ROTHERHAM UNITED COMMUNITY TRUST

POLICY / PROCEDURE

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1 Introduction

This policy applies to professional and personal use of social media by employees, contractors and other people who undertake paid or voluntary work on behalf of Rotherham United Community Trust(RUCST).

(RUCT) is committed to make the most effective use of communications technologies to support learning, teaching, research recruitment and public relations and engage with our communities.
In particular, external social media platforms - web based tools that allow instant interaction between users - greatly enhance our ability to communicate and network with colleagues, students/learners and the public.

At the same time, it is essential to recognise and manage the legal, ethical and reputational risks arising from the use of social media communications platforms. Information, once published online, may remain in the public domain indefinitely. (RUCT) also recognises that many people use social media to communicate for work related, study and personal purposes and that the boundaries between professional and private use are increasingly blurred. Therefore, (RUCT) has a responsibility to set out its expectations for employees about acceptable and unacceptable use of social media, in line with its wider rules governing professional conduct and safeguarding. This policy sets out a framework to promote effective use of social media for work, to maintain a safe, professional environment and protect the interests of (RUCT) and all members of the (RUCT)'s community. Any breach of this policy could lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal and/or legal action

2 Purpose

The purpose of the social media policy is to clarify the rules for using social media websites, so that employees are clear what is acceptable and what is unacceptable.

Social media is the term commonly given to websites, online tools and other information communication technologies which allow users to interact with each other in some way by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests.
Examples of social media include podcasts, message boards, social networking sites such as Facebook, Linked In, Twitter and Snapchat and content sharing websites such as YouTube. It is important that we use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly to develop the business by supporting innovation and providing a framework of good practice.

This policy and its supporting guidance aim to:

- Support appropriate use of social media for the (RUCT)'s academic and Professional purposes;
- Clarify that there are no boundaries between work-related and private use of social media;
- Safeguard the interests and privacy of our students/learners, staff and Stakeholders and retain their trust;
- Promote e-safety and privacy online;
- Maintain the security of our IT systems and infrastructure;
- Protect our intellectual property rights, information assets, financial interests and competitive edge;
- Maintain our reputation;
- Confirm what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviour and conduct in terms of social media usage;
- Comply with the law and help defend (RUCT) and its employees against legal action

3 Objectives

3.1 Using social media in academic and professional life

(RUCT) actively supports appropriate use of social media. All colleagues using social media need to be aware that, while contributing to (RUCT)'s social media activities, they are representing the Company at all times.

Colleagues need to ensure that their use of social media is compliant with the law and the issues covered by this policy.

3.2 Identification of (RUCT) social media accounts

All (RUCT) social media accounts must be clearly identified as such, using the company branding and logo. Colleagues who manage (RUCT) social media accounts are responsible for ensuring that passwords and other access controls are of adequate strength and kept secure. All official (RUCT) accounts should be set up to be managed jointly by nominated staff using an account with shared login.

Credentials specific to the account, using a strong password, so that authorised colleagues can add content in the absence of the main content provider. Under no circumstances should passwords for individual staff accounts be shared with others. Accounts should not be left open and unattended for any period. These accounts should also only be managed on a company provided device, not personal devices.

3.3 Intellectual property rights in RUCT social media accounts

The content of RUCT social media accounts created by colleagues on company business and associated intellectual property rights belong to the (RUCT).

3.4 Use of private social media accounts in public life

All colleagues within the (RUCT) whether using a private account or not are representative of the (RUCT) at all times and therefore must comply with this policy at all times. If found to be in breach of this policy and it's guidelines on usage then appropriate disciplinary action may be taken.

3.5 Acceptable conduct online

In the online environment, as in all other areas of RUCT, all members of the (RUCT) community need to treat others with dignity and respect, as they themselves should expect to be treated, at all times, in accordance with RUCT values.

RUCT recognises that employees may use social media to express personal views. The (RUCT) does not routinely monitor the content posted by employees or students using social media. However, the (RUCT) has a responsibility to investigate and to take appropriate action to deal with all instances of misconduct involving employees and students/learners that are drawn to its attention, whether they take place online or face to face.

