

Social Media Policy

Version 1.3

5/27/2013



This Social Media Policy is designed to help and protect the UCC community by setting out the responsibilities of staff and students in using social media platforms (such as Facebook and Twitter). The policy is applicable to all who use, update or maintain social media accounts via University infrastructure and services.

Document Location

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/it-policies/policies>

Revision History

Date of this revision: 11/04/2013	Date of next review: 11/04/2014
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Draft Version Number/Revision Number	Revision Date	Summary of Changes
0.1	18/09/2012	Draft received from OCLA
0.2	9/10/2012	Draft updated in newly approved format and suggestions accepted
0.3	06/11/2012	Revised OCLA draft
0.4	21/11/2012	Revised draft to include revised external parties definition
0.5	28/11/2012	Revised draft based on Student Union feedback
0.6	18/1/2013	Changes based on Further Revisions of the document
0.7	21/02/2013	Changes based on feedback from IS&ER committee
0.8	08/03/2013	Revised based on feedback from IT Staff
0.9	14/03/2013	Changes based on feedback from IS&ER committee
1.1	11/4/2013	Changes based on feedback from College of Business and Law
1.2	14/05/2013	Included Clarifications from the College of business and Law
1.3	27/5/2013	Minor changes from Academic council

Consultation History

Revision Number	Consultation Date	Names of Parties in Consultation	Summary of Changes

Approval

This document requires the following approvals:

Name	Title	Date
Gerard Culley	Director of Information Technology	
John Fitzgerald	Director of Information Services	
John Morrison	Chair of IS & ER committee	
Michael Farrell	Corporate Secretary	
Heads of College		
Academic Council		

This policy shall be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

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1 Purpose

University College Cork (the “University”) recognises that the Internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and to share information on topics of interest *via* a wide variety of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, etc. However, as the content of such media is largely user-generated, this poses a unique set of legal and reputational risks for the University. The purpose of this document is to inform staff and students of the University what the University deems to be acceptable use of these platforms; and to offer staff and students a level of protection from any misuse of this medium. This policy is without prejudice to the right to personal privacy as protected by the Irish Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights.

2 Scope

This social media policy document applies to:

- University College Cork information assets (such as student, staff, and research data)
- University College Cork IT resources (such as networks, computers, portable devices)

This policy applies to staff, students and/or external parties (each of which is defined below and are, hereinafter, collectively referred to as “Users”) and governs the use of social media sites by Users communicating with and/or on behalf of the University through social media sites. The University recognises that a number of different groups may use social media in different ways; guidelines for different groups of users are available on the IT Services website. The following groups are within the scope of this social media policy:

- Users of University social media sites such as:
 - Official social media sites created by the University (including repositories of material for staff and students); and
 - Other University profile pages created on third party sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.
- Users of personal accounts on third party social media sites using University systems and/or equipment.

For the purposes of this Social Media Policy:

- Staff means all full-time and part-time employees of the University.
- Student means all full-time and part-time students of the University.
- External parties means all the University’s subsidiary companies, contractors, researchers, visitors and/or any other parties who are granted access to the University’s IT resources and/or University social media sites/discussion forums on third party platforms.

3 Supporting Policies, Standards & Procedures

Please note that certain additional UCC standards and policies supplement this policy and should be read in conjunction with this policy. All users should ensure compliance with all relevant UCC policies and procedures. These include but are not limited to the following:

- [Student Rules](#),
- [UCC IT Documentation Policy](#)
- [Acceptable Usage Policy](#) (“AUP”)
- [UCC Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Procedure for establishment and use of Official UCC social media accounts](#)
- [Procedure for the establishment and use of other accounts](#)
- [Data Management Policy](#)
- [Digital Estate Working Group](#)
- [Procedure for notice and take down](#)

4 Social Media Usage Policy

Users must at all times use social media sites in a responsible manner, having due regard to the rights and reputation of the University and of others. In particular, users are required to comply with the following rules:

- Users should not use social media sites for any purpose which is prohibited under the terms of the [Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- Users should not use social media so as to contravene or breach the laws of Ireland, specifically in relation to: privacy rights, defamation law and data protection law.
- Users should not use social media sites to engage in any form of bullying. Behaviour which is illegal or likely to cause harassment to others is strictly prohibited.
- Users should not excessively duplicate previously posted communications (other users may consider this as spam).
- Users should not impersonate any other person nor should users engage in trolling (i.e. intentionally insulting and harassing people via the Internet).
- Users should not post any material which breaches the intellectual property rights of third parties (e.g. logos, written works, diagrams, pictures, music, video/film clips, etc.); where necessary the express permission of the rights holder should be obtained.
- When posting as individuals, users are asked to consider that it may be appropriate for them to identify any personal views expressed by them, on third party websites, as their own and not representing the University (for example the following disclaimer is often stated on twitter accounts: *“all views expressed here are my own and don’t reflect the views of my employer”*). Please refer to the University Acceptable Usage Policy, Section 6 for further clarification.
- While recognising the importance of academic freedom, users posting on behalf of University College Cork, should ensure that they adhere to the Social Media policy and procedures for official University accounts.

