The University of Queensland Union College Appropriate Use of social media Policy

Document Number: RES0005

Topic: Appropriate use of social media, guidelines, fake news

Approval Authority: Head of College

Last Approval Date: January 2024

Review Date: December 2024

Audience: UC Team, Board, Current Residents, Parents/Carers

Document Web Links:

Notes:

If you have any questions about this policy, please do not hesitate to contact the Head of College via email at
headofcollege@unioncollegeuq.com.au

Introduction

We recognise that social media platforms, such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, Instagram, Tik Tok etc., are widely used and play a large role in today's world. Much of the information exchanged within social media networks online or otherwise falls within the public domain, and the line drawn between what is personal and public is not always clear.

The College supports the appropriate use of social media both personally, and, if authorised by the Deputy Head of College, on behalf of the College. This policy has been developed to ensure that residents are mindful of their obligations to not bring the good name and reputation of the College into disrepute, to protect the confidential information and intellectual property of the College and to treat others with respect.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline minimum standards regarding social media use and participation for all residents during their time at college.

Social media platforms

Examples of social media platforms include but are not limited to:

- social networking platforms such as Facebook, X, LinkedIn
- video and photo sharing platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, YouTube, Periscope, Vimeo, Flickr, TikTok, Discord
- blogs, including corporate blogs, personal blogs and those hosted by media outlets which include a comments or 'your say' feature
- public wikis and online collaborations, such as Wikipedia
- forums, discussion boards and groups, such as Google+ and Whirlpool, as well as online review sites such as TripAdvisor, Yelp and Booking.com
- instant messaging, such as Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, Snapchat, and including SMS
- geo-spatial tagging such as Foursquare, Geocaching, 'check in' features on social media platforms.

Tips and guidelines

- Update the privacy settings on your accounts so that you protect your personal information. Don't automatically save passwords on shared computers or devices.
- Respect the privacy of others. Don't tag them in photos or places, or share their posts, without their permission.
- If you see inappropriate social media behaviour, clearly ask for it to stop and keep a record of your request. If the behaviour doesn't stop, do not engage further.

Things you can do in these instances are:

- Report concerning online behaviour to the Deputy Head of College.
- Block unwanted messages and posts on social media sites.
- Delete or block the person who is behaving this way.
- Keep evidence of the behaviour (save texts or emails, and/or take screenshots of social media sites).
- Get help and support.

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Fake news

Be wary of false or misleading stories on social channels. The occurrence of 'fake news' has grown rapidly with the rise in social media activity. Avoid contributing to this problem by checking the authenticity of stories and authors and if in doubt, don't share it. The following tips can help to spot false news.

- Be sceptical of headlines. False news stories often have catchy headlines in all caps with exclamation points. If shocking claims in the headline sound unbelievable, they probably are.
- Look closely at the URL. A phony or lookalike URL may be a warning sign of false news. Many false news sites mimic authentic news sources by making small changes to the URL. You can go to the site and compare the URL to established sources.
- Investigate the source. Ensure the story is written by a source you trust with a reputation for accuracy. If the story comes from an unfamiliar organisation, check their 'About' section to learn more.
- Watch for unusual formatting. Many false news sites have misspellings or awkward layouts. Read carefully if you see these signs.
- Consider the photos. False news stories often contain manipulated images or videos. Sometimes the photo may be authentic but taken out of context. You can search for the photo or image to verify where it came from.
- Inspect the dates. False news stories may contain timelines that make no sense or event dates that have been altered.
- Check the evidence. Check the author's sources to confirm that they are accurate. Lack of evidence or reliance on unnamed experts may indicate a false news story.
- Look at other reports. If no other news source is reporting the same story, it may indicate that the story is false. If the story is reported by multiple sources you trust, it's more likely to be true.
- Is the story a joke? Sometimes false news stories can be hard to distinguish from humour or satire. Check whether the source is known for parody, and whether the story's details and tone suggest it may be just for fun.
- Some stories are intentionally false. Think critically about the stories you read, and only share news that you know to be credible.

Policy Guidelines

The College trusts residents to do the right thing when it comes to social media activity. However, all residents must be mindful of the following when interacting with social media:

- do not use or display any of the College's intellectual property in any online communications without the express written consent of the Head of College of the College.
- ensure you do not disclose any information about fellow residents on any social media applications or similar without their express permission to do so.
- ensure no material is published or disclosed that breaches applicable legislation including laws relating to copyright, privacy, financial disclosure; and that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity including the College, its officers, Directors, workers, agents or representatives, residents, partners, suppliers, competitors, or contractors.
- ensure that you do not make any online communication that is in any way disparaging or unfavourable about the College and/or is likely to bring the College into disrepute or ridicule.
- do not imply that any personal comments are endorsed in any way by the College.
- maintain and protect the confidential information of the College in their communications; and
- ensure they notify the Deputy Head of College should they be aware of any material which may damage the College or its reputation, as soon as is practicable.

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If you choose to reveal or imply where you live, be aware that you are potentially increasing exposure for both yourself and the College. You are responsible and accountable for information that you put forward via social media and should monitor your posts accordingly.

The College reserves the right to request that residents remove any published content wherever published on a social media site, if not suitable or appropriate.

You are prohibited from publishing material which has the potential to be disparaging or unfavourable or has the potential to reflect negatively on the College. This includes, but is not limited to, obscene, defamatory, discriminatory, or vengeful remarks about another person involved or reasonably connected with the College, e.g., workers, residents, alumni, etc.

The College strongly advises against 'following' and/or 'friending' a UC team member or other worker on any personal social media platform such as Facebook.

Breach of Policy

A resident who is found to be in breach of this policy or any other College policy which is referenced or related to this policy may face disciplinary action.

In cases where a breach of the policy involves a breach of any law, then the relevant government authorities or the police may be notified.

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