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SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

#### Policy Statement

##### Effective use of social media can bring significant benefits to the University. These include opportunities to promote our success stories, develop national and international reach, improve student engagement and attract high quality staff and students.

##### Social media channels can spread the University’s messages across the globe quickly and to a range of audiences at little or no cost and, unlike other traditional media channels, they can provide instant feedback from our audiences.

##### Along with these benefits come the risks inherent in managing channels that are dynamic and unlimited in scale. These include the risk of reputational damage arising from misuse by staff, students or third parties, threats to the security of sensitive or confidential information, exposure to malware and the potential to jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations.

##### The purpose of this policy is:

###### to minimise the risks to the University associated with the use of social media;

###### to provide staff with a clear articulation of the University’s expectations regarding the use of social media;

###### to make staff aware of the potential impact social media could have on themselves, the University and others;

###### to ensure consistency and coherence across the University’s official social media accounts;

###### to encourage staff to collaborate and innovate through social media in an effective and beneficial way; and

###### to provide guidance on etiquette and best practice when using social media platforms.

##### This policy deals with all forms of social media, and for the purpose of this policy, social media is defined as any online interactive tool that encourages participation, interaction and exchanges. New forms of social media are created on a regular basis; examples of current platforms include Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and Reddit, as well as blogs, discussion forums, instant messaging and any website that allows public commenting or posting. These examples will be updated frequently but this policy applies to all social media use whether or not expressly listed in this paragraph.

It also extends to the use of the chat function in all conferencing software, whether these are used in a scheduled teaching and learning session or for communication between students when collaborating at other times. The recording function in MS Teams means that the contents of a ‘chat’ remain available after the session has closed for all participants to view. (The University’s retention policy in place for Teams is to delete messages after 12 months. This applies to one-to-one and group conversations (Chats), Teams Channels and Teams Meetings).

##### This policy is intended to cover the use of all and any social media platforms used by staff of the University. For the purpose of the policy we split social media accounts into three distinct types of social media account:

###### **University of Chichester Account** – used by representatives of the University to communicate messages from a departmental or corporate perspective;

###### **Professional Personal Account** – used by an individual member of staff for professional purposes, who is identifiable as an employee of the University of Chichester through the content of their posts or their profile’s biographical information; and

###### **Private Personal Account** – used by an individual primarily for non-university activity.

##### This policy covers all employees of the University (including those employed on permanent and temporary contracts), and all those acting on behalf of the University (e.g. contractors). It applies to use of social media for business purposes as well as personal use that may affect the University in any way.

##### The University values academic freedom (i.e., the freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without risk to employment or privileges) and this must be taken into account when applying this policy.

##### For the avoidance of doubt, this policy does not cover the University of Chichester Students’ Union activity on social media (except to the extent that they fall within the categories outlined above), though the University does ask the Students’ Union to abide by equivalent standards.

#### Professional Use of Social Media (A University of Chichester Account or Professional Personal Account)

##### If you use social media in a professional capacity, either through a University of Chichester Account or through a Professional Personal Account, you must make sure that your communications do not:

###### **bring the University into disrepute**, for example, by making defamatory or disparaging comments about individuals, other organisations or groups, or the University, or by posting inappropriate content or using inappropriate language;

###### **breach confidentiality or data protection requirements**, for example, revealing confidential information owned by the University, or the personal data of any individual who has not given appropriate consent for their data to be published;

###### **breach copyright or other intellectual property rights**, for example, using someone else’s content without their permission or by breaking the terms of any permission granted;

###### **do anything that may be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual or group**, for example, making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief or age; using social media to bully another individual; or posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or linking to such content; or

###### **breach the University’s policies or the terms of service of the social network**.

###### 2.1.6 **goes against our duty of care to our students and other members of staff** for example crossing the line between an appropriate student and member of staff contact.

#### Private Use of Social Media

##### The University recognises that staff will make use of social media in a private capacity, through Private Personal Accounts. The University does not, as a matter of policy, interfere with the private lives of its staff and students, however, as with any private behaviour, if you use social media in a manner that negatively affects the University, for example as set out in section 2.1 above, you may be subject to disciplinary action.

##### If you disclose an affiliation with the University on your profile or in any social media postings, you must state that your views do not necessarily represent those of the University. However, be mindful that you will still be perceived as a representative of the University, and such a disclaimer would not prevent appropriate disciplinary action.

##### The University does not actively monitor personal social media accounts but it is likely that any posts that mention or are relevant to the University will appear on the marketing team’s media monitoring software, which is used to effectively run the corporate social and press channels.

##### Personal social media accounts do not need to follow University branding guidelines. To avoid confusion, the University prohibits the use of its logos and branding on social media when used for non-business reasons.

