

Social Media Policy

Section 1 - Background

(1) The Social Media Policy has been developed to promote and encourage the use of social media by Australian Catholic University (ACU) staff and students. Social media provides opportunities to build communities and to encourage online conversations through the exploration and consideration of diverse thoughts and views.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) The University expects that ACU staff and students who contribute to social media will familiarise themselves with this Policy and will act responsibly in their social media and online activities. The University in turn will put in place processes to manage and support the use of social media by staff and students.

(3) This Policy provides guidance to staff and students who use social media, either as part of their job, study, association with the University or in a personal capacity, on the University's expectations for that use.

(4) Failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action as outlined in the [Student Conduct Policy](#) (for students) and the [Misconduct and Serious Misconduct Policy](#) (for staff).

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(5) ACU aspires to be a community characterised by free inquiry and academic integrity. It embraces the use of social media by staff and students to connect with each other and a broader community of researchers, business partners, alumni, supporters and colleagues as an important tool of academic, community and business engagement.

(6) Social media use by ACU staff and students must comply with the following principles:

- a. respect for human dignity and adherence to the [ACU Mission, Identity and Values](#);
- b. confidentiality of University information and respect for privacy must be maintained; and
- c. [Statute 13 - Freedom of Speech, Intellectual Freedom and Academic Freedom](#).

(7) When using social media in a professional or personal capacity, staff and students should not:

- a. damage the operations of ACU;
- b. engage in or incite others to engage in defamation, victimisation, stalking, vilification, harassment or bullying of individuals or organisations;
- c. disclose University information or confidential information, or the personal information of any other individual if they do not have that individual's consent;
- d. breach the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform;
- e. breach any ACU policy, court or tribunal order or law;
- f. infringe intellectual property rights;
- g. compromise academic honesty or encourage cheating or plagiarism;

- h. use their ACU affiliation or title if commenting on areas outside their area of research enquiry or profession;
- i. subject to this and other policies, state or imply that they speak on behalf of or have the endorsement of the University; or
- j. use ACU logos or branding without prior approval from Marketing and External Relations or consultation with the ACU Brand Team.

(8) ACU will monitor the social media platforms it operates to ensure that use of its facilities and equipment is lawful and policy compliant.

Section 4 - Public Comment

(9) ACU staff may contribute to public comment on social media on subjects which are within their area of expertise using their qualifications and University title. Statements must be accurate and professional. Staff must be respectful of others, acknowledging their responsibilities outlined in the [Code of Conduct for Staff](#) and [Statute 13 - Freedom of Speech, Intellectual Freedom and Academic Freedom](#).

(10) If ACU staff decide to contribute to public comment on social media on subjects outside their field of expertise, they must not use their ACU affiliation and / or title. Staff must carefully consider the risks of engaging in such comment and seek advice where appropriate.

(11) ACU staff and students contributing to public comment must not state or imply that they are authorised to speak on behalf of the University or give the impression that the views they express are those of the University. Commenting on behalf of the University is the prerogative of the Vice-Chancellor and President or their authorised delegate.

Section 5 - Official Social Media Accounts

(12) Authorisation to create an official University social media account or group can only be granted by the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO).

(13) Authorisation to post on an official University social media account or group can only be granted by the Social Media Team.

(14) Where an official or endorsed social media account or group is being used for research purposes, evidence of Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approval must be provided.

(15) If a staff member, student or affiliate wishes to create an official account and / or seek authorisation to post on an official account, a formal request to the CMO must be made, supported by a business case.

(16) A register of all official and affiliate social media accounts / groups; and persons authorised to post on those accounts / groups will be kept by the CMO. The accounts and authorised users will be monitored regularly by the Social Media Team. The CMO can close an account or withdraw authorisation at any time.

Section 6 - Policy Application

(17) This Policy applies to staff and students. It applies to professional use of social media, as well as identifiable personal use where that use has a connection with or may have implications for ACU, its reputation or effectiveness. This policy does not apply to non-identifiable personal use of social media as a private citizen.

