



Social Media Compliance Policy

POLxxx

Lead Officer (Post):	
Responsible Office/ Department:	Communications and Marketing
Responsible Committee:	Board of Management
Date policy approved:	1 st August 2023 TBC
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	n/a
Date policy due for review:	TBC
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	July 2023
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	n/a

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request.

Policy Summary

Overview	This policy has been written as a guide and support for staff and students on how to use social media in a proactive way and whilst enjoying the benefits it can create, also raise awareness of the reputational, legal and ethical implications of social media.
Purpose	It will provide assurance and guidance for all UHI NWH staff and students and protect UHI NWH from the the reputational, legal and ethical implications of social media.
Scope	All staff and Students of UNI North West and Hebrides
Consultation	A range of staff and students have been consulted on this policy as well as the Marketing and Comms team. All staff and students of UHI NWH will be notified of this policy.
Implementation and Monitoring	The policy will be implemented the UHI NWH Comms and Marketing Team who will also monitor its use and impact.
Risk Implications	This policy addresses the reputational, legal and ethical implications of social media on UHI NWH.
Link with Strategy	This policy links to and aligns with the overall UHI social Media policy.
Impact Assessment	Equality Impact Assessment: No further action.
	Privacy Impact Assessment: n/a

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Social media channels provide important and exciting opportunities for UHI North, West and Hebrides to communicate and engage with a wide range of audiences and stakeholders. These channels also provide a range of professional and personal opportunities for staff and students. It must also be considered how these channels are being used and why. There are a number of risks that come from the use of social media that could impact not only on UHI North, West and Hebrides' reputation but also on those of our staff and students.
- 1.2 This policy has been written to guide and support staff and students on how to use social media in a proactive way and whilst enjoying the benefits it can create, also raise awareness of the reputational, legal and ethical implications of social media. In particular, it provides information on:
- Responsibilities when communicating via corporate social media accounts.
 - Expectations of staff on individual personal and professional accounts.
 - Expectations of students in relation to social media.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 UHI and partners: UHI is an integrated university, made up of a distinctive partnership of independent colleges and research institutions. The partners are: UHI Argyll, UHI Inverness, UHI Moray, UHI North, West and Hebrides, UHI Perth, UHI Shetland, Highland Theological College UHI, Orkney College UHI, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, and Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS).
- 2.2 Social media: websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. Examples of popular social media includes, but is not limited to:
- LinkedIn
 - Twitter
 - Facebook
 - YouTube
 - Instagram
 - Snapchat
 - Wikis and blogs
 - TikTok
 - WhatsApp
- 2.3 Corporate social media: any social media account run by a department, academic area/subject, learning centre or any other area within the college.

3 Purpose

- 3.1 The objectives of this policy are:
- 3.1.1 To provide staff and students with information on the management and delivery social media from UHI North, West and Hebrides and realistic expectation from that.
 - 3.1.2 To ensure a consistent approach to social media across the institution
 - 3.1.3 To set out the legal risks associated with social media use.
 - 3.1.4 To ensure staff and students do not compromise their personal security or the security of UHI North, West and Hebrides.
 - 3.1.5 To set out the responsibilities of users of corporate social media accounts

- 3.1.6 To support users of corporate social media accounts to mitigate the risks associated with social media, protecting themselves as well as UHI North, West and Hebrides.
- 3.1.7 To signpost staff and students to resources which will support them in enhancing their social media presence and that of the college and university.
- 3.1.8 To provide clear direction and support for issues and concerns regarding social media use.

4 Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to all social media used by staff and students at UHI North, West and Hebrides.

5 Exceptions

- 5.1 This policy applies without exceptions, exclusions, or restrictions.

6 Notification

- 6.1 This policy will be made available on the college's website and on the college SharePoint site.

7 Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Staff

- 7.1.1 **Appropriate Use:** Staff may make reasonable use of social media for the promotion of their academic work and course promotion. It is advised that staff work with the UHI NHW Marketing and Comms team to develop a strategy to maximise growth and engagement. Staff should also follow our [Social Media Guidance](#).
- 7.1.2 **Contribution to corporate accounts:** Any staff wishing to contribute to college social media accounts managed by the Marketing and Comms team can do so by raising a ticket – add link to ticket system and guidance on how to raise a ticket.
- 7.1.3 **Creation of new accounts:** All new accounts for UHI North, West and Hebrides must be approved by the Marketing and Comms Teams. Before you think about the creation of a new account consider why you want to do this. Can the needs of your audience be met through existing accounts? All new accounts will need to be presented to the Comms and Marketing teams with a plan detailing audiences, content, how this content will be produced, managed and consistency developed, account ownership and details of how it will align with other existing accounts and strategies.
- 7.1.4 **Management of approved accounts:** All existing accounts must align with UHI North, West and Hebrides's Brand Guidelines and Marketing and Comms Strategy. The Marketing and Comms team must have access to the account and know what hours it is monitored by the account managers.

