

Social Media Policy

Section 1 - Purpose of Policy

(1) This Policy:

- a. provides a framework and terms of use of social media by Staff, Students and Affiliates of UOW;
- b. sets out the responsibilities of the UOW Staff, Students and Affiliates when using social media;
- c. outlines the consequence of breaches of this Policy and possible associated misconduct;
- d. gives effect to the Brand and Reputation Policy;
- e. prescribes the management of UOW Social Media activity in a sustained and disciplined way;
- f. supports UOW's ability to protect and enhance its brand and reputation.

Section 2 - Application and Scope

(2) This Policy applies to the use of social media by all UOW Staff and Affiliates.

(3) This Policy applies to the use of social media by UOW Students acting in their capacity as Students if:

- a. social media is accessed using a UOW account;
- b. engaging with Official UOW social media; or
- c. commenting on social media on matters involving UOW or its Staff or Students.

(4) This Policy does not apply to UOW Controlled Entities (for example UOW Enterprises & UOW Pulse). These entities are expected to have their own equivalent social media policy documents, that are endorsed by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Innovation, Enterprise and External Relations).

(5) Words and phrases used in this Policy and not otherwise defined in this document have the meanings as set out in the Brand and Reputation Policy.

Section 3 - Standards and Exceptions

(6) Use of the UOW name on social media must be in accordance with the Use of the [University Name in Public Statements Policy](#) and the Brand and Reputation Policy.

(7) Any use of social media by Staff, Students and Affiliates must not bring UOW into disrepute, compromise effectiveness of work or study, imply UOW endorsement of personal views or disclose, without authorisation, UOW's confidential information.

(8) Staff, Students and Affiliates are expected to maintain a professional, courteous and respectful approach when interacting on social media, and comply all relevant common law and legislation, including but not limited to the [Copyright Act 1968 \(Cth\)](#), [Trade Marks Act 1995 \(Cth\)](#).

(9) Staff, Students and Affiliates posting content on social media, must:

- a. not disclose confidential or proprietary University information.
- b. not use UOW in the username of any non-UOW account.
- c. comply with the [Use of the University Name in Public Statements Policy](#).
- d. understand that content posted on social media is generally public and may be archived permanently.

(10) All social media produced by Staff and Affiliates (and Students when acting in a student capacity) must comply with all relevant UOW policy documents including but not limited to the [University Code of Conduct](#), [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#), [Privacy Policy](#), Brand and Reputation Policy, Brand Approvals Guideline, [Bullying Prevention Policy](#), [Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy](#), [Use of University Name in Public Statements Policy](#) and the [Inclusive Language Guidelines](#).

Section 4 - UOW Rights for Official UOW Social Media

(11) UOW may at any time delete, modify, suspend or discontinue, temporarily or permanently, any Official UOW Social Media account with or without notice, where content posted is offensive, derogatory or is a breach of this or any other UOW policy.

(12) If content associated with any Official UOW Social Media is considered a breach of this or any other UOW policy, the Advancement and Communications Division must be notified immediately.

(13) UOW may remove (where possible) any content on Official UOW Social Media channels that in UOW's reasonable opinion is offensive, inaccurate, discriminatory, indecent, defamatory, illegal or in breach of any State or Commonwealth law or UOW policy.

(14) If content associated with UOW is made available on social media, other than on Official UOW Social Media, and such content is, in the reasonable opinion of UOW, offensive, discriminatory, indecent, victimizing, humiliating, threatening, degrading, excluding, defamatory, illegal or is considered a breach of any State or Federal law or UOW policy document, UOW may request the account owner to act on the content in any way UOW may require including deleting, hiding, reporting, or otherwise.

Section 5 - UOW Brand and Identity

(15) The UOW Brand Identity is a valuable asset and defines and differentiates UOW's image and reputation as perceived by stakeholders and audiences.

(16) Activities undertaken on Official UOW Social Media can impact on UOW's brand and reputation. It is important that all communications accurately and professionally reflect the UOW Brand Identity, as outlined in the [UOW Brand Guidelines](#).

Official UOW Social Media Presence

(17) Social media marketing activities may be undertaken (at University level) provided that such use is in accordance with this Policy.

(18) Official UOW Social Media is social media that is operated by Staff, is officially endorsed by UOW and serves the purpose of sustained communication with a key target audience. It is intended to strategically connect with that audience and to positively promote the UOW brand. Staff must consult with, and gain approval from, the Advancement and Communications Division before creating an official social media presence that is intended to represent any UOW activity, including but not limited to faculty, school, research centre, project or cohort.

(19) UOW requires social media accounts to be streamlined and optimised around few supported channels. Staff are asked to utilise the @UOW official account as much as possible.

(20) UOW Business Units are discouraged from setting up new social media pages. Wherever possible and appropriate, it is encouraged to start a personal account as an academic.