Section 7 - Roles and Responsibilities

(18) The Social Media Team is responsible for:

- a. creating, scheduling and publishing content to all official social media channels;
- b. monitoring all official and affiliated social media accounts;
- c. responding to and executing all University and stakeholder requests to publish content on official social media channels (paid or organic);
- d. responding to messages / queries (public or private) received via social media;
- e. providing advice, support and training to staff; and
- f. collecting consent from individuals featured in content and making them aware of ACU's privacy policy.

(19) The National Manager, Advertising and Digital Marketing is responsible for:

- a. execution of ACU social media strategy and governance of all official and affiliate social media accounts;
- b. the development, compliance, monitoring, implementation and review of this policy and any associated processes or guidelines; and
- c. producing and executing social media plans for sensitive issues and briefing relevant staff.

(20) The Chief Marketing Officer is responsible for approving any official social media accounts / groups and authorised users.

(21) Authorised users of official social media channels are responsible for:

- a. creating, scheduling and publishing content to relevant official social media channels;
- b. forwarding any social media queries / enquiries to the Social Media Team for guidance;
- c. monitoring relevant official social media accounts;
- d. alerting the Social Media Team to any potential social media incidents; and
- e. responding to messages / queries (public or private) received on relevant official social media channels.

(22) ACU staff members using social media are responsible for:

- a. engaging with and using social media responsibly;
- b. ensuring they comply with the Terms of Use of relevant social media channels;
- c. complying with ACU policies and relevant legislation;
- d. alerting the Social Media Team to any potential social media incidents;
- e. contacting the Social Media Team about any pro-active social media content they seek to post about ACU;
- f. working with the Social Media Team to plan social media activity for any joint projects or collaborations;
- g. working with Privacy Coordinator to determine consent requirements; and
- h. forwarding any social media queries / enquiries to the Social Media Team for guidance.

(23) ACU students using social media are responsible for:

- a. engaging with and using social media responsibly;
- b. ensuring they comply with the Terms of Use of relevant social media channels;
- c. complying with ACU policies and relevant legislation; and
- d. alerting AskACU, the Social Media Team or Student Experience to any potential social media incidents.

Section 8 - Further Assistance

(24) Enquiries about this Policy must be directed to the Chief Marketing Officer.

Section 9 - Review

(25) This Policy will be reviewed every five (5) years from the date of approval, or more frequently if appropriate.

Section 10 - Definitions

(26) In this Policy:

Term	Definition
Social media	is a group of online applications which are designed to allow information to be created, shared, discussed and disseminated. Social media includes the sites, tools, channels and platforms used to publish content and promote connections and conversations. "Social media" includes but is not limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Social networking sites (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn)2. Video and photo sharing websites (e.g. YouTube, Instagram)3. Blogs, including those hosted by social channels or media outlets (e.g. Tumblr, 'comments' or 'your say' feature on websites)4. Wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)5. Forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Reddit)6. Podcasting7. Instant messaging (e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger)8. Chat rooms9. Geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Google Maps)10. Online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. Twitch).
"Professional use" of social media	includes social media / online activity used in an official capacity as a representative of the University; for research, teaching and learning purposes; and / or commercial purposes.
"Identifiable personal use" of social media	is defined as social media / online activity that (directly and / or indirectly) associates the user with ACU and where that connection / use may have implications for the University, its reputation or effectiveness.
"Non-identifiable personal use" of social media	is defined as social media / online activity that does not associate the user with the University and / or does not have implications for ACU, its reputation or effectiveness.
"Official social media account or group"	means an account or group which has ACU endorsement to use ACU logos, names, job titles, or other ACU identifier.

Section 11 - Associated Information

(27) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	2nd April 2024
Review Date	30th April 2024
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
Approval Date	2nd April 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Kathy Vozella Chief Marketing Officer
Responsible Manager	Luke Williams Associate Director, Digital Experience
Enquiries Contact	Luke Williams Associate Director, Digital Experience <hr/> Marketing and External Relations