Examples of personal conduct in a personal or professional capacity which may incur disciplinary action (up to and including dismissal for Gross Misconduct) and may also be breaking criminal or civil law include:

- Behaviour that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by: making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
- Posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content;
- Breach of confidentiality, for example by: revealing confidential intellectual property or information owned by the (RUCT) or another organisation (such as a partner institution); or discussing the (RUCT)'s internal workings (such as agreements that it is reaching with partner institutions/customers or its future business plans that have not been communicated to the public);
- Breaching the privacy of students, colleagues or other people whose personal data is held by the (RUCT), though sharing of their personal data in contravention of the General Data Protection Principles;
- Conduct which brings RUCST into disrepute (This list is an example and is not exhaustive) for example by:
  - criticising or arguing with students/learners, customers, colleagues, partners or competitors; making abusive or defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups; or posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;
  - Breaching copyright, for example by: using someone else's images or written content without permission; or failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something.

- Where colleagues are in receipt of offensive, unacceptable content via social media in a work context, this should be reported to a relevant member of management immediately.
- Offensive or threatening posts received on personal, private social media accounts should be reported to the service provider and the police. The (RUCT) will always seek to provide help and assistance at such times and can be contacted on 01709 827767.

This list is an example and is not exhaustive

3.6 Employee personal use of social media at work

RUCT IT and Communications Facilities Acceptable Use Policy applies to the personal use of social media by employees at work. The RUCT permits only limited private use of social media on RUCT IT systems from RUCST and personal devices for non-(RUCT) purposes.
However, this should not be carried out in work time; i.e. should be limited to lunch or other breaks. Where excessive use, interfering with relevant duties, is proven, RUCT may take disciplinary action.

The Company reserves the right to monitor your internet usage and considers the following to be valid reasons for checking an employee's internet usage:

- If the organisation suspects that the employee has been viewing offensive or illegal material, such as material containing racist terminology or nudity (although the organisation understands that it is possible for employees inadvertently to view such material and they will have the opportunity to explain if this is the case).
- If the organisation suspects that the employee has been spending time viewing websites that are not work related.

Monitoring will consist of checking the websites that an employee has visited and the duration of such visits.

Monitoring of an employee's email and/or internet use is considered to be in the organisation's legitimate interests and is to ensure that this policy on social media use is being complied with.

RUCT has appointed Jamie Noble as its data protection manager.

Monitoring will normally be conducted by the organisation's management team. The information obtained through monitoring may be shared internally, including with members of the HR team, an employee's line manager, managers in the business area in which the employee works and IT staff if access to the data is necessary for performance of their roles.

Information may also be shared with third parties such as our HR/legal advisors, legal authorities or law enforcement. However, information would ordinarily be shared in this way if the Company has reasonable grounds to believe that there has been a breach of the rules set out in this policy or a breach of the law.

The information gathered through monitoring will be retained on the employee file in line with our retention policy.

Workers have a number of rights in relation to their data, including the right to make a subject access request and the right to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. You can find further details of these rights and how to exercise them in the Company's data protection policy. If workers believe that the organisation has not complied with their data protection rights, they can complain to the Information Commissioner.

3.7 Social media and public interest disclosure

Where an employee wishes to release information that may be considered as a Public Interest Disclosure ("Whistle Blowing"), RUCT Whistleblowing Policy must be initiated in the first instance before any action is taken through social media. Please also refer to the RUCT Privacy Policy in this instance.

4. Scope

4.1 This policy applies to:-

- All employees and to all social media communications which directly or indirectly represent RUCT including all volunteers, Interns and Casual/Self Employed workers.
- Employee use of RUCT social media accounts in the course of their work for the (RUCT).
- Personal use by colleagues of social media that contains comments about the work of or their colleagues' work
- Personal use of social media by colleagues, that impacts on RUCT's operational, legal or reputational liabilities
- Casual workers, including external examiners and agency workers engaged on RUCT business
- Students, contractors, suppliers, (RUCT) partners and external researchers and visitors who are issued with login credentials to manage or post content to (RUCT) social media accounts on behalf of the (RUCT).

4.2 The scope of this policy includes use of social media for promotional, learning, teaching and research activities and for private use that impacts on RUCT.