(21) Requests for new UOW Official Social Media pages are handled and approved by the Advancement and Communications Division in accordance with the Brand Approvals Guideline.

Unofficial usage

(22) Students, student groups or associations wishing to use the UOW Logo on social media must obtain prior written permission from UOW's authorised delegate (as set out in the [Delegations of Authority Policy](#)), and comply with the Logo Procedure and this Policy.

(23) Any social media activities undertaken by a student or student group in connection with UOW, whether or not as part of a formal course of study, that are not endorsed by UOW in accordance with this Policy, must include this disclaimer on the relevant site/page, indicating that the site/page is not endorsed by or affiliated with UOW:

'This page, and its content, is not formally endorsed or approved by the University of Wollongong (UOW)'.

Section 6 - Staff usage

Using Official UOW Social Media

(24) When using Official UOW Social Media, Staff should be aware that the content they post is seen as being endorsed by UOW and therefore, they should consider how their use of Official UOW Social Media will impact on UOW's brand and reputation.

(25) Staff using Official UOW Social Media accounts are responsible for exercising careful and appropriate judgement when posting content onto any social media platform.

(26) Staff must maintain confidentiality, integrity and security of UOW information to which they have access. Staff must not disclose UOW's confidential information on social media or misuse UOW information and knowledge.

(27) UOW is responsible for the content posted on Official UOW Social Media. Staff managing an Official UOW Social Media account must ensure that they follow UOW's Social Media Terms of Use (Appendix 1) and actively monitoring their social presence, to ensure that content posted is accurate and is not offensive, discriminatory, indecent, defamatory, illegal or in breach of any law or UOW policy. If the content is considered inappropriate or unlawful, UOW reserves the right to remove the content as outlined in this policy.

Professional Use - posting Content on Behalf of UOW

(28) Staff acting in a professional capacity or posting content on behalf of UOW (Professional Use) must not post any inappropriate content on social media platforms, including:

- a. any individual's personal information, such as full name, address, phone number, personal email address, Student identification numbers, or anything else considered as personal information in accordance with the UOW [Privacy Policy](#);
- b. spam, such as: irrelevant or non-strategic Third-Party advertisements, commercial solicitations, affiliate links;
- c. content that is profane, discriminatory, defamatory, fraudulent, unlawful, pornographic, obscene, offensive,

threatening, hateful or otherwise objectionable;

- d. content that makes UOW appear to be affiliated with a company, social group, political affiliation, product or individual when it is not the case;
- e. references to Student or Staff performance or Student records without prior consent from the Student or Staff member;
- f. material that violates the copyright or other intellectual property rights of any person;
- g. information or software containing a virus, or other damaging or destructive components to UOW systems and infrastructure.

Academic Use

(29) The University is committed to the principles of academic freedom as defined in the [University of Wollongong \(Academic Staff\) Enterprise Agreement](#). Staff are encouraged to engage on Social Media to share their expertise on matters of community interest, to participate in public discourse.

(30) UOW Staff posting to social media in their academic capacity (Academic Use) must ensure that their commentary is within their area of academic expertise. is within their area of academic expertise, and comply with the standards and expectations set out in this Policy.

Personal Use

(31) Posts by UOW Staff to social media outside their area of academic expertise (and which is not Professional Use) is classified as personal use. In this instance, staff must make clear that their comments are personal opinions and not the views of UOW. For the avoidance of doubt, Personal Use that is incompatible with a Staff member's duties and obligations under a UOW policy document or employment contract may be the subject of disciplinary action.

Staff or Affiliate breaches of policy and misconduct

(32) Alleged breaches of this Policy by Staff or Affiliates should be referred to the Advancement and Communications Division for review, and may be escalated where required, to the Staff member's supervisor.

(33) The Advancement and Communications Division may seek to resolve the matter informally and directly with the member of Staff and their supervisor.

(34) Serious or continued alleged breaches will be addressed through the disciplinary procedures prescribed by UOW misconduct policies or procedures, enterprise agreements or contracts.

(35) Where Inappropriate Use of social media under this Policy constitutes a breach of any law, UOW may refer the matter to external law enforcement agencies or regulators, including the police or eSafety Commissioner, or pursue legal action.

Section 7 - Student usage

(36) Students must not depict themselves as official representatives of UOW on social media.

(37) Students using social media through UOW accounts, or engaging with Official UOW Social Media, or commenting on social media on matters involving UOW or its Staff or Students, must act according to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility, and comply with UOW rules and policies (including but not limited to the [UOW Student Charter](#), [Bullying Prevention Policy](#), and the [Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy](#)). UOW expressly prohibits use of social media to discriminate against, harass, bully or vilify a person.

