

Guide for the use of Non-University Social Media

This Guide is intended to assist members of the University Community comply with the University's Social Media policy and provides general guidance that will support productive and positive Social Media experiences.

<p>General Self-Care</p>	<p>The point of Social Media is that it is 'social'. Expect your content to be seen, either immediately or in the future, by friends, family, colleagues, or future contacts and connections, including future employers. Consider how you may be perceived, and whether the content you are about to post is worth any immediate or future potential consequences.</p> <p>The wisdom of hindsight can be very valuable, yet, pausing before acting can help avoid the need for lessons to be learnt that may be painful, stressful, embarrassing, or uncomfortable.</p> <p>Be aware that your comments and content may result in unexpected responses. You may feel a level of comfort with and control over your own content, but you can't always control the way others respond, and sometimes it is these unexpected responses that impact or damage your personal reputation and credibility.</p> <p>Notice when you are being drawn into an argument or feeling triggered to rapidly respond with comments or content that may be emotionally driven rather than rationally considered. It can be better to have another person perceive that they have 'won' than to ignore the potential danger signs and hurt your personal image in ways that may be irreparable.</p> <p>Deleted posts can resurface, and it is not unusual for content and comments shared in what is understood to be a private and safe setting to find their way onto public channels.</p> <p>The quote 'act in haste, repent at leisure' applies to Social Media. While the next thing you are about to do on Social Media may feel perfect in that precise moment, try to pause, and remember nothing about Social Media is momentary.</p>
<p>Personal Views</p>	<p>Personal views expressed through Non-University Social Media channels by staff can be perceived to be reflective of professional opinion, or the opinion of the University, if taken in the wrong context. Effort is required to ensure that, as far as reasonable and practicable, personal opinion is clearly stated as such, and is distanced from the University.</p> <p>Personal views and content shared through Non-University Social Media channels by students may be seen, and used, by potential future placement providers or employers. Screening of job applicant's Social Media, and its use to establish an opinion on conduct, attitude, or suitability for engagement, is increasingly</p>

	common. This can have wide reaching and long-lasting consequences.
Negative Media Coverage	Bad-news stories attract wide media coverage and, where possible, media outlets will make, and publicise, links between controversial comments, members of the University Community, and the University. This can bring the individual, the University Community, and the University into disrepute, and cause reputational damage to all involved parties.
Professional Boundaries	Appropriate staff/student boundaries can be breached and allegations of misconduct, inappropriate contact, or inappropriate conduct, are a possibility. The University's expectations with respect to staff/student boundaries are clearly stated, and are governed by the Staff Code of Conduct and Student Code of Conduct . Be mindful that situations which start out as being understood to be mutual, welcome, and positive can change, and once the boundary has been broken and emotions are involved, the consequences can be significant.
Being 'Friends'	'Friending' people on Social Media has become a normal part of life, but before reaching out to be a friend, or accepting a friend request, consider if there are any professional boundary issues that need to be protected and maintained. Give thought to whether there are any real or perceived power imbalances, and what it is hoped that being Social Media friends will achieve.
Magnifying Tensions	Tensions between members of the University Community arising from interactions on campus and as part of University activities can be exacerbated or escalate when carried over to Non-University Social Media. Self-regulation is required to prevent this occurring.
Legal Considerations	Various legal claims may arise as a result of the unlawful use of Social Media, including defamation, harassment, discrimination, misleading and deceptive conduct and breach of privacy. Digital exchanges, including blogs, postings and emails, may be required to be produced in legal proceedings.

Want more information or advice?

Universities Australia has partnered with the eSafety Commission to combat online abuse, and its impacts on students and staff at Universities. For further information, resources, and advice on e-safety, please refer to the [Toolkit for Universities](#).