##### If you make use of social media, you are encouraged to familiarise yourself with privacy settings for each social media platform and share only at a level that you consider to be appropriate.

There is further guidance on management of private social media accounts in Annex C.

**4.0 Social media in an emergency**

##### 4.1 Social media provides important information channels for staff, students and wider stakeholders during an emergency situation and it is vital that the information provided is timely, consistent and accurate. All communications on social media from the University in an emergency situation will be issued via the central University social media accounts (@chiuni/universityofchichester). In order to minimise the risk of issuing conflicting and/or incorrect information, it is vital that all other corporate social media accounts do not post information or updates during a live incident and await further direction from the University’s Serious Incident Management Team.

If you are unsure please contact [marketing@chi.ac.uk](mailto:marketing@chi.ac.uk)

4.2 **Escalating concerns and issues**

If a social media account appears to have been a victim of unauthorised access, or a post from a corporate or professional personal account attracts a number of negative comments, staff should flag this with the marketing team in a timely manner, who can record the incident and comments and advise on how best to respond. Contact [marketing@chi.ac.uk](mailto:marketing@chi.ac.uk). Where this could potentially result in a personal data breach this must also be reported to IT and the DPO Office in accordance with our breach management processes.

#### 5.0 Breach of this policy

##### 5.1 A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

5.2 Staff may be required to remove posts which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may result in disciplinary action.

##### If you become aware of a breach of this policy, please contact the Digital team [marketing@chi.ac.uk](mailto:marketing@chi.ac.uk).

#### 6.0 Responsibility

##### 6.1 Specific responsibilities for social media across the University are as follows:

###### Reputational risk created by social media – Chief Marketing and Communications Officer.

###### Response to customer enquiries – Head of Admissions if it’s about an application or Head of Marketing for anything else.

###### Marketing opportunities – Head of Marketing.

###### Press enquiries – Press and Public Engagement Manager

###### Social media development – Digital Content Producer

###### Internet usage monitoring infrastructure – Director of Information Learning and Technology.

###### Disciplinary proceedings relating to social media – Chief Human Resources Officer.

Use the marketing section on the staff intranet to find out who is currently in post for the above roles or email [marketing@chi.ac.uk](mailto:marketing@chi.ac.uk) where it can be escalated.

**Relevant policies**

#### Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies. All of our policies can be found online at [www.chi.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-statements](http://www.chi.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-statements). Relevant policies include:

###### the Electronic Information Security Policy;

###### the University Privacy Standard and Privacy Notices;

###### the Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Statement;

###### the Freedom of Speech Code of Conduct;

###### the Safeguarding and Prevent Duty Policy; and

###### the Equality and Diversity Policy.

#### Annex A: Creation and management of University of Chichester Accounts

**Creation of Accounts**

##### A.1 New University of Chichester Accounts must be requested from, and approved by, the Digital team (marketing@chi.ac.uk).

##### The Digital team will ask you to consider the following before giving approval to set up an account:

##### There should be a clear reason for having a University of Chichester Account and why another internal communications tool would not be suitable i.e. email, moodle etc

###### How will having a social media account help you achieve your goals?

###### How will you be able to measure the success of having a social media presence?

###### Who will manage the account? Can they devote enough time to it to make it effective?

###### What sort of content will you be posting and how frequently will you be posting?

###### Who is your main audience? Which social media platforms will be best at accessing this group?

A.2 If the marketing team are happy that a social media account is required they will work with individuals to set up the account.

##### A.3 All University of Chichester Accounts must be registered to a generic, ‘resource account’ University email address (for example, [sports@chi.ac.uk](mailto:sports@chi.ac.uk)) and where several members of staff require access there must be an agreed overall account manager

##### A.4 Usernames should include ‘chi’ or ‘chiuni’, and ‘University of Chichester’ must feature in the account name, title, or description. Any profile description or biographical section should contain links to the University website.

##### A.5 Profile pictures should include the University logo. If the social media account has a cover image or banner, these should be high quality, cropped to the correct specifications and must have explicit, informed consent from any person featured in the image. An approved set of logo profile pictures and appropriate cover images in different sizes is available from the Digital team. Other visuals, such as backgrounds and templates, can be provided on request.

##### A.6 Passwords for accounts must be of adequate strength (preferably containing a mixture of letters, numbers and punctuation) and be kept secure. The current username and password to all University of Chichester Accounts must be logged with the Marketing team, to enable University oversight of the account. Passwords must not be shared other than with those authorised to use the account and the Marketing team. Passwords must be changed if any person who has access to the account is no longer associated with the University.