Academic freedoms as student rights

(38) UOW supports the rights of students to engage in Academic Freedom as set out in the [Student Conduct Rules](#) whilst recognising that this comes with responsibilities. Any exercise of Academic Freedom is subject to UOW's standards of conduct as set out in this policy and other relevant policy documents.

(39) Students engaging with Official UOW Social Media, must comply with UOW's Social Media Terms of Use (Appendix 1) and are expected to have read and to comply with the terms and conditions of each social media platform being used.

Student breaches of policy and misconduct

(40) Alleged breaches of this Policy by Students may constitute misconduct under the [Student Conduct Rules](#) and must be referred to the Integrity Division.

(41) The Integrity Division may seek to resolve the matter informally via existing social media communication channels (for example a private Facebook message to the relevant social media user or Facebook page administrator).

(42) Serious or continued alleged breaches will be addressed through the investigative and disciplinary procedures prescribed by the [Student Conduct Rules](#) and [Procedure for Managing Alleged General Misconduct by a Student](#).

(43) If inappropriate use of social media under this Policy constitutes a breach of any law, UOW may refer the matter to external law enforcement agencies or regulators, including the police or eSafety Commissioner, or pursue legal action.

Section 8 - Managing risk

(44) A potentially "High Risk" issue is defined as anything that is or may become a reputational risk issue for UOW such as:

- a. a post or comment that undermines or could potentially undermine public trust in the UOW brand and services;
or
- b. a threat or danger to the good name or standing of UOW.

Assessing negative and high risk posts and when to escalate

(45) The Risk Mitigation Framework (Appendix 2) outlines the process for assessing negative and potentially high-risk posts, and provides instruction on when to escalate to relevant local management (Senior Manager, Faculty Executive Manager or Head of School) and the Advancement and Communications Division in decisions and responses.

Navigating potentially harmful social media interactions

(46) Any sensitive posts, should be managed in accordance with the [Navigating Harmful Social Media Interactions Protocol](#) available on the Advancement and Communications Division intranet site. This information is designed to guide Staff who suspect an incident has occurred through this complex environment, and facilitates appropriate management and triaging of activity of this kind by the People and Culture Division, the Staff member involved and any other divisions necessary.

Section 9 - Roles and Responsibilities

(47) The Advancement and Communications Division:

- a. provide social listening, reporting, analytics, advice and oversight of the UOW's supported social media activities;
- b. is responsible for representing the strategic direction of the University on social media and optimising UOW's social media presence;
- c. provides support and advice on strategic social media activities to Staff, Students and Affiliates;
- d. provide training and advice on the appropriate use of the University brand (including on social media) to Staff;
- e. review relevant social media related policy documents regularly to ensure that they remain current and consistent with external legislation, the UOW Strategic Plan and other UOW policy documents;
- f. audit UOW's social media presence as required, including closing down pages deemed inactive;
- g. review content and appropriateness in accordance with this Policy;
- h. maintain a list of branded page icons, URLs and naming conventions (Appendix 3).

(48) UOW Social Media Managers:

- a. develop, maintain and regularly review faculty/division/unit social media strategies and content plans for platforms they manage;
- b. monitor the social media platforms, for which they are responsible, during AEST business hours, and aim to respond to enquiries within 24 hours;
- c. manage page roles and settings;
- d. remove and ban people from the platform as required;
- e. respond to and delete comments and posts to the platform(s) for which they are responsible;
- f. advise the Advancement and Communications Division of any change to social media management.

(49) UOW Social Media contributors:

- a. edit the page, create posts, send messages for the pages that they are responsible;
- b. create adverts, view insights; and
- c. send messages from the platform(s) for which they are responsible

(50) UOW Staff, Students and Affiliates:

- a. are responsible for informing themselves and understanding the contents of this Policy and related policy documents, to ensure the integrity of the UOW brand and reputation.
- b. are familiar with each individual social media platform's rules and regulations.
- c. Are required to follow the UOW Social Media Terms of Use (Appendix 1)

Section 10 - Definitions

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Official UOW Social Media	Social media accounts that are owned or operated by any member of the UOW Community and that are officially endorsed by UOW in accordance with this Policy.
Social Media Manager	The person in a UOW organisational unit responsible for monitoring and responding to social media comments for a specific social media community, or comments made outside of any owned social site relating to that faculty or unit's core functions or responsibilities.
Staff	All people employed by UOW including conjoint appointments, whether on continuing, permanent, fixed term, casual or cadet or traineeship basis.
Students	A person registered for a course at UOW.

