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# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE FOR STAFF

[go.qub.ac.uk/socialmedia](https://go.qub.ac.uk/socialmedia)

# WHY ARE SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS IMPORTANT TO QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY?

The term 'social media' is used to describe a range of communication tools available on the web or on mobile devices, such as blogs, wikis, message boards and social networking tools. These are widely used by individuals to share experiences and opinions and by organisations to provide information and communicate globally.

As an innovative university, Queen's encourages its staff to actively participate in collaboration with students, colleagues and the public using social media tools where appropriate. Some departments and Schools within Queen's are already making effective use of social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube to:

- Develop relationships with potential students
- Interact with current students and staff
- Maintain links with alumni
- Collaborate with other departments and external organisations
- Promote the University and the achievements of staff and students, both internally and externally



This guide is aimed at any member of staff using social media tools to engage in online conversations or share content, either in support of their role or personally. It offers practical advice on how you can communicate effectively online and outlines the things you may need to consider when interacting with students, colleagues or the public through social media sites. It also provides additional guidance for staff responsible for University affiliated social media sites.

In addition to the advice provided in this guide, staff must adhere to the Social Media Policy for Staff and the Computer Resources—Acceptable Use Policy. Students should be referred to the Social Media Guide for Students, along with the Social Media Policy for Students. These policies and guides, along with additional advice regarding social media, are available online at <http://go.qub.ac.uk/socialmedia>

# GUIDANCE ON USING SOCIAL MEDIA



Social media can be an effective way of communicating with students, collaborating with colleagues and interacting with the public and external organisations. Many staff are already using social media to enhance their personal development, share their expertise and network with other professionals. However, careless use of social media can easily cause offence, damage your career prospects or even result in criminal proceedings. You can minimise any risks that may arise from your use of social media by thinking carefully about the content that you post and taking steps to protect your privacy.

## COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY USING SOCIAL MEDIA

While social media can be used to initiate and maintain relationships with individuals or small groups, comments and content may be shared with other users beyond your initial audience and even cross over to other platforms including other media. While this is beneficial if you want to communicate with a wide audience and gain maximum exposure, it also means that you should always consider the wider implications of any content that you post and how comments and other content may reflect on you, both personally and professionally.

Communicating effectively using social media involves:

- Thinking carefully before your post – if you are not sure if something is accurate or appropriate, don't publish it
- Adopting a conversational tone – social media is intended to promote interaction
- Providing information about your area of expertise that students, colleagues or the public may find interesting or useful
- Being professional and courteous in your communications and making sure that you represent the University in an appropriate manner
- Respecting copyright and acknowledging your sources
- Correcting any mistakes quickly and explaining what the error was
- Where appropriate, adding a disclaimer making it clear that your views do not necessarily represent your department or School

# PROTECTING YOUR ONLINE PROFILE

When using social media, it is important that you take steps to protect your personal information. In particular:

- Check the privacy settings of sites that you use and remember that anything put online may potentially become public and permanently accessible
- Be careful about who you accept as 'friends' on personal sites
- Don't publish personal information such as your home address or mobile number
- Don't tell everyone where you are going or that your home will be empty
- If possible, keep personal and professional online activities separate

## COMMON SOCIAL MEDIA SCAMS TO AVOID!

Social media is often used by scammers to install viruses or access your personal details. Be particularly cautious about:

- Free giveaways, for items such as vouchers or flights, which require you to provide personal details or download a program—always check the company's official web page or social media site
- Messages from friends which appear to contain a link to a photograph or video—don't click links unless you're sure they are genuine
- Apps which claim they can reveal who has viewed your profile or 'unfriended' you—these are usually malware

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE POSTS OFFENSIVE COMMENTS OR IMAGES OF ME?

If someone posts something that causes you offence or embarrassment, a polite request for removal should usually suffice.

If the problem continues, or you feel you are being harassed, don't hesitate to report this using the links provided on the social media site. If you've received threatening messages or believe an offence has been committed, report it to the PSNI.

If you wish to make a complaint about a potential breach of the University's Social Media Policies, you can do so through the University's staff grievance procedures (<http://go.qub.ac.uk/grievance>).

