

Social Media Guidelines for Students

Purpose of the Guidelines

The aim of these guidelines is to help:

- Protect and support students contributing to, and engaging with, social media
- Encourage good practice
- Protect the reputation of the University, its staff, students, partner organisations and clients.

Scope of the Guidelines

These social media guidelines are aimed at students who use, or intend to use, social media as part of their studies at Canterbury Christ Church University. These guidelines also apply to students' personal use of social media where their comments could be taken to reflect on the University.

Contacts

Any questions or concerns about the interpretation or operation of this policy should be taken up with the University's Secretary Office - Robert Melville, Assistant University Secretary (e-mail foi@canterbury.ac.uk).

CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY

Introduction

Social media is a part of everyday life. The rapid growth of social media has made communication faster and easier than ever before. It is a great tool to enhance your learning experience by sharing knowledge, discussing ideas, and developing professional and social networks.

Social media is the collection of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interactions, content-sharing, and collaboration. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation, and wikis are among the different types of social media. Prominent examples include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Reddit, Pinterest, TikTok and Instagram

While social media presents opportunities, there are risks associated with it. Social media allows individuals to communicate with a potentially huge audience. Sometimes its informality can encourage a person to be less cautious than when using other communication and interaction methods.

You might face risks such as:

Risk	What it means
Data leakage	where you reveal information about yourself (or another person) that someone else can use to your disadvantage
Profile hacking/identify theft/phishing	where hackers steal personal information such as names, addresses or contact and financial information from social media profiles to commit crimes
Fake apps and malicious links	where you click on or download something that contains malware
Cyberbullying	where you receive or post something that can be seen as harassing another person
Cyber-stalking	when people follow, monitor, or harass others online through the Internet and social networking sites

[The Student Code of Conduct](#) sets out what the University considers inappropriate behaviour on or off University premises, including the use of social media. Please note that we may discipline a student for unacceptable behaviour wherever and whenever it took place.

Social Media Guidelines

The following social media guidelines are for students who use or intend to use social media as part of their studies at Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU). These guidelines also apply to students' personal use of social media where postings could reflect on the University.

The guidelines aim to:

- Protect and support students engaging with social media
- Help identify and assess potential issues related to the use of social media
- Encourage good practice
- Protect the reputation of the University, its staff, students, partner organisations and clients.

Guidelines	Points to consider
	Protect Yourself
Be confidential	Do not reveal personal information (such as names or dates of birth) about yourself and others, including other students and staff.
Use privacy settings	Learn about and use the privacy and security settings on social networks. They are there to help you control who sees what you post and manage your online experience positively.
Control your location	Consider turning off the geolocation on your phone and location tagging in your social media apps.
Think before you post	Do not jump into social media without a purpose. Having a goal will guide discussions regarding what elements you want to include in social media postings. Decide which social media community best fits your needs. Understand the community you would like to engage. You might start as an observer. You can then make your postings as you become comfortable and confident within that community. As a guideline, do not post anything you would not want to see posted about you.
Keep calm	If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, you might think about waiting to make your comment until you are calm and clearheaded.
Connect thoughtfully	By connecting to other social media sites, you can build your community. However, it could also give the unintended impression that you endorse a particular cause, group, or person. Be clear to yourself about who you 'friend' and 'follow', what sites you link to and what comments you make.
Identify your contacts	Consider if and how you respond to a private message on any social media platform if you do not know the sender.
Perception is reality	In online social networks, the lines between the public and private

	become blurred. By identifying yourself as a CCCU student, you create perceptions about yourself. Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with how you wish others to see you and represent the University appropriately.
Postings can be for life	There is no such thing as a private social media site. Although you might forget about a posting, others may not. Even when you delete a post, archival systems can save the information. Search engines can reveal posts and pictures years after posting. Comments can be forwarded, copied or screen shots taken.
Think about life after your studies	A posting you made years ago can come to the attention of the public, the media, an employer, or a professional body. It may reflect poorly on you and lead to embarrassment or sanctions. It can affect your reputation and this could affect your career prospects.
Think carefully before posting photographs	Post only pictures you would be comfortable sharing with the public, current and future friends, and current and future employers.
Follow your profession's standards	Should you be preparing to enter a profession, you need to follow the rules set out by the Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body for your professional studies. Inappropriate postings may directly affect your future learning and career aspirations. If you are not sure if your course has professional body requirements, you should ask your Course Team.
Stay safe	Be cautious of phishers. Phishers might try to gain control of a social media site by deceiving you into revealing your username and password and even financial details. Some people will try to engage with you without the best of intentions. For example, situations of harassment or bullying can develop over time. Be mindful of your personal safety if agreeing to meet someone in person and if someone asks you to send them details, photographs or any other information you are may not be comfortable with, or asks or challenges you to do risky, illegal or explicit behaviour.
Protect your accounts	Just like your other accounts, keep your social media passwords secure. Make your password difficult, do not share with anyone and change periodically. One of the best ways to keep your social media accounts safe is to enable two-factor (or multi-factor) authentication on the accounts that you use on a regular basis.
Monitor your social media sites	You should look at your sites regularly to see if there was an attempt at unauthorised access. If you have a large audience, your site becomes more tempting as a target. Close any social media sites you no longer use.
	Protect Others