- Users should not post material which is confidential and proprietary to the University or which could have the effect of damaging the reputation of the University or the privacy or reputation of any third party.
- Users should not post material which would identify a third party (e.g. comments, photographs, video clips etc.) without the express permission of the third party concerned.
- Users should ensure that information posted is accurate and not misleading.
- Users should not post material for the purpose of embarrassing people or which will bring that person or the University into disrepute.
- Users should not use the name of the University, including any emblems or logos, to promote their own commercial objectives or activities.
- Users should not use the name of the University, including any emblems or logos to imply that the University endorses an activity without its prior written consent.
- Users should respect University time and property: University systems and equipment are reserved for the use of staff and students for University related business, research and study.
- Users should comply with the procedures on the establishment and use of social media accounts, namely:
 - Procedure for official UCC accounts
 - Procedure for UCC organisational unit accounts

4.1 Third party social media sites

Third party social media sites, such as Facebook, twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn are used at the user's own risk and since UCC has no control over these sites, the University cannot take any responsibility for data stored on these sites. Users should familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions governing of all social media sites and adhere to these conditions, in addition to the regulations set out in this policy document. Users should ensure that they protect themselves, read and familiarise themselves with any privacy policy governing the site to ensure that they are happy with the uses and disclosures that may be made of their data. It is recommended that users maintain the highest possible privacy settings (i.e. "private" profile on Facebook). Users should be aware that this security may not be possible on some services (such as Twitter or LinkedIn).

4.2 Think before you post

Even where social media accounts have been deactivated, copies of user information may still remain online. Before posting content on a social media site, users should consider the permanent online footprint they are creating in doing so. The nature of the Internet provides unique opportunities for copying and dissemination of information, regardless of the originator's intentions. Users should think carefully about whether they are happy for their information to be made available in this manner, not just now, but into the future (such as in the context of exams, future job applications, etc.). The potential for copying information on the Internet makes it difficult to permanently delete user information.

4.3 Compliance with Policy

The University reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without notice, the postings and activities of staff, students and alumni where there is reason to suspect that this policy is being breached, or where deemed necessary by the University for other legitimate reasons. A working group has been established by the University to advise senior management on websites and social media site content, including any breach of compliance with policy. This group is called the Digital Estate Working Group (email address dewg@ucc.ie). The membership and terms of reference of this group are set out in the University's [digital estate governance policy](#).

4.4 Breach of Policy

The University takes a very serious view on malicious use of social media by staff or students, particularly if such use puts at risk the staff or students of the University or brings the University's reputation into disrepute. The University operates a strict "[notice and takedown](#)" procedure, in these circumstances. Users are encouraged to be vigilant and to report any suspected violations of this Policy immediately to the Digital Estate Working Group (dewg@ucc.ie), who will decide on the most appropriate course of action. On receipt of notice (or where the University otherwise becomes aware) of any suspected breach of this Policy, the University reserves the following rights:

- To remove, or require the removal of, any content which is deemed by the University to be in breach of this policy; and/or
- To disable any User and block access by that User to the University's network, systems, communications devices or equipment.

In addition to the above, if any breach of this policy is detected, disciplinary action up to and including dismissal (in the case of staff), contract termination (in the case of third parties) may be taken in accordance with the University's disciplinary procedures for staff as appropriate. In the case of students, a breach of this policy will be considered a breach of Section B1 and Section G2 of the student rules and the student will be subject to University's student disciplinary procedures, which may ultimately lead to student expulsion. The student's transcript may include the details of any transgressions as a result of the disciplinary procedure.

4.5 Revisions to Policy

The University reserves the right at any time to revise the terms of this policy. Any such revisions will be notified to you, and by continuing to use the relevant social media sites following such notification users will be deemed to have accepted the revised terms of this policy.

5 Further Information

If you have any queries in relation to this policy, please contact:

Director of IT Services

University College Cork

Tel: 021 4902215

Email: it_director@ucc.ie