# UNIVERSITY AFFILIATED SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

If you feel that social media could enhance your work at Queen's, discuss your ideas with your line manager. It may also be useful to look at how Schools and departments within Queen's are already using social media. If you have a specific query relating to the establishment of a University social media site, email [socialmedia@qub.ac.uk](mailto:socialmedia@qub.ac.uk).

## SOCIAL MEDIA SITE CREATION

Before creating a University affiliated social media site, you must obtain approval from your Head of School or Director. Note that a University affiliated social media site is defined as any site that could reasonably be perceived to be associated with or representative of Queen's.

In order to effectively manage a social media site, you will need a small team of site administrators to help develop content and share moderating responsibilities. It is strongly recommended that proposed site administrators attend the **Managing a University Social Media Site** course provided by the IT Training and Assessment Unit.

Once you have set up the approved site, it must be registered via an online form available at <http://go.qub.ac.uk/socialmedia>. Note that the form requires confirmation that the Head of School or Director has approved the creation of the site and contact details for two site administrators must be submitted.

Approved sites will be included in the **University Social Media Directory** (<http://go.qub.ac.uk/socialmedia>) where appropriate. Care should be taken when naming accounts to maintain consistency and to ensure accounts can be easily identified as University affiliated accounts.



Existing sites should also be registered using the online form at <http://go.qub.ac.uk/socialmedia>. Only registered sites will be listed in the University Social Media Directory!

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF SITE ADMINISTRATORS

If you set up a University affiliated social media site, you effectively become the administrator for that site on behalf of the University. It is important that at least one other member of staff shares administrator responsibilities for the site and has access to the login details in order to ensure continuity and to help with moderation. All administrators for the social media site will be responsible for ensuring:

- The site displays any necessary disclaimers
- Any use of the University's branding is in line with the appropriate guidelines (<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/mcs/Marketing/>)
- The site does not display any unlawful, offensive or inappropriate content or links to other sites that contain such content
- Comments are moderated on a regular basis and inappropriate posts are removed
- The security of account passwords is maintained to avoid any unauthorised actions taking place on the account
- The site complies with all Queen's University policies and with the terms and conditions of the social media platform used
- The site is deactivated or permanently deleted if no longer required

Further guidelines on the use of University affiliated social media sites are outlined in the Social Media Policy for Staff.



# SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING

It is important that staff are able to make informed choices regarding their use of social media and that anyone responsible for a University affiliated social media site is fully aware of their responsibilities. Consequently, the IT Training and Assessment Unit offer a range of social media training courses for staff including:

- Introduction to Social Media
- Facebook for Beginners
- Twitter for Beginners
- LinkedIn for Beginners
- Managing a University Social Media Site
- Using Social Media for Teaching and Research



In addition, there is a Social Media for Researchers training course for postgraduate research students.

It is strongly recommended that staff attend any relevant courses in order to ensure that they are using social media appropriately and are aware of any privacy or legal issues.

Further information about social media training is available at <http://go.qub.ac.uk/socialmedia> or by emailing [socialmedia@qub.ac.uk](mailto:socialmedia@qub.ac.uk). Staff courses can be booked via Queen's Online ([www.qub.ac.uk/qol](http://www.qub.ac.uk/qol)).



# KEEPING UP-TO-DATE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA AT QUEEN'S!

Staff and students can receive regular updates and advice on social media by:

- Following @SocialMediaQUB on Twitter
- Liking the Social Media QUB Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/SocialMediaQUB](http://www.facebook.com/SocialMediaQUB)
- Subscribing to the Social Media QUB blog at <http://blogs.qub.ac.uk/socialmedia>.

For specific advice on social media, staff can email [socialmedia@qub.ac.uk](mailto:socialmedia@qub.ac.uk).



[www.facebook.com/SocialMediaQUB](http://www.facebook.com/SocialMediaQUB)

[www.twitter.com/SocialMediaQUB](http://www.twitter.com/SocialMediaQUB)

<http://go.qub.ac.uk/socialmedia>