##### If you manage a University of Chichester Account, you must ensure that:

###### all content produced for the account is in line with this policy;

###### the account is used regularly and appropriately;

###### messages and enquires made to the account are checked and responded to in a timely fashion;

###### enquiries from media sources are forwarded to the University’s Press and Public Engagement Manager for response (press@chi.ac.uk);

###### any incidents of misuse or abuse are appropriately reported; and

###### the comments and discussion on the account made by third parties are moderated to ensure compliance with section 2.1 above (but bearing in mind the University’s commitment to academic freedom and freedom of speech).

##### A.7 Statements made on a University of Chichester Account will be construed as official statements of the University. If you manage a University of Chichester Account, you must only make statements or commitments that are within your authority to make. You must take care when endorsing third party statements or campaigns, particularly funding campaigns, as the University is required by law and by its status as a charity to use its resources, including its reputation and reach, solely for its charitable aims. Reposting content, even without comment, is likely to be seen as official endorsement. If you require guidance on what is permissible within our charitable aims, please contact the University Secretary team.

#### Best practice for managing Professional Use of Social Media (A University of Chichester Account or Professional Personal Account)

A.8. Be respectful: Anything you post on your site/group/channel reflects directly on you, your area of work, and the University as a whole. Be professional and respectful at all times and do not engage in arguments or extensive debates. While it can be appropriate to put right any incorrect assertions, or provide extra detail to counteract any criticism, try to do so in a way that will be construed as friendly, rather than combative or over-sensitive.

A.9. Be friendly: Developing a tone of voice that is friendly and relatively informal is essential – you are engaging in a social forum, so behaving in a social manner is going to be far more effective than talking in a dry, verbose or overly formal way, though using slang, ‘text speak’, or sentence fragments is generally not appropriate. You should also adopt a consistent voice across sites, if you are using more than one channel to represent your area.

A.10. Timeliness is everything: Social media allows us to share information almost instantly, which means audiences often expect information to appear straight away. While that’s not always feasible, be prepared to provide relevant information promptly in response to new developments, announcements or emergencies. A short amount of accurate information delivered at the time can be more valuable than a lengthy report the following day.

A.11. Be accurate: As a Higher Education institution spelling, punctuation and grammar are critical, so take time to write and check your posts for clarity of message and errors before publishing them. Drafting your message in a Word document and using the spell check facility is often a good idea.

A.12. Your content will live forever: Think before you post and remember that anything you share on social media is not private. It can and will be shared, stored and spread globally, even when deleted many online tools will still save the post and people could screenshot anything online. Don’t post anything online that could reflect negatively on the University or that you wouldn’t feel comfortable seeing on the front page of a newspaper or the BBC website for example. Ensure you have the informed consent of any individuals who appear in photographs you wish to publish (for more on consent see section 2.1.2 of this policy).

A.13. Think about frequency: If you post too often you risk annoying your followers. As a broad rule of thumb, you should make fewer posts on Facebook (approx. three per week) than on Twitter (which can handle tens of posts a day if the content is interesting). Also, ensure that all content you post or share is likely to be relevant to a large section of your audience.

A.14. Share, share, share: Follow other relevant University social media accounts and repost/share/retweet any messages that are relevant to your own audiences. This is a great way of joining up our social media channels and strengthening the sense of community.

A.15. Focus on engagement, not numbers: Rather than aiming to get as many followers as possible it is better to prioritise increased engagement with the followers you do have. Fifty students who regularly interact with your channel are more valuable than 500 who click the like/follow button and never come back.

**Annex B: Current primary University social media accounts (Updated April 2023)**

##### Facebook: [www.facebook.com/UniversityofChichester](http://www.facebook.com/UniversityofChichester)

##### Twitter: [www.twitter.com/chiuni](http://www.twitter.com/chiuni)

##### Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/universityofchichester/>

Tik Tok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@universityofchichester>

##### YouTube [www.youtube.com/universityofchichester](http://www.youtube.com/universityofchichester)

##### LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/university-of-chichester](http://www.linkedin.com/company/university-of-chichester)

**Annex C: Best practice for managing Private Personal social media accounts**

C.1. Be wary: We would recommend not having current students as followers / friends on your personal account. Be aware that having current students as followers on your Private Personal Account will mean they can interact and screenshot anything you wish to share about your private life and opinions.

C.2. Communicate thoughtfully**:** Consider carefully whom you add as friends or followers, and if you wish to have a professional and/or personal relationship with them. If you want to communicate with students via social media, we would recommend setting up a public group or chat.

C.3. Think before posting: Privacy does not exist on social media. Think carefully about posting when you are commenting on global movements or controversial topics if you have stated you represent the University on your profile. Remember that what you post on your personal page could impact you professionally.

C.4. Ensure that your profile settings are set to private if you do not want anyone seeing everything that you post. There are different privacy settings on each platform and most channels are public by default, so ensure that you have manually adjusted these settings.

Any queries please speak to the marketing team in the first instance [marketing@chi.ac.uk](mailto:marketing@chi.ac.uk)