



## Student Social Media Policy

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. De Montfort University (DMU) recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities that social media presents. We actively use social media to engage with Students



## 2. Scope

- 2.1. For the purpose of this policy, the term 'Social Media' is used to describe virtual channels dedicated to live streamed or scheduled uploads, community-based input, interactions, content sharing and collaboration through the building of virtual



### 3. Students' responsibilities

- 3.1. Students are encouraged to be mindful of how their identity, statements or views appear online and are reminded that current and future employers, and industry contacts may view social media profiles when recruiting to gain information about a candidate's character, personality or employability. Students should therefore bear in mind that any content they publish online may have an impact on future opportunities.
- 3.2. Students registered on professionally accredited programmes should be aware that unacceptable online behaviour may breach the code of conduct of their chosen profession and may have implications for Fitness to Practise
- 3.3. It is unacceptable for students on professionally accredited programmes to discuss matters related to the people they may have contact with as part of their placements outside of this setting. Sharing confidential information online can have the potential to be more damaging than sharing it verbally due to the speed at which it can be shared and the size of the potential audience. It is important to remember that although some information may not directly breach an individual's right to confidentiality when anonymised, people may still be identifiable, and this behaviour may breach the



- 3.8. Students must be aware of the potential impact and permanence of anything posted online. Even if your settings are set to private, other people may share information you have shared with them or there may be information out there from before your settings were changed. Therefore, Students should avoid posting anything:

They do not wish to be in the public domain  
Which contravenes sections 4, 5 and 6 of this policy

- 3.9 Any digital material posted online could reach a wider audience than was expected or intended. Once digital content has been created and shared, there is limited control over its permanence and audience.
- 3.10 Students should note that they have the right of erasure under the data protection legislation, and that they can request that social media companies remove content concerning themselves. It should be noted that there are circumstances where the social media company can refuse to remove content, for example where they might be used as evidence in legal proceedings.
- 3.11 Students should note any personal data uploaded onto social media about themselves is normally regarded as being put into the public domain, and therefore has significantly less protection from the data protection legislation.

#### 4. Behaviour and conduct on social media

- 4.1. Students are personally responsible for what they communicate on or through social media and they must adhere to the standards of behaviour set out in this policy and any related policies, such as [Policy on Dignity and Respect](#) and the [General Regulations and Procedures Affecting Students](#)
- 4.2. Students wishing to raise a complaint or report a crime or an incident should follow [established university guidance](#) rather than reporting via social media, e.g., by contacting the University Security team or by contacting the Police. Where necessary Students should contact the University and/or the Police as soon as possible, saving any evidence, e.g screenshots of social media. Students are advised to bear in mind that sharing details and evidence of a complaint on social media may limit the chances of action taken against any offenders and lead to civil action against the author if the complaint is found to be false.



- 4.3. Use of social media must not infringe on the rights, or privacy, of other Students or Staff and Students must not make disparaging or defamatory comments or judgements about other Students, Staff or third parties.
- 4.4. We recommend that permission to share third party material from the owners of the material, in line with copyright laws, including all images, photography, text and videos, is sought and recorded before uploading said material to, or sharing via, social media. Furthermore, where permission is obtained, we recommend such materials should be credited appropriately. Guidance can be obtained from the [Library and Learning Services website](#)
- 4.5. The following non-exhaustive list includes material considered to be of an unacceptable nature that should never be posted:

Confidential information (which may include research not yet in the public domain, information about fellow Students or Staff or personal matters, non-public or not yet approved documents or information).

Personal information about another individual, including contact information, without their express permission.

Posts made using another person's name or identity without their consent

Submission of other students' social media account details for surveys, forms and open letters

Inappropriate material, including but not limited to images, that is, or may be perceived to be threatening, harassing, discriminatory, illegal, obscene, indecent, defamatory, or hostile towards any individual, group or entity.

Records, recordings and/or photographs made without the consent of one or more parties concerned and released without a clear public interest case.

Recordings or any content from University owned DMU Replay material or interactive learning platforms including but not exclusively, Blackboard, Blackboard Collaborate and MS Teams, and online assessments.

Any other post or material that constitutes, or may constitute, a criminal offence.

Material to prepare to engage in or engage in academic offences.

Material taken from assessments or exams scripts.



Any academic work completed by the student in part or full.  
Anything which may bring the University into disrepute or compromise the safety or reputation of colleagues, former colleagues, Students, Staff and those connected with the University.

- 4.6 Careful consideration should be given before sharing details of potential or complaints or legal proceedings, as this can impact the outcome of proceedings and/or the viability of evidence used.
- 4.7 Students should be mindful that statements on social media that cause harm to an individual, including to their reputation, or that interfere with an ongoing disciplinary/legal process may create a potential civil claim against the individual



5.2. The following non-exhaustive list of examples illustrate the types of behaviour, displayed through social media, which the University considers to be forms of cyber bullying:

Maliciously, negligently or recklessly spreading rumours, lies or gossip

Intimidating or aggressive behaviour, as perceived by those viewing the social media content.

Offensive or threatening comments or content, as perceived by those viewing the social media content.

Posting comments/photos etc. deliberately, negligently or recklessly mocking an individual with the potential to harass or humiliate them, as perceived by those viewing the social media.

Repeatedly posting comments on social media about an individual or group in an unwanted way, and not complying to requests to desist.

Accessing any third party's social media either directly or through personal contacts, and using this to post comments about an individual.

Replicating student's account, assuming a student's name or identity or otherwise posting on a student's behalf without their consent

5.3 Cyber bullying may also take place via other means of electronic communication such as email, text, instant message, video, audio or images –edited or otherwise.

5.4 Students should be aware that some cases of the above may constitute criminal acts under the [Criminal Justice Act \(2015\)](#), the [Communications Act \(2003\)](#), the [Malicious Communications Act \(1988\)](#) or the [Protection from Harassment Act \(1997\)](#).



## 6. Student use of official University accounts

6.1 Some students may have the opportunity to post on the official DMU social media





- 7.5. Any breach of this policy must be reported in line with DMU's [Student Complaints Procedure](#) in the first instance. Breaches must be brought to the attention of the DMU Security Team where appropriate by email at [security@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:security@dmu.ac.uk) or by phone on (0116) 257 7642.

## 8. Monitoring

### 8.1 The University will:

Ensure this policy, and any changes, is accessible to Staff and Students

On occasion, provide guidance for Students on how to stay safe online when using social media. Initial guidance is available at Annex A. Further guidance on [Staying Safe](#) is available from ITMS.

Monitor references to the University on social media and the internet and respond to complaints regarding Student conduct on social media

Take disciplinary action where inappropriate behaviour is exhibited that affects Students, Staff, the University or members of public in accordance with the University's [General Regulations and Procedures Affecting Students](#), in particular Chapters 2 and 14 of those Regulations.

Where appropriate, refer to the faculty with responsibility for [Fitness to Practise](#) processes.

Annually review and update this policy, where appropriate, and any other associated policy and guidelines and publish details of any changes.







Be aware of sharing third- party materials. Do you need permission to share the materials or should you, as a matter of courtesy, contact the party? Make sure you check before posting as infringement of rules could break copyright and/or intellectual property laws.

Do not post solutions to assignments on the internet or social media. If you upload your own answers to coursework or phase test questions then these may be used by others in their own assignments. You could be found guilty of committing the

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