

Chief of Staff Office Fact Sheet

Supporting ethical and equitable outcomes

Social Media Policy approved

Policy Guidance

Acceptable communication, information sharing practices and related standards of behaviour are referred to in a number of existing JCU policies including the Code of Conduct and the Information Communication Technology Acceptable Use Policy.

JCU has established a Policy to support the education of students and staff about the appropriate use of social media as a platform for communication, and to assist the University manage any potential inappropriate use of social media.

The intent is to provide JCU with an effective way to manage, monitor and maintain the use of Social Media for its Staff, Students and Affiliates to make a meaningful and high-quality contribution to public debate on issues at a local, national and international level.

What is Social Media?

Social media is a prevalent and effective communication tool used both personally and professionally by employees and students, as well as being a reliable vehicle in the pursuit of teaching, learning and assessment outcomes.

Social media may include, although is not limited to:

- social networking sites, for example Facebook, LinkedIn, Yammer
- video and photo sharing websites, for example Flickr, Instagram, YouTube
- blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs, for example SharePoint
- blogs hosted by media outlets
- micro-blogging, for example Twitter
- wikis and online collaborations, for example Wikipedia
- forums, discussion boards and groups, for example Google groups
- VOD and podcasting, for example SoundCloud
- instant messaging, including SMS
- geo-spatial tagging, Foursquare, Facebook

Why establish a Policy?

There is a growing number of complaints being received about comments being made on social media sites by staff and students.

The Social Media Policy is intended to provide clarity to students and staff on how to use social media appropriately. It would also aim to inform students and staff of their responsibilities when using social media, provide guidance on how to distinguish between and manage personal and work/study boundaries and to state the processes involved should inappropriate use of social media occur.

By providing this clarity, it should be easier to avoid breaches of Code of Conduct and Student Conduct, Copyright, Workplace Bullying and Discrimination and Harassment policies that could occur through Social Media use.

Most universities within Australia have a Social Media Policy.

JCU encourages use of Social Media

The increase of social media usage has brought with it great opportunities for interaction not previously available. This allows staff and students to readily communicate with their peers, institutions and other entities quickly and easily. It allows for direct feedback and ease of collaboration that will enhance relationships within the university and in the greater community.

JCU certainly encourages and supports the ideal of the 'engaged academic', 'engaged Student' or 'engaged Affiliate' who, via Social Media and public commentary, is participating in the sharing of information, opinion and ideas that showcase the University's research and scholarly expertise.

This should be at the same high standard of communication, behaviour and conduct expressed in other policies that govern our workplace and/or study environment.

Advice

If you have any doubts or would like to discuss any issues regarding use of or complaints regarding social media use please contact:

- Chief of Staff, Vanessa Cannon – 4781 4078
- Director HR, Nick Rogers – 4781 5332
- Head, Media and Communications, Richard Davis – 4781 4822
- Manager Digital Marketing, Sean Gilligan – 4232 1322
- Student Complaints, Julie Caswell – 4232 1774

[Click here to access the Social Media Policy and Guideline.](#)