4.3 Where the Policy applies

This policy applies to online communications posted at any time and from anywhere, whether to an individual, a limited group or the world.

5. Lines of responsibility

Colleagues designated as senior managers of social media accounts, or with responsibility for organising use of social media for (RUCT) purposes are responsible for making themselves aware of this policy, it's contents and the objectives set out in section three using social media in line with recommended standards and guidelines.

6 Principles, Rules & Regulations

Social networks do not offer a cloak of anonymity so when representing RUCT, employees are representing a public brand and can therefore publicly damage the Company's reputation with inappropriate posts.

Access to social media websites is provided so that employees can perform their job roles; all posts/interactions on behalf of the Company should comply with guidelines provided by the (RUCT).

Personal use of social media should be restricted to non-working time e.g. breaks, lunch time or outside of work.
For social media there is no clear line between employees' work life and their personal lives and professional boundaries must be maintained.

Privacy does not exist in social media so even if an employee posts in their own time, inappropriate comments can impact on the (RUCT), its customers, suppliers, business partner and employees.

Employees are encouraged to think before posting; public posts are indexed in search engines and private comments can be forwarded or copied and easily made available to the public.

Employees should be aware that what is posted on personal pages could impact on them professionally.

Employees are expected to treat customers, suppliers, business partners and other employees with the same level of respect that they would expect to receive. Comments, banter or conversations may be viewed as offensive to some people and therefore may be classed as harassment or bullying and will be treated in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure.

Information that is confidential to Rotherham United Community (RUCT) or its customers or suppliers e.g. future plans or financial information should never be revealed.
Employees should not post material that is unlawful, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, abusive, slanderous, hateful or embarrassing to any other person.

7 The potential audience

When using social media, it is important that participants are aware that:-

- The potential audience is unrestricted in terms of age, gender, nationality and number
- Participants should be particularly minded that their posts will be read by children of all ages, and so whatever they post must be suitable for a family audience
- The audience may include journalists who may follow a participant as a resource for information about the Club
- People may try to provoke a response from a participant on social media sites that will be significantly more newsworthy
- Other users of social media may not be who they seem, or may not use their real identities on social media sites
- Comments made in the heat of the moment may be regretted in the cold light of day

This list is an example and is not exhaustive

8 (RUCST) and Club Matters

Under this Social Media policy any sensitive information about the (RUCST) or players for Rotherham United Football Club is strictly prohibited. The following are examples of what is prohibited but this is not an exhaustive list.

i Information that is confidential to the Club or to a fellow employee such as:

a information about team selections, injuries and tactics;
b information about possible transfers
c information about a player which the Club may nevertheless reasonably regard as confidential, e.g. information about contractual discussions, or about his fitness or any medical treatment he is undergoing
d information about a teammate posted without the individual's consent (and where appropriate, such as in the case of information about the teammate's fitness, without the Club's consent); and
e personal data of colleagues (phone numbers, email address and home addresses)
f any disciplinary issue regarding any employee

ii Criticism of the Club, its manager, playing tactics, players, directors or staff.

iii Criticism of match officials

iv Endorsements of brands/goods/services which conflict with those of Rotherham United Football Club's commercial partners (or of The Football League's commercial partners) contrary to clauses 4.3 and 4.4 of the standard player's contract (and save as permitted by those clauses);

9 Betting

Users of social media sites should also exercise caution when posting/posting about betting and in particular should post nothing which could be interpreted as a breach of either Football League or FA rules prohibiting betting.

http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/policies/betting/betting-rules

Special care is needed as these rules prohibit not only direct betting on a competition in which the Club is competing that season, but also instructing or enabling another person to bet, and providing 'inside information', such as details of team selections, injuries and tactics, that are not publicly available to another person who then uses it in relation to betting.

9 Monitoring

If you have any doubt about acceptable/unacceptable content you should contact the Data Protection Lead who is responsible for the Club's social media output.

