

Owner:	Director of Marketing & Communications
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Social Media Policy and Procedures - STUDENT

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 These policy and procedures are for BU students and/or visitors and guests of the University.
- 1.2 Social Media is the term commonly used to describe app and web-based tools which allow users to interact with each other. Social Media includes (but is not limited to) accounts on: Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Instagram, Blogs, WhatsApp and YouTube.
- 1.3 This policy covers BU students and third parties who have access to the University's IT resources. It also applies to the use of Social Media for both business and personal purposes. The policy applies whether or not the Social Media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or personal equipment.
- 1.4 The purpose of this Social Media Policy and its guidelines is to encourage good practice; protect the reputation of the University and protect and support its employees and its students; to clarify where and how existing policies and guidelines apply to Social Media; and to promote effective and innovative use of Social Media as part of University activities. It is not intended to interfere with lawful freedom of speech as set out in the [University Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#).
- 1.5 BU encourages the use of Social Media as it can be a valuable tool for communication and learning and can assist in the work of students and employees.
- 1.6 Privacy does not exist in the world of Social Media. Consider what could happen if a post becomes widely known and how that may reflect both on the person and the University. Search engines can turn up posts years after they are created, and comments can be forwarded or copied.

- 1.7 It is also important to note that some Social Media platforms are public, and as such you could be liable under law for anything that you say, or post. You are advised to use your own discretion when posting and use Social Media in a responsible and respectful manner. Adhere to the Terms and Conditions or User Agreements of any Social Media platform used.
- 1.8 The University has guidelines and policies regarding other aspects of its communication operations e.g. [11k Student Disciplinary Procedure](#). Students are reminded that the usual standards of behaviour and conduct that the University expects on a day-to-day basis apply equally to the use of Social Media.
- 1.9 This policy will be reviewed as appropriate and may change in line with technological updates. The latest version of the policy can be found on the University website.
- 1.10 The University contact for Social Media will be the Director of Marketing & Communications who can be contacted by emailing socialmedia@bournemouth.ac.uk.
- 1.11 This policy has been approved by M&C Executive Team and ULT, with consultation from Bournemouth University branches of UCU and Unison.

2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 This policy is owned by the Director of Marketing & Communications and their appointed nominees. Where a decision about the implementation of this policy is needed, the responsibility will rest with the Director of Marketing & Communications.
- 2.2 The Head of Student Services is responsible for student discipline and welfare.
- 2.3 It is the responsibility of students to read and act in accordance with the principles of this policy and guidelines.
- 2.4 Social media monitoring will be conducted by M&C, who will only monitor social media for references to Bournemouth University. Monitoring of personal accounts will not be conducted as a part of this process.
- 2.5 If a complaint is made about a social media post that relates to Bournemouth University, or a member of the Bournemouth University community, or if

concern is raised about a post through our monitoring process, the matter will be raised with the Director of Marketing & Communications, who will make a judgement on how to proceed. If it is judged that the complainant or post may breach a clause in this policy it will be referred to the Head of Student Services (SSS) at Bournemouth University and will be dealt with under the [11k Student Disciplinary Procedure](#), as per normal complaint handling protocol. The Head of Corporate Communications (or appointed nominee) has no power to discipline students, but may seek to offer advice on use of social media if appropriate.

- 2.6 The University will ensure this policy and guidelines are accessible to students and incorporated in induction information. The University will periodically review and update the guidelines and any other associated material. Students will be notified of any significant changes via student communication channels.

Policy

3. LINKS TO OTHER BU DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 Social Media should never be used in a way that breaches any of the University's other policies. If an internet post would breach any of the University's policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. All existing University policies concerning students and third parties also apply to the use of Social Media. These include but are not limited to:

- [11H Fitness to Practice: Procedure](#)
- [11k Student Disciplinary procedure](#)
- [SUBU constitution and byelaws](#)
- [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#)
- [Additional Learning Support Policy](#)
- [All existing Student Policies and Procedures](#)

Students should also consider any codes of conduct that are required by their current or future Professional, Statutory or Regulatory body.

- 3.2 Inappropriate use of Social Media that might damage the University's operations and/or which bring the University into serious disrepute may constitute breach of disciplinary procedure and could result in serious action being taken, not limited to exclusion from the University. Furthermore, if a student has been found to have used Social Media for purposes designed to

harass, bully or intimidate or in any other way to have committed an act of misconduct (for example, those outlined in sections 5 and 6 of the [11k Student Disciplinary Procedure](#)) via Social Media, the Disciplinary Procedure shall apply.

- 3.3 The University reserves the right to require the removal of any post that is in breach of University policy or procedure (including potentially offensive material).
- 3.4 Anything that is deemed in the reasonable opinion of the University to be offensive, abusive or derogatory, or could be deemed to have breached the student disciplinary procedure, will be flagged for the individual to remove and serious or repeat offenses will result in appropriate steps being taken under the [11k Student Disciplinary Procedure](#).
- 3.5 Generally, if a personal Social Media presence does not make reference to and does not identify its owner as being a student at the University; the content is likely to be of little concern to the University. However, the content of sections 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 apply.
- 3.6 Individuals should not reveal confidential information. This might include aspects of University policy, details of internal discussions or personal information about other students.
- 3.7 Student conduct should at all times take account of the need for satisfactory relations with others within the BU community with whom they have contact with during the course of their time at University. Furthermore, contact details or pictures of other students or University employees should not be used without their prior permission.
- 3.8 If you are posting social media content, as part of paid work or a personal business, that may potentially impact the University or constitute as a conflict of interest (such as promoting rival or controversial products and/or services), the University reserves the right to take appropriate action.
- 3.9 If someone from the media (including Social Media) or other organisation makes contact about posts on a personal site which relate to the University or asking for a statement about the University, students are reminded that they are members of the University and should carefully consider the consequences of making such a response. Students should also avoid appearing as though they are speaking on behalf of the University.
- 3.10 BU reserves the right to monitor references to the University on Social Media and the internet. This may be done through keyword analysis through social media channels for instances including feedback, responding to complaints or

enquires, and reputation management. The University may also monitor forums and blogs to gain indirect feedback on University services and facilities.

- 3.11 The University may refer to social networking sites when investigating breaches of discipline, e.g. harassment, anti-social behaviour, or academic offences.
- 3.12 The University reserves the right to take any necessary steps to protect its facilities, students and employees from malware (malicious software) including blocking sites where this is an issue.