University Social Media Policy

1. What is social media?

1.1   Social media sites on the internet are used for the purpose of creating, sharing, exchanging and commenting on ideas and information. They can be used for:

- pooling resources, or working collaboratively, both internally and externally;
- communicating for business or social reasons;
- research;
- teaching, learning and assessment, and for giving feedback to students, or for providing support to students;
- helping to build useful relationships and to enhance the student experience.

1.2   Examples of social media sites include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat.

1.3   The University positively encourages staff and students to take advantage of the academic, business and professional opportunities provided by social media, in line with the guidance contained within this policy and its associated guidelines.

1.4   It is a key principle of this Policy that staff consider, when using these sites, whether they are speaking on behalf of the University, or in their own personal, or professional, capacity. This applies whether or not they are using University-owned devices or equipment, or their own personal devices or equipment. University-owned devices will allow for attribution to be traced back to the University, and this must be taken into account. Staff communicating with students will always be speaking on behalf of the University.

1.5   The University recognises that individuals may have different types of account:

- **Marketing and recruitment accounts** – accounts created for recruiting new students, talking to prospects or marketing the university, faculties, or degree programmes. These should be run by staff appointed to the role of recruitment,

admissions, or marketing. Content that is suitable for marketing the university should be channelled through suitable marketing channels.

- **Business or official accounts** – relating to the member of staff's business e.g. the University's official Twitter account @UniofGreenwich, a Facebook group that represents a department, or an official role within the University's faculties, departments and offices. These types of account are subject to the University's business acceptable rules (see below). Where practical, the use of closed access accounts and groups should be used to communicate and converse with current students.

- **Mixed use accounts** – these may be used for different purposes including personal, professional, academic or business/official. If these accounts incorporate use for business or official purposes, they will also be subject to the University's business acceptable rules when being used for that purpose e.g. advertising a University event or replying to a student's message from a Lecturer's Twitter account.

- **Personal accounts** – will be separate from business or official use, and are therefore not subject to the University's business acceptable use rules.

1.6   When using these sites or accounts for business purposes staff should consider whether their use is the best way of achieving their particular objective (see Social Media Guidelines). Staff should also be aware of the risks that are involved – see below.

1.7   It is recommended that staff add a caveat stating 'my views are my own' in the biographical information of any social media account that also contains reference to the University.

2   Business acceptable use

- Social media sites should be used responsibly and professionally
- Staff should think carefully about the consequences of anything they write or send within social media sites including the potential for impact of negative comments on some or part of the staff or student population with protected characteristics. If staff foresee there will be negative comments directed at members of our student or staff population via comments they should turn off comments to de-platform hate
- Staff should not use social media sites in such a way that damage might be caused to the reputation of the University
- Defamatory comments should not be made on social media sites
- Members of staff should be aware that any records that they produce which are held in social media should be held within the terms of the Information and

[Records Management Policy](#) and its underlying systems, including retention policies. These could, for instance, be training materials, assessment records, business correspondence or correspondence with students.

- Staff should also be aware that the University is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, which means that any information held by it, and by its staff on its behalf, in whatever form, including on social media sites, is liable to disclosure under the Act
- Use of social media must comply with the University's information security and Information Compliance Policies
- User authentication (login) details used to access the University's network and systems must not be used to register an account on any social media used either for business or personal purposes
- Members of staff should be aware of [copyright rules](#), and should not place copyright material on social media sites without permission of the copyright owner. These rules apply to University material including photos and logos
- All members of staff must abide by Data Protection legislation. Third party personal data (e.g. of students) should not be placed on the internet without consent
- All signed-off social media accounts associated with the University should only be accessed via a password-controlled management system such as Hootsuite
- The only exception to accessing accounts outside Hootsuite is when setting up paid adverts via Facebook Business Manager, or an equivalent advert manager for any other platform. There may also be instances during live events when it is appropriate to post directly
- Training and support for Hootsuite will be provided by the Social Media team (in the Communications and Marketing Directorate)
- Other confidential or sensitive or financial information should not be placed on social media sites
- Programmes that are validated by a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) will need to abide by the PRSB social media policy and should take appropriate steps to ensure necessary compliance
- The University will not refer to social media sites when assessing student applications and job applications unless such sites are specifically highlighted in the application
- Misuse of social media sites may be investigated under disciplinary procedures.

NB: breach of this policy may be considered under the University's disciplinary policy.

If you have any queries, questions or concerns, contact the Social Media Team on gresocialmedia@gre.ac.uk or call 020 8331 8092.

Other relevant policies:

- *Bullying and Harassment Policy*
  https://docs.qre.ac.uk/rep/humanresources/bullying-and-harassment-policy
- *Information Compliance Policy*
  https://www.qre.ac.uk/qovernance/rmo/data_protection/university_policy
- *Equality and Diversity https://www.qre.ac.uk/about-us/policy/equality*
- *IT policies https://www.qre.ac.uk/it-and-library/about/policies-and-procedures/itpolicies*