10 General Advice

1. The Senior Management Team (SMT) set up all social media accounts for subject area/department use e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and linkedin
2. Do **not** use personal social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and linkedin accounts to interact with students (this list is not exhaustive)
3. **Monitoring** – There are 5 departments that use our social media accounts. It is impossible for the SMT to monitor all of these all the time. We would appreciate it if you take responsibility for the content you post and if you have any issues with abuse/negative comments to report it to the SMT. Photos relevant to work being carried out should not be taken on personal devices
4. Your employment prohibits you from having personal contact with students, parents or any participant in the (RUCT)s work.

11 How to be successful on Social Media

1. **Interact with your followers** – If you receive a question, respond as soon as possible!
2. **Be consistent** – Use the same tone with your followers. Post regularly.
3. **Keep it short** – You are limited to the amount of characters you have on Twitter and it is a fact that people do not read more than a couple of lines of a status on Facebook
4. **Don't butt in** – You don't need to always be involved in all conversations. You can let people talk about you without you needing to get involved unless it's a question or something that needs addressing
5. **Be transparent** – Choose the content you post carefully. Give people an insight into your department/unit
6. **Be proactive** – Keep an eye on what competitors are doing and what other departments are doing in the (RUCST). It is ok to steal ideas! Like/follow them to be able to monitor their activity and share posts/posts where relevant
7. **Respond to feedback** – Whether it's positive or negative, thank those that post and respond accordingly. Never delete content unless it's offensive or abusive. If you do delete it – take a screenshot first and save it carefully.
8. **Make a plan** – Plan the content you are going to post in advance. Look at key events in the calendar and schedule posts around them
9. **Don't get political** – Do not post content that could be found offensive by any of your followers. Political and religious post should be avoided.

10. **Don't get personal** – Do not post any personal content about yourself or your students. If someone contents you with a personal matter please ask them to contact you via direct messaging or in person at the (RUCST)
11. **Share RUCST content** – Share posts from stakeholders, funding providers and partners in order to highlight relevant information that can complement what your department is doing
12. **Variety of Content** – Use different types of content to keep your followers engage. Use a mixture or images, videos, links etc.
13. **Advertise your accounts** – Whether it's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Snapchat get the addresses added to your business cards. *Contact the SMT for support with this*.
14. **Report** – Doing nothing is not an option and you have a responsibility to report any wrongdoing or safeguarding concerns.

12 Social Media Sites Do's and Don'ts

This includes the following Social Media sites however, this list is not exhaustive

- **Facebook**
- **Twitter**
- **Instagram**
- **Snapchat**
- **Linkedin**

1. **Report posts that contain abuse/swearing/offensive language** – do **NOT** delete the content. We need you to keep the content just in case the person in question needs investigating and further action to be taken. If this kind of behaviour arises please contact the SMT for support
2. **Delete the URL** – if you are putting a post that has a URL in it, copy the URL in the status update box and let the URL generate a preview box and image. You can then delete the URL you pasted in and in some cases you can choose the image that will be displayed with the preview, you can also shorten URLs using https://goo.gl/
3. **Set up a professional profile** – This is so that you can use Groups and be able to interact with students without them seeing any personal information about you. Use a name like "JohnEducationRUCT" so it is obvious that you are representing your professional self. Make sure that you "hide" all the personal information that Facebook asks for when you create your profile. This can be found in the "About" section on your profile
4. **Don't follow everyone** – Remember that anyone can see who you follow on Twitter. Make sure the people you follow are relevant
5. **Don't over share content** – you don't need to repost every bit of content you see. Only repost what you think is relevant to your followers and your subject
6. **#RUCT** – Try to use this hash tag as often as possible and when you have enough characters in your posts. These will then be picked up when anyone clicks on the hashtag
7. **@RU_CT** – If you want the (RUCT) to respond to you or repost your post, please add @RU_CT in your post
8. **Consider the length** - Be aware of the 140 characters. Links, images and hashtags all take up characters
9. **Search bar** - Use the Twitter search tool to search for names, hashtags, people and brands
10. **Hashtags** - add relevant hashtags to your posts so that others can find them (#inclusion, #NCS etc.)
11. **Lists** – The (RUCT) has lists of all staff members on its profile. It's a quick and easy way to see all the other (RUCST) accounts and to be able to follow them.

12 **Be patient** – Don't follow too many accounts at once. Be patient when starting out, it can take a while to build up followers depending on how much content you post