Social Media Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy specifies the rights and responsibilities of Macquarie University staff engaging on Social Media in their capacity as an employee of the University, to safeguard their reputation and that of the University.

(2) Use of Social Media by students is managed in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy.

Background

(3) Macquarie University recognises that Social Media is an important communication tool used by staff to connect with colleagues, other researchers, alumni, key stakeholders, industry partners, and the broader community.

(4) There are many reasons for the University to be an active organisation on Social Media. Examples include:

a. Social Media is often the forum where important social and political discussions take place. The University encourages staff to be an active part of these discussions, where it relates to areas of their academic or professional expertise;
b. Social Media is an effective tool to communicate ideas and messages, and can leverage a powerful 'amplification' effect as content can be shared with a user's entire network;
c. there are opportunities available through the widespread use of Social Media to promote the University; and
d. monitoring Social Media can give the University an insight into how the organisation is perceived in the community.

Scope

(5) This Policy applies to all academic and professional staff of Macquarie University, including full-time, part-time, casual and fixed-term staff, and holders of Emeritus, Honorary, Visiting, Adjunct, Conjoint, and Clinical appointments, using Social Media in a professional capacity which relates to his / her academic or professional expertise.

Section 2 - Policy

(6) Macquarie University is committed to the protection and promotion of free speech, academic freedom and intellectual freedom. Laws and standards apply to statements published online with which staff must comply.

(7) Staff are required to comply with other University policies including the Public Comment Policy, the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy, and the Staff Code of Conduct. Staff must be familiar with and comply with these other obligations in using Social Media.

(8) When using Social Media in a professional capacity, staff must adhere to the following principles:

a. Social Media contributions must comply with the Public Comment Policy.
b. Be transparent, accurate and honest:

i. Staff must declare their position at Macquarie University when engaging on Social Media in their capacity as an employee of the University by identifying their credentials or linking to their Pure research profile in their biographical details.

ii. Staff must represent themselves and the University in a true and accurate way, and not make false representations or claims which cannot be substantiated.

c. Speak only on areas of expertise:
   i. Staff should only comment or post where it matters that relate directly to areas of expertise.

d. Show respect and be accountable:
   i. Staff must communicate in a professional manner and not engage in personal disputation.

e. Never post malicious or unlawful comments:
   i. Staff must not publish content or statements that are malicious, abusive, threatening, discriminatory, defamatory, racist, or obscene. Staff must also not publish content that is unlawful.

f. Avoid potential legal risks:
   i. Staff must comply with copyright and intellectual property laws. They must give proper attribution to content (such as images or video) they publish that is not their own intellectual property.

g. Follow proper procedure for staff complaints:
   i. Staff should not use Social Media to raise grievances or workplace complaints. Staff should raise grievances with their line manager / supervisor, who will address the matters accordingly, in accordance with the Complaint Management Procedure for Staff which specifies the University's approach to managing staff complaints.

h. Use judgement and common sense:
   i. Staff must maintain confidentiality, integrity and security of University information to which they have access. Staff must not disclose confidential information on Social Media or misuse University information and knowledge.

Establishing Social Media Properties

(9) For advice on best practice for establishing a presence on Social Media, please refer to the Social Media Toolkit.

Section 3 - Procedures

(10) Nil.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(11) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(12) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

a. Social Media means websites and digital communication platforms or applications that allow people to interact, comment, share digital media, and participate in discussions.

(13) The following are the most prevalent forms of Social Media:

a. social networks (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat):
    i. these platforms allow users to connect with others, create groups, participate in discussions, and post digital media such as videos and photos.
b. photo and video sharing (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo, Flickr):
    i. these websites allow users to post video or photo content. They also allow users to comment or share other people's contributions.
c. blogs (e.g. sites hosted on or powered by WordPress or Squiz):
    i. blogs are websites that normally feature timely online journal-style content on a particular topic. Typically, they allow and invite comments and feedback.
d. Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia):
    i. wikis are collaboratively created repositories of content. Wikis allow users to create and edit new and existing articles and content.
e. forums and discussion boards (e.g. Google groups, Reddit):
    i. these sites allow users to share and rate their favourite content and comment on the submissions of others.
f. question and answer sites (e.g. Quora, Yahoo Answers):
    i. these sites allow users to post questions and invite answers from the public.

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Responsible Executive	Eric Knight Deputy Vice-Chancellor (People and Operations)
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