

CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR STUDENTS

1. Introduction

The use of social media is becoming increasingly common in universities, students' unions, and by students and employees. Canterbury Christ Church University seeks to ensure these communication channels are used appropriately to facilitate and support student communication and information services, whilst maintaining organisational, professional and personal reputations.

The University recognises that students may want to use social media websites such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc. for both personal use and within their academic studies. The following policy and guidelines have therefore been produced on how to protect personal and professional reputations while using social media.

This Social Media Policy for Students is written in conjunction with the Social Media Policy for Staff <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/support/marketing/essential-guidlines.asp> and 'Using Social Media: Guidelines for Learning and Teaching'.

2. Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this Social Media Policy is to:

- encourage **good practice**
- **protect** the University, its staff, students, partner organisations and clients
- clarify where and how **existing policies** and guidelines apply to social media
- **promote effective and innovative use** of social media as part of the University's activities

This policy applies to all students with CCCU computing accounts and includes students' use of Social Media as part of their studies. .

Students' use of the internet for all purposes should be in accordance with the University's Computing Services policies/procedures, <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/support/computing-services/Policies-Procedures/new-policies-and-procedures.asp>.

3. Definition of Social Media

Social media is a form of online media where people can comment, share and network. It allows for immediate two-way interaction and participants are involved in the creation and distribution of content. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are all examples of social media.

4. Students' responsibilities

It is the responsibility of students to:

- 4.1 read and act in accordance with the principles of this policy and guidelines and regularly check the website for any minor updates to documents
- 4.2 read and act in accordance with the rules and guidelines set out by individual social media, social networking and website hosting companies and providers
- 4.3 act lawfully in the use of social media and to be aware that criminal and civil proceedings can be taken in the event of unlawful activity
- 4.4 remain mindful of, and respect, the University's values when using social media, in line with the Student Terms and Conditions of Registration.
- 4.5 note that social media may not be used to inform or promote inappropriate behaviour or actions which may bring the University into disrepute.

5. Monitoring the use of social media and the University's responsibilities

- 5.2 The University will ensure this policy and guidelines are accessible to staff and students through the CLIC portal and incorporated in both academic and central induction information. The University will periodically review and update the policy and guidelines and any other associated policy and guidelines. Staff and students will be notified of any significant changes
- 5.3 The University will monitor references to the University on social media and the internet, and may take disciplinary action where inappropriate behaviour is exhibited that affects the University.
- 5.4 Should misconduct or breach of University policy be identified, investigation will be carried out in accordance with the University's student disciplinary policies as relevant, with attendant consequences if found proven.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

Social media is becoming increasingly popular and sometimes its informality can encourage us to be less cautious than we would be using other more traditional methods of communicating and interacting.

Careless comments cost careers

Reputations can take years to build but be irreparably damaged in a couple of clicks by a careless comment on a social media site.

Any content you post about yourself or others could be brought to the attention of the University, future employers or professional bodies.

If you breach the Student Partnership Agreement or the code of conduct of a professional body (e.g. Nursing and Midwifery Council, Police forces, National College for Teaching and Leadership), it may directly affect your future learning and career aspirations. It has also become increasingly common for employers to research prospective employees by looking at their social media profiles – what would your profiles say about you?

Here are a few tips to keep you and your reputation safe when using social media.

Be polite

Don't use social media to attack others and remember to respect other people's privacy and feelings. If you break the law on social media sites (for example by posting something defamatory), you will be personally responsible. You should also respect the University's values and avoid bringing the University into disrepute.

Careful what you share

Always ask permission before sharing private details about your fellow students, staff, the University, its partner organisations and clients. Such details could include private contact details, pictures or details of private discussions.

Remember to follow the anonymity and confidentiality rules set out by your course and/or the professional standards set out by the governing body for your professional studies.

Fraudsters and identity thieves often use social media to find out information about people so be careful about sharing your own personal details – like your date of birth or your address. Make sure you only interact with people you know, there have been cases of people posing as students of the University to engage with genuine Christ Church students.

Be appropriate

Remember to be appropriate when engaging with staff, students or clients of the University through social media. Inappropriate information, promotion of events/activities or contact may breach the Student Terms and Conditions of Registration or disciplinary policies.

Be ethical

If you're using social media as part of a research study or project; you still need to adhere to all ethical requirements of the University, your faculty and course. You also need to consider intellectual property rights, copyright and ownership of data.

Your views are your own

When using social media you should not state or imply that your views are those of Canterbury Christ Church University. You must not use the University logo at any time.

Stick to the rules

Read the 'house rules' for each social media site you use. These set out how sites expect you to behave on their network. If you break these rules you can be excluded from the site and you might even have charges brought against you.

Report it!

If you see something on a social media site that concerns you, you can report it to the social media provider. The provider is likely to pass the complaint to the person who set up the space or group.

If it concerns the University or a member of the University community, please report it to the Student Communications Unit via the i-zone.

Keep it Legal

What you post must be legal. If you post discriminatory or defamatory comments, act in a harassing or intimidating way, or engage in any illegal activity you may face criminal investigation and prosecution. You may even face legal action from an individual who has been offended by what you write. So remember you can be held responsible for what you write.

Think about the future

Remember that prospective employers may trawl social media sites as part of their selection process. The social media posts you make could undermine your future prospects.