



## Procedure 6.3 Social media



# Social Media Policy

## Introduction.

The term 'social media' is used to describe dynamic and socially-interactive, networked information and communication technologies, for example Facebook; Instagram, Tik Tok and LinkedIn, as well as SMS text messaging and other social networking sites such as WhatsApp.

N.B This policy uses the term 'Friend' in a social media networks context to refer to a member of the network, for example 'Friend' on Facebook or 'Follower' on Twitter.

## Purpose

The School supports the official use of social media to reach audiences important to the institution, such as students, potential students, employees, and visitors, etc. This procedure establishes the criteria and procedure for creating a School presence or participation on social media sites on behalf of the School.

1. School presence or participation on social media sites includes:
2. media sites established by the School on the School-owned domain
3. accounts on external sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, etc. on behalf of the School
4. personal accounts on external sites that are approved for use or participation by School employees as part of their job duties

This procedure applies to faculty and staff, including students, employees, who engage in internet conversations for work-related purposes or who are asked by supervisors to use or participate in social media as part of his or her job responsibilities.

Through establishing guidelines for the use of Social Media, the School aims to:

- Encourage good practice
- Protect the School, its staff and students from harassment and sexual misconduct and other forms of disruptive or abusive behaviour
- Promote effective and innovative use of social media as part of the School's activities whilst protecting the integrity of the School and maintaining a consistently high standard of communication with internal and external users.

## Definition

Social media - includes but is not limited to blogs, podcasts, discussion forums, on-line collaborative information and publishing systems that are accessible to internal and external audiences, video sharing, and social networks like MySpace and Facebook.

## Criteria for an approval of Social Media Initiatives

The following criteria shall be considered when there is a request to establish a School hosted social media site, or to participate in internet discussions or social media on behalf of the School:

- Whether or not the School involvement can be carried out in such a manner that positively supports the institution's values, missions, and goals
- Whether or not the engagement with the audience adds value to both the School and the audience
- Whether or not the approach is as effective or efficient as other approaches that might be used (i.e. would an existing School social media initiative or the School website accomplish the same goals)
- Whether or not the use of social media enables the School to offer services it might not otherwise be able to offer
- Whether or not sufficient resources exist to appropriately manage the interactions.

### **Personal accounts**

The School requests that staff and students with personal social media accounts are mindful of who can view their profile and act accordingly. Where staff identify themselves as a member of the School staff within a personal account, they should remember that their actions or comments could be construed as those of the School.

This procedure also outlines the School's position on external websites being used as reading lists, learning aids and supportive materials.

Where members of the School are friends with colleagues, students, prospective students or School partners, they should think about outcomes carefully before posting comments regarding the School that could cause offence, creating a hostile or intimidating environment or be viewed as contravening confidentiality rules.

### **Usage policy**

#### **a. URL / Websites and Teaching Aids / Resources**

- ❖ Before setting up a new URL / webpage or social media account on behalf of CSA, staff involved should consider the purpose of the account and what benefits it may have. For example, when setting up accounts with Facebook it is possible to choose between a 'group' and a 'page' depending on requirements. To discuss which type of account would best suit the identified needs, please contact the Marketing and Communications Team.

N.B Please be aware that all URLs / webpages used in teaching should be correctly referenced and endorsed by the Course Tutor / Programme Manager.

- ❖ The School uses a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) 'Moodle' as the official teaching aid / resource. Any materials generated by staff and used as a teaching aid should be available on the relevant section of Moodle.

## **b. Social Media**

- ❖ School Staff should not be 'friends' with any active students unless they have a clear and transparent reason, for example; they are a relative, family friend etc. This is recognised as best practice within the sector in order to promote a safe and transparent online environment that protects the organisation, the students and staff interests and reputation.

## **c. New accounts**

- ❖ All new accounts to be set up on social media sites including (but not exclusive to) Facebook, Flickr, Tik Tok, Snapchat, Reddit, Twitter, YouTube, should be approved by the Marketing and Communications Team before they are created. This allows the School to maintain consistency and high standards of use, alongside approving use of School logos etc., and monitoring the range and nature of activity on the site to ensure that there is no harassment, discriminatory or sexually inappropriate content.
- ❖ On creation of accounts the Marketing and Communications Team will request administrative access to the account. This is to ensure that in circumstances such as the main administrator being away or unexpectedly absent; the account can still be moderated.

## **d. Existing accounts**

- ❖ All administrators of existing social media accounts related to the School should contact the Marketing and Communications Team to inform them of the account details. We would also ask that the Marketing and Communications team be made an administrator of the account.

## **f. Blog accounts**

- ❖ Blogs provide an opportunity for staff to discuss research, encourage debate or simply write about a subject that interests them. Whilst blogs are your personal work some also form part of the School web content. With this in mind please note that blogging services are subject to the terms and conditions of use set out in this document.

## **Copyright**

- ❖ Social Media users are reminded that they must consider intellectual property rights, copyright and ownership of data. [The main branches of IP law are copyright, patents, trademarks, designs, passing off and the law of confidential information. For latest information please visit <http://www.ipo.gov.uk/>]
- ❖ Every effort has been made to ensure that nothing in the [www.caspianschool.ac.uk](http://www.caspianschool.ac.uk) domain (the website) infringes UK law.
- ❖ Permission should always be sought before making links to a website, unless the website Terms and Conditions clearly state that linking is permitted.

