

Social Media Guidelines

PURPOSE

In support of our efforts to work collaboratively across the University, the following guidelines are provided for staff and representatives of the University of Waikato who participate and engage in social media. These guidelines are intended to establish best practice and appropriate etiquette on social media.

These guidelines do not cover Division/School use of social media for instructional purposes nor academic department use of social media within any internally facing system, such as Moodle.

PRINCIPLES

As technology changes, so does online behaviour and expectations. As a University of Waikato social media staff member, representative or ambassador, it is expected that you not only adhere to the respective policies and guidelines, but that you keep abreast of social media updates, tools and best practices, as it evolves.

The fundamental basics in social media remains that same:

Engagement

- Social media, by name and definition, is a platform for social engagement. When starting a conversation or posting content, do so with a clear objective and plan in place. What do you want your audience to do with this content?
- Be prepared to engage in *relevant* conversations. Ensure you have the right information available to address comments or questions.
- If you will be posting content outside of your scope or area of expertise, ensure you identify and advise the right person to be available in the event of needing to address any comments or questions.
- Address all queries or comments in a timeous manner. Any negative comments can escalate quickly and need to be handled swiftly and professionally.
- Maintain a consistent and authentic voice that is relevant across each social media platform.
- Post content that will be meaningful, not simply for the sake of posting. If the audience sees no value, they will leave or disengage (opt out).
- Always use the proper grammar and tone when posting and commenting.
- If you make a mistake, be upfront about it and correct it as quickly as possible.
- When needing to go back and edit any previously published posts, advise that there has been an edit made.
- Consider hiding or deleting comments if
 - a. the comment is, or is likely to be, offensive to others (racist, sexist or otherwise offensive to any of your audience members)
 - b. the comment is inappropriate (this includes both crude and suggestive language), or
 - c. the comment is spam (the comment does not relate to your purpose).

Privacy & Legal

- Respect the confidentiality of all participants and never disclose student information. If it becomes a personal matter, message them directly instead. This includes the posting of any contact details such as email address, mobile number, links to other student social profiles, etc.
- When not using original content owned by the University (video, images, content, ideas, etc.) always credit the source and acknowledge copyright appropriately.
- Do not discuss competitors, partnerships, other students or suppliers without their consent.
- Avoid publishing your personal contact information in a public space and rather message a person directly, take the conversation 'off-line'.

CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT

Creating a social media account is easy. Understanding if you need social media, and if so, which social platform to use, requires consideration and planning.

Before you request a new social media account, consider the following:

- Do you have a communication or social media plan?
- What is your overall objective?
- What role do you foresee social media playing in achieving that objective, over and above any other current communication and/or marketing channels being used?
- Who is your audience? How niche is it / how many people do you see benefiting from your content?
- Are there any current University of Waikato owned social media accounts currently operating which may already serve your purpose?
- Do you have interesting and sharable (consistent) content to share on the platform which will add value to the students?
- Are there resources currently available to commit to maintaining and managing this social media account? If unsure, discuss with the Social Media and Campaign Manager what is expected from a University of Waikato social media administrator in order to understand the level of commitment expected.

Once you're ready to request a new social account, make a Kuhukuhu request using the "Social Media Postings" tile.

RELATED POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

- [Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)
- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Computer Systems Regulations](#)
- [Media Policy](#)
- [Personal Information and Privacy Policy](#)
- [Social Media Policy](#)
- [Staff Code of Conduct](#)