It is essential that all social media accounts are kept up to date, posted from regularly and monitored on a frequent basis. Questions should be responded to promptly within operating hours. Accounts that are not managed in this way will be reviewed by the Marketing and Comms team and steps may be taken to close dormant accounts.
- 7.1.5 **Posting:** It is vital all staff remember when posting on corporate channels that they are representing UHI North, West and Hebrides. All posts must be carefully considered

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as all communications within your role, including safeguarding, duty of care, all college policies regarding HR and privacy. You must always represent yourself professional and not risk the reputation of UHI North, West and Hebrides. If you need any support on what to content to produce, please seek advice form the Marketing and Comms team. Content posted or promoted on corporate accounts must be respectful of others and courteous. Corporate accounts must not be used to criticise or argue with colleagues, students, customers, partners or competitors. Staff posting on personal accounts and channels but referencing their work or role with UHI North, West and Hebrides must also be aware of and adhere to the above.

- 7.1.6 **Accessibility:** All graphics and film produced for social media must be done in partnership with the Marketing and comms team to ensure accessibility.
- 7.1.7 **Security:** Staff are responsible for the security of the account they manage. Risk of hacking is very real and must be considered. This is why the Marketing and Comms team must have access to all accounts. Hacking can cause significant reputational damage. There are also considerable resource implications following on from any breach in security such as a compromised social media account.
- You are responsible for selecting a strong password and storing it in a secure way. You must never save passwords on hard drives or paper or send them via email.
 - If you have to update your password you must let the Marketing and Comms team know.
 - If your account is hacked you must report it to the Marketing and Comms team in order to manage this as quickly as possible.
 - If others are given temporary access to accounts – for student takeovers for example – a temp password must be provided.
- 7.1.8 **Process for raising concerns and/or complaints:** If you see anything on social media that causes you any concern, you must report it to the Marketing and Comms team as soon as possible.

If you receive engagement or comments on a post that you do not know how to reply to, please speak to the Marketing and Comms team who can support you. Do not engage with trolls or people who are making derogatory remarks. It is important to first seek guidance on how best to handle such comments.

- 7.1.9 **Individual or Professional Accounts – not official UHI North, West and Hebrides accounts:** Social media can be an important tool for colleagues' professional activity and provide a helpful platform for profile raising and enhancing networks. It is recommended that colleagues using social media for both professional and personal reasons maintain separate accounts for these purposes as the audiences for each activity are often distinct.

Individuals' personal and professional accounts should not use UHI North, West and Hebrides branding and, if staff do discuss their work on social media, they should make it clear on their profile statement or elsewhere that the views expressed are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the College.

All employees should consider what they are posting on their individual accounts. UHI North, West and Hebrides does not and will not monitor individuals' accounts.

However, if a concern is raised regarding content posted on a staff member's social media account the college has the right to request the removal of content.

In addition, the matter may be addressed through our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious breaches including, but not limited to, harassment or bullying of colleagues and the misuse of confidential information may constitute gross misconduct and may lead to action including dismissal.

7.2 Students

- 7.2.1 Posting:** Individuals are personally responsible for their communications through social media. Remember that what you publish may be readily available to the public (including the college, 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.

Anybody is free to talk about UHI North, West and Hebrides on social media sites, however you must not share confidential information, or make personal attacks on staff members or other students. UHI North, West and Hebrides has a duty to promote freedom of speech and recognises that an attitude of tolerance is essential to enable academic debate. All students and staff are required to show respect and tolerance towards the views, opinions and beliefs of others, even though those views, opinions or beliefs may run contrary to their own personal views, opinions or beliefs.

- 7.2.2 Reference to UHI North, West and Hebrides:** Students who have a social media presence which refers to UHI North, West and Hebrides, or from which the college can be identified, should ensure it is clear they are speaking in a personal capacity. Students should not declare, imply or indicate that their content or views are representative of those of UHI North, West and Hebrides. The college may request the removal of content if it is deemed to pose a risk to the reputation of UHI North, West and Hebrides or to that of one of its staff/students.

- 7.2.3 Security and safety:** Social media should not be used to verbally abuse or intimidate staff, students or members of the public. Respect should be shown 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:
- Say defamatory things about people or organisations;
 - say anything that is or could be construed as discriminatory;
 - engage in any criminal activity;
 - tell lies or mislead people; or
 - post inappropriate pictures or videos.

8 Legislative Framework

n/a

9 Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

- TBC

10 Version Control and Change History

Version	Date	Endorsed / Approved	Amendment(s)	Author
0	Jul 2023	Endorsed	New NWH policy.	Comms Practitioners
1				
2				
3				
4				