

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

Date approved:	09/12/2016	Date policy will take effect:	09/12/2016	Date of Next Review:	09/12/2019
Approving Authority:	Academic Council				
Responsible School/Unit:	Registrar, Heads of school				
Consultation undertaken:					
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy:	Not applicable				
Reference(s)	Not applicable				
Audience:	Public – accessible to anyone				
Category:	Student-Centred learning, Teaching and Assessment				

1 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment(s)
1	20/06/2012	Academic Council (AC:DOC:127:04:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First version of policy
2	28/04/2014	Academic Council (AC:DOC:127:04:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amendment to 4.5.2• Amendment to 5.1.3
3	09/12/2016	Academic Council (AC:DOC:150:10:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To incorporate Digital Citizenship Initiative

Contents

1	Version Control and Change History	2
2	Purpose of Policy.....	3
3	Institute Policy regarding the use of Social Networking Sites	3
4	Policy Principles.....	3
5	Work-placements, including Internships or Clinical Placements	4
6	Guide to Good Practice On-line.....	5
7	Infringements.....	5

2 Purpose of Policy

1. The purpose of this policy is to set out the Institute's position on the use of Social Networking websites.

3 Institute Policy regarding the use of Social Networking Sites¹

1. This policy applies to all members and addresses specific issues around the use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Tumblr, You Tube, Flickr and all kinds of online communication, including personal websites and blogs, wikis, discussion boards, email groups and instant messaging. It also covers all kinds of content shared online, including text, photographs, images, video and audio files. The remit of this policy also extends to on-line communication yet to be developed.
2. The Institute recognises that communication online and via social networking sites is now an integral part of people's daily lives and affords tremendous possibilities for the promotion of both individual work and of the reputation of the Institute. Members of the Institute community should when possible take advantage of these opportunities to promote themselves and the Institute in a professional manner, however if in doubt about the implications of content you should not publish and seek advice from your Head of Function/Department.

4 Policy Principles

1. The Institute recognises the right to dignity of every individual associated with it and it expects that each be treated with consideration, courtesy and respect without harassment or physical or verbal abuse. Every member shall refrain from conduct liable to infringe the rights of others. The Institute's individual codes of conduct require staff and students to treat others with respect for their person and their rights, whether in the Institute or elsewhere, and to avoid conduct which infringes upon the rights or lawful activities of others, or which brings the Institute into disrepute.
2. Social networking sites often encourage a level of familiarity, which is at variance with good long term professional practice. Some social media sites require the user to relinquish any rights to information once posted, so that recalling of previously posted information may be impossible. Although social networking sites might appear anonymous, transactions and messages can be sourced back to the originating computer.
3. Dundalk Institute of Technology has a public duty to protect its reputation. Where misuse of its logo and other branding products is found or where it is fraudulently associated with activities or positions, the Institute reserves the right to pursue infringements.

¹ This draft policy is informed by the advice presented by the Nursing and Midwifery Council on social networking sites. Nursing and midwifery council.(2012).Available at: <http://www.nmc-uk.org/Nurses-and-midwives/Advice-by-topic/A/Advice/Social-networking-sites/> [Accessed 20 June 2014]

As part of the Institute's Digital Citizenship Initiative, all members of the Institute are provided with awareness training and information on responsible and professional behaviour in the use of social networking sites and other online communications.

4. While accepting the right to free speech and expression of ideas, the Institute advises that the following activities can conflict with its individual codes of conduct. Some of these activities may also be illegal and can be subject to civil or criminal prosecution.
5. In respect of the use of social networking sites, the Institute's individual codes of conduct may be infringed if staff or students (list not exhaustive):
 - 5.1. Share confidential information online;
 - 5.2. Post inappropriate comments about colleagues or peers within the Institute or in any professional or social environment including inappropriate pictures of staff or students of the institute;
 - 5.3. Post material which could be construed as bullying, threatening, harassing, illegal, obscene, defamatory, slanderous, or hostile towards any individual or entity.
 - 5.4. Pursue personal relationships with persons in their care, during clinical or work placements;
 - 5.5. Distribute sexually explicit material;
 - 5.6. Trade insults with others online;
 - 5.7. Use social networking sites in any way which is unlawful;
 - 5.8. Provide professional advice unless qualified and authorised to do so;
 - 5.9. Use the Institute brand to imply that you are an employee of the Institute or that you are making representations on behalf of the Institute.

5 Work-placements, including Internships or Clinical Placements

1. Students who undertake work placements as part of their studies should note the following:
 - 1.1. Students working with youth groups, community groups, patients or clients should not use social networks to build or pursue relationships with those in their care and with service users, even when the placement terminates. Friendship requests from a current or former patient or person who has been in one's care, should be ignored, avoiding the need to give unnecessary offence.
 - 1.2. Work-related matters should never be discussed online, including conversations about those in one's care or complaints about colleagues. Even when anonymised, these are likely to be inappropriate.
 - 1.3. Pictures of staff or students of the institute or of those in one's care, while on placement or of service users at placement sites should never be published on line, even if those persons request it. Cameras should not be used in the workplace or in the Institute without the express permission of staff/students being recorded

- 1.4. Social networking sites should not be used for raising and escalating concerns (commonly referred to as whistleblowing). Such matters should be raised with a supervisor or Head of Function/Department.

6 Guide to Good Practice On-line

1. Personal and professional lives should be kept separate as far as possible. This applies when using Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or any other social networking sites. If you do identify yourself as a staff member or student of Dundalk Institute of Technology, make it clear that the views that are expressed are yours and not that of the Institute.
 - 1.1. Conduct online can have implications beyond one's time as a student. Inappropriate online behaviour may jeopardise a student's future, in particular, for example in professions where fitness to practice must be established or where on-line behaviour such as hacking may lead to criminal prosecution.
 - 1.2. Always think twice before posting and consider your audience; When you are using social media channels, remember that your readers include current/past/future employers, colleagues and lecturers. Consider that before you publish and make sure you would be happy for them to read what you have posted.
 - 1.3. Assume everything posted online is public and may be assumed to be permanent and likely to be shared, even with the strictest privacy settings. Once something is online, it can be copied and redistributed, and it is easy to lose control of it.
 - 1.4. Staff and students should protect their own privacy. Careful consideration should be given to the kinds of information shared with others and privacy settings should be adjusted accordingly.
 - 1.5. Respect copyrights and fair use always give people proper credit for their work, and make sure you have the right to use something with attribution before you publish.

7 Infringements

1. Staff and students have the right to take action if they become the target of complaints or abuse on social networking sites. Most social networking sites will include mechanisms to report abusive activity and provide support for users who are subject to abuse by others.
2. As a first step, a member of the Institute who is the subject of inappropriate online activity which caused hurt or harm to them may seek redress through the Institute's Digital Citizenship Mediation Initiative. This initiative works on a Restorative Justice model. Trained Digital Citizenship mediators in each academic and functional area act as facilitators between the parties with a view to having the material removed promptly and providing the opportunity for those negatively affected to have their voice heard.
3. If this first step does not resolve the matter satisfactorily, any on-line activity, which is in breach of the Institute's individual codes of conduct, and/or the code of conduct of a relevant professional body and/or of the Institute's

Policy on Bullying and Harassment (including sexual harassment), will be dealt with under the Institute's relevant disciplinary procedures.

4. Those concerned about someone else's behaviour online, should raise their concern with the Head of Function/Department. In the most serious circumstances, for example if someone's use of a social networking site is unlawful, the matter will be reported to the Gardaí.