

Social Media Policy

Introduction and scope

- 1.1 The University recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on various topics using a wide variety of media such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs and wikis. The use of such online media sites has become a significant part of life for many people as a way of keeping in touch with friends and associates and can be used to exchange ideas and thoughts on common interests, both from a personal and employment perspective.
- 1.2 However, the use of social media by students of the University can pose risks to the University's confidential information, reputation and overall compliance within the law. To minimise such risks the University expects its students to comply with this policy in relation to the use of social media.
- 1.3 This policy is intended to apply to personal use of social media by students of the University. If such personal use does not make any reference to the University and the University cannot be identified, then the content is not likely to be of concern to the University.
- 1.4 If students are encouraged to use social media as part of their study, in the absence of a formal policy being put in place, such use should be conducted in line with the spirit and intent of this policy.

Guidelines relating to use of Social Media

- 2.1 If you wish to have a social media presence, or already have a presence in place, which refers to the University or from which the University can be identified, please make sure it is clear that you are speaking on your own behalf, for example by writing in the first person and using a personal e-mail address.
- 2.2 You are personally responsible for what you communicate in social media. Remember that what you publish may be readily available to the public (including the University, prospective future employers, the media and social acquaintances) for a long time. Keep this in mind when posting content. Inappropriate posting of content can damage your career potential, since potential (and current) employers often screen social media sites when considering applications.

- 2.3 Social media should not be used to verbally abuse or intimidate staff or students. Respect should be had at all times for other people's privacy and feelings. Care should be taken to avoid language which may be deemed as offensive to others. For example, you should not:
- 2.4.1 say defamatory things about people or organisations;
 - 2.4.2 say anything that is or could be construed as discriminatory;
 - 2.4.3 engage in any criminal activity;
 - 2.4.4 tell lies or mislead people; or
 - 2.4.5 post inappropriate pictures or videos.
- 2.4 Before posting pictures or details of another person you should obtain their consent.
- 2.5 Anybody is free to talk about the University on social media sites. However, please be aware that disparaging or untrue remarks which may bring the University, its staff or students into disrepute may constitute misconduct and disciplinary action may be applied. Please refer to the Students' Handbook of Regulations for further details; this policy does not vary the existing student disciplinary procedures. You should avoid posting any communications which might be misconstrued in a way that could damage the University's goodwill and academic reputation, even indirectly.
- 2.6 If you are approached by a media contact about content on a site relating to the University of Huddersfield you should contact Jenny Grainger, Director of Marketing and Communications (e-mail: j.c.grainger@hud.ac.uk) before taking any action.
- 2.7 If you wish to complain about any inappropriate posting of content, which identifies the University of Huddersfield, you should contact the Head of Registry who will investigate the matter on behalf of the University to ascertain what action, if any, may be appropriate.
- 2.8 Social media should not be used for accessing or sharing illegal content.

Compliance with related policies and agreements

- 3.1 All of the University's other policies which might apply to the use of social media remain in full force and effect
- 3.2 Social media should never be used in a way that violates any other University policies or obligations relating to students. If your post would violate any of the University's policies in another forum, it will also violate them in an online forum.
- 3.3 If there is any conflict between this policy and any of the other relevant University policies, then the more restrictive policy shall take precedence.