appropriate use of social media. However, all staff have the responsibility to uphold the policy and support the College in fulfilling its duties and commitments.

5. Associated Documents

- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Grievance Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure
- College Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection Policy

6. Equality Impact Assessment

Wiltshire College & University Centre strives to ensure equality of opportunity for all students, local people and the workforce. As an employer and a provider of education, the College aims to ensure that none are placed at a disadvantage as a result of its policies and procedures. It is intended that this policy and procedure is fair to all. Where any part could potentially lead to unequal outcomes, the policy then justifies why this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

7. Data Retention Statement

Wiltshire College & University Centre is committed to ensure the data it collects, and holds is in line with the ICO's guidance and meets data protection law. Where appropriate a Data Protection Impact Assessment will be undertaken as and when policies are updated to ensure risks to the individual and college are considered and managed.

For further information please refer to Wiltshire College & University Centre's Data Protection Policy.

8. Policy Review and Ownership

This policy and procedure is owned by the Marketing and Careers Manager. It will be reviewed periodically in light of developments in employment legislation, good employment practice or audit; and to ensure it continues to be relevant and supports operational effectiveness. The document is managed by the Campus and Curriculum Admin Team Leader.