## Image and Performance Rights

- ❖ When using people for photography (staff, students or professional models), always ensure they sign a model release form. Once signed please send this to Student Services with a small copy of the student's image so this can be held on file for the duration of the agreement. Due to the Data Protection Act, the School is unable to use images without this agreement.
- ❖ Where recording a video, seminar or an event involving several people who are clearly identifiable, then an All Rights Release Agreement covering an assignment of your (and their) performance rights to the School should be completed and retained by the School. Where a recording of a lecture in front of a class is being made, but with no individual is identifiable in the recording, then it is generally reasonable provided all audience members agree to being recorded (vocal contributions, etc.).

## Conduct expectations

### Content

The School management believe in free speech, however in the context of social media accounts, for example Facebook pages, the School reserves the right to remove certain content posted on to School owned and administered websites and pages. The following guidance applies to all staff and students or other authorised user:

- ❖ As a general rule users can post content freely on a social media account except when content could be considered illegal, obscene, defamatory, threatening, demeaning, discriminatory, offensive or infringing upon intellectual property rights, invasive of privacy or otherwise, extremist, injurious or objectionable and can be construed as targeted harassment
- ❖ Users cannot use the School name to promote or endorse any product, opinions, cause or political party. Stating that CSA endorses any personal opinion is prohibited.
- ❖ Users will not knowingly or with intent to defraud provide material and misleading false information.
- ❖ Users should understand that content posted becomes the sole responsibility of the individual who originally posted the content. All opinions expressed by users of this site are expressed strictly in their individual capacity and not as a representative of CSA. However, the site may not be used to promote any views or opinions which have the purpose or effect of violating any individual or group of individual's dignity or which may result in a degrading or hostile environment as this will be classified as harassment and subject to the School's disciplinary procedures.
- ❖ CSA will not be liable, under any circumstances for any errors, omissions, loss or damages of any kind incurred as a result of use of any content posted on its social media sites.

Remember that all users are required to protect confidential and proprietary information regarding the School, staff members or students.

Any complaints about social media and public media content should be directed to the Marketing and Communications Department or to the School mailbox: [info@caspianschool.ac.uk](mailto:info@caspianschool.ac.uk)

### **Social Media and Conduct wording**

Posting personal statements of a defamatory, extremist or offensive nature regarding the

School, students or staff will be regarded as breaching the School's Code of Conduct and will be dealt with under the School's disciplinary procedure. Where statements are libellous, offensive or degrading, legal action may also be taken.

Likewise, personal statements that would reasonably be considered as offensive or discriminatory when posted to social media can be considered as public statements and may contravene the School's code of conduct as they could be attributed to a member of School staff or a student. Where statements are likely to cause any of the following, action will be taken against the person or persons responsible, in as much as they can be identified as likely to be considered as:

- liable to cause offence, including pornographic material or abusive language;
- being described as harassment or bullying;
- defamatory of an individual, group or the School;
- breaches copyright;
- discriminatory on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political or religious belief or contravenes the School's Equality and Diversity Policy;
- information which is confidential by the School or which is not in the public domain (consult a senior manager if unsure);
- revealing personal information about a member of staff, student, client or customer (data, contact details or photographs) without their permission;
- damaging the reputation of the School.

### **Time management**

Whilst engaging with an online audience is important, and updating social media accounts can be valuable, please also remember that much time can be lost online and to balance this with the other needs of demanded of School staff and defined roles.

### **Encouraged practice**

- Academic uses – the School recognises that social media has the potential to support /advance learning opportunities and encourages its use in this way. Social media should not, however, be used where existing supported learning technologies offer equivalent functionality.
- Collaborative uses – the School supports both internal (e.g. inter-department) and external (e.g. inter-School) collaboration and recognises that social media may provide opportunities for people and organisations to work together.
- Communications and External Relations uses – the School recognises the opportunity to communicate with prospective and existing customers through social media as part of an integrated marketing strategy.

- Prospective and current students' uses - these users, along with others who have an interest in the School, are active in social media, e.g. setting up Facebook groups and blogging. The Marketing and Communications Team will monitor these sites to get further insight into the needs of its customers. Possible responses to any contentious issues identified in unofficial social media sites should be referred to the Marketing and Communications Team.
- Alumni uses – the School recognises the opportunity to communicate with existing students and alumni through social media to develop an on-going relationship with them. These users are the responsibility of the Student Administration Marketing and Communications Team, who have ultimate responsibility for Alumni contact details.
- Student Committee users – the School understands that the Student Council may wish to use social media to maximise the exposure of its services to existing and prospective students. These uses are the responsibility of the Student Council, and support by the Student Services Manager.

## Privacy

All staff and students need to be aware that if they are posting content on behalf of the School using their own personal account they should check their privacy or account settings to ensure that they are not allowing a wider audience to view their personal details.

## Monitoring and Investigation

The School may refer to social networking sites when investigating breaches of discipline, e.g. cheating, harassment, anti-social behaviour. At least one faculty or staff person shall be designated to monitor the medium, identify problems that emerge, and take action when necessary.

The School may monitor forums and blogs to gain indirect feedback on School services and facilities.

The School may post replies on forums or blogs to answer queries or address factual corrections, but would generally take a cautious approach before getting involved in contentious issues.

## Inappropriate use of Social Media relating to the Caspian School of Academics

Posting personal statements of a defamatory, degrading or offensive nature regarding the School, students or staff might be regarded as breaching the School's code of conduct and will be dealt with under the School's disciplinary procedure.

## Locus of responsibility

All School staff should be aware of the appropriate use of social and public media. The Student Code of Conduct makes clear that inappropriate use of social media is an offense and those in violation of the code are subject to disciplinary procedures. In addition, those who abuse social media may be liable to legal action.

The Marketing and Communications Team under the direction and leadership of the Principle are responsible for the monitoring of social media content.

Any use, such as logos and graphics, shall comply with School approval (for more information please contact [info@caspianschool.co.uk](mailto:info@caspianschool.co.uk)).