Safeguard others	Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Ensure you keep others safe. Do not post something that could harm another person or that gives out personal information without their agreement. Let us know if you believe someone might be under threat through social media.
Respect others	Social media sites provide for two-way communication. Other people may have a different view from yours, and you need to respect that difference in thinking. As a student, you should respond when relevant, but consider how your response may reflect on you, your course, and the University. All freedom of speech must be within the law. Postings that are threatening, bullying, harassing, discriminatory, sexually explicit, inflammatory, or hateful may lead to disciplinary action. You can talk to your tutor if you are unsure about posting something or responding to a comment.
Respect the rights of others	Respect the intellectual property rights of others. Sometimes content posted to a social media site becomes the property of the platform operator.
Respect the law	You may become personally responsible if you break the law on social media sites (for example, posting something defamatory or representing hate speech).
Be a valued member	Think about how you can contribute with valuable insights. Others can see self-promoting behaviour negatively. It can even lead to your removal from sites or groups
	Protect the University
Protect CCCU's logo	Under no circumstances may you use the CCCU logo for personal purposes.
Respect CCCU	Post in good taste and protect CCCU's reputation. As a student of CCCU, avoid postings that could lead to misinterpretation. Ask your tutor or the Department of Marketing if you are unsure. Respect University property, University computers are reserved for University-related activities.
Stay accurate	Review your content before posting. If you know you have made a mistake, correct it as soon as possible. It will earn you respect in the online community.
Remain transparent	Be honest about your identity. If you choose to post about CCCU, please identify yourself as a CCCU student.
Follow the student handbook	You need to follow the requirements regarding academic integrity and the student code of conduct as outlined in your Student Handbook
	Respect the Social Media Platform Rules
Follow the social media	Should you see something on a social media site that concerns

platform terms of use	<p>you, you should report it to the social media provider. Here are links to policies for some of the more popular platforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook ○ Twitter ○ Instagram ○ Snapchat ○ LinkedIn ○ YouTube ○ Flickr ○ Wikipedia ○ WordPress ○ Pinterest ○ Tumblr ○ TikTok ○ Reddit <p>Media platform rules are subject to change.</p>
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Reporting issues

- Should a person send you threatening, abusive or offensive messages online or via social networking sites, they could be committing a criminal offence. You can report this to the Police online or by calling 101.

Where there has only been a single communication, it is unlikely it would qualify as harassment. However, it could be considered a malicious communication. An indecent, grossly offensive, obscene, threatening or menacing message must be sent to another person or via a public communications network for an offence to be committed.

- You can (and should) report online abuse directly to the social media platform. [This website](#) helps you to report online abuse on the most used social media platforms
- If you have experienced or witnessed online bullying and harassment within the Christ Church online community, you can report this via our online [Report+Support tool](#). If you feel at immediate risk and are on campus you can also ask for support from our Security Team.

Support

Should you experience or witness online bullying and harassment, you can talk confidentially to our [Student Wellbeing Service](#) or a [Report and Support Adviser](#) for emotional support.

What the University will do

The University will:
Page 6

- Make these guidelines accessible to staff and students.
- Give students the information to stay safe on the internet when using social media.
- Monitor references to the University on social media.
- Look into issues regarding students' behaviour on social media and, if necessary, follow it up through the [Student Disciplinary Procedures](#).
- Periodically review and update the guidelines.

Useful links

- [Online Safety](#)
- [Terms and Conditions of Registration](#)
- [Student Disciplinary Procedures](#)

Social Media Guidelines

Department Owner	Student Communications
Subject	Social Media Guidelines to help protect and support students contributing to, and engaging with, social media
Related University Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Terms and Conditions of Registration• Student Disciplinary Procedures• The Student and University Partnership Agreement
Approved by	Students' Union and University Partnership Forum
Date Approved	September 2022
Date of Commencement	October 2022
Review Date:	October 2024
Version	1.3