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Affiliates	Includes people holding UOW Honorary Awards as conferred by the University Council, including the awards of Emeritus Professor, Honorary Doctor and University Fellow; people appointed in accordance with the University's Appointment of Visiting and Honorary Academics Policy; and people engaged by the University as agency staff, contractors, volunteers and work experience students
Inappropriate Use	Use of social media in contravention of the law or otherwise not in compliance with this policy.
Academic Use	Use that relates to staff making comment under the principle of academic freedom, within their area of academic expertise and defensible based on their academic expertise or research.
Professional Use	Approved use by a Staff member in connection with their role at UOW. This includes casual Staff.
Personal Use	Use other than Academic Use or Professional Use.
UOW	The University of Wollongong (ABN 61 060 567 686).
UOW Controlled Entities	Those entities over which UOW has control, as defined in section 16A of the University of Wollongong Act 1989 (Cth) (as amended) and section 2.2(1) of the Government Sector Finance Act 2018 (NSW).
UOW Logo	The main visual identifier for UOW, incorporating the UOW crest and the words "University of Wollongong Australia". Does not include campus, faculty, school or department).

Section 11 - Appendix 1: UOW Social Media Terms of Use

(51) UOW encourages comments and posts on its Official UOW Social Media sites as a forum for the reader/viewer/user (User) to contribute their thoughts about UOW news and to participate in civil conversations about topical issues.

(52) By engaging with UOW in any way on Official UOW Social Media, the User agrees to abide by our Social Media Terms of Use:

- a. be polite: Treat other people using UOW social media sites, including Staff and moderators, with respect and courtesy. Comments using inappropriate language, which are abusive towards other users, or which appear to deliberately provoke arguments, will be deleted.
- b. don't break the law: Do not post comments which are potentially defamatory, discriminatory, incite violence, infringe copyright or are otherwise unlawful. Messages that are factually wrong and misleading may also be deleted.
- c. stay on topic: News articles and opinion pieces are provided for discussion of the articles' content. Do not post messages which are irrelevant. Trolls will be banned or blocked.
- d. don't dominate the conversation: UOW reserves the right to hide or delete comments from Users who seek to dominate the discussion.
- e. don't advertise: Contributions that seek to endorse commercial products or activities or solicit business will not be accepted. UOW publishes links to other websites at its sole discretion.
- f. be transparent: Comments and posts must not intentionally impersonate other people.

(53) These instructions apply to all UOW operated social media accounts listed on the [Connect with UOW](#) page, and apply across all social media platforms.

(54) Due to the design of some platforms, UOW may not be able to contact Users to alert them if their content goes against UOW's Social Media Terms of Use. However, if Users repeatedly violate these terms of use, they may be banned from one or all UOW social media pages.

(55) Participation in UOW's social media sites is also governed by UOW's [Privacy Policy](#).

(56) Each social media platform has its own standards which Users must abide by. Users should familiarise themselves with these before using each social media channel.

Section 12 - Appendix 2: Risk Mitigation Framework

Is the post negative?	
Yes: Could it be considered 'high risk' if not managed correctly?	
Yes: Notify local management and escalate to ACD.	
No: Post a simple response e.g. "Sorry to hear, let us know if we can help"	
No: Does the comment breach UOW Social Media Terms of Use?	
Yes: Does the platform allow deletion of posts/comments?	
Yes: Keep record (screenshot) and rationale for deleting, and delete.	
No: Report to platform using inbuilt functionality.	
No: Is the person talking to us or did they mention @UOW or post it on a UOW page?	
Yes: Do they expect a response (or are they just venting)?	
Yes: Do you have a preapproved response (approved by ACD if high-risk)?	
Yes: Post response and monitor reply.	
No: Respond (gain prior approval from ACD if high risk).	
No: Post a simple response e.g. "Sorry to hear, let us know if we can help"	
No: Decide whether appropriate to respond. Liaise with ACD.	

Section 13 - Appendix 3: Conventions

Page/Profile Naming Convention

(57) Advancement and Communications Division maintains specific naming conventions for UOW official social media channels. All page names, such as those on Facebook, should start with "UOW" in sentence case and avoid using acronyms unless approved. The main pages use names like "UOW: University of Wollongong" while specific faculties or units follow the format "UOW [Unit Name]", e.g., "UOW Business and Law".

Page/Profile URL Conventions

(58) UOW's official social media pages have a standardized URL format. By default, URLs are in lowercase, but "UOW" can be capitalized. The main UOW page URL is "facebook.com/uow", while faculties or units use "facebook.com/uow[unitnameoracronym]", like "facebook.com/uowearlystart". URLs are case-insensitive but will display in the platform's preferred format. Advancement and Communications Division advises on URLs to work within this convention and potential platform restrictions.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	13th December 2023
Review Date	13th December 2028
Approval Authority	University Council
Approval Date	13th December 2023
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Stephen Phillips Vice-President Operations
Responsible Officer	Anthony Petre Chief Advancement and Communications Officer
Enquiries Contact	Advancement and Communications Division