Social Media Policy

of

University of Kelaniya

Table of Content

1. Introduction

Social media sites are excellent platforms for discussions about the University, current events, issues, accolades, and stakeholders. These channels provide important opportunities for the University of Kelaniya to communicate and engage with a wide array of stakeholders. They also provide a range of professional and personal opportunities for staff and students.

However, there are also many risks associated with the use of social media that may result in the dissemination of potentially serious misinformation to stakeholders and ultimately impact the reputation of the university.

This policy provides guidance to staff and students on how to safely and productively use social media to maximize the range of benefits it offers whilst mitigating associated risks.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

1. Provide staff and students with information on requirements and expectations of the University regarding use of social media;

2. Ensure a consistent approach to use of social media across the institution;

3. Minimize the potential negative reputational impact for users and the University as a result of using social media;

4. Mitigate the risks associated with use of social media, protecting users as well as the university;

5. Ensure staff and students do not compromise their security or the security of university information assets;

6. Set out the responsibilities of users of university social media accounts;

7. Clarify the expectations of staff and students using social media in an individual professional or personal capacity;

8. Support staff and students to enhance their presence and that of the University on social media.

3. Scope

This Policy shall apply to:

1. Any social media platform hosted by the university;

2. All university members (both staff and students);

3. All social media communications that represent the university;

4. All use and all forms of social media where there is a potential impact on the University, whether for work-related or personal use, whether during working hours or otherwise, whether social media is accessed using the university's IT facilities and equipment, or equipment belongs to members of staff/students or any other third party.

4. Definitions

The following terms are used in this Policy. Knowledge of these definitions is important to an understanding of this Policy:

Social media: Collective of online communication channels, portals, and websites dedicated to facilitating community-based interactions, sharing, and collaborations. Social media allow people to socially interact, converse, network and share with one another online; examples of social media sites and applications include Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Instagram.

A University social media account: Any social media account that uses the University's logo and/or name, and represents the University; managed by the university, a faculty, a department, or an official student association.

Copyright: A form of intellectual property law protecting original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works.

5. Provisions and Conditions

The University of Kelaniya encourages the use of social media to connect with others, including students, employees, alumni, fans, and the general public. To protect the reputation of the university and members of the university and to mitigate the risks associated with using social media, the use of social media is subject to the following:

All university social media pages must adhere to the University's brand guidelines and the profile information should clearly state the purpose of the page.

It is important that all social media pages are kept up to date, posted regularly, and monitored frequently. Questions should be responded to promptly within operating hours.

Using all forms of communication including communicating through social media that violate university policies, rules, and regulations or is otherwise used for any illegal purpose shall be prohibited and such actions are subject to disciplinary actions.

The university's Information Security Policy shall apply for all forms of electronic communication including the use of social media.

Content of university social media pages

All posts from university social media pages represent the university. It is vital that messages posted are carefully considered, appropriate and do not damage the reputation of the university or otherwise bring it into disrepute. Safeguards should be put in place to minimize the risk of communication errors via social media.

Posts must be in line with the values and ethics of the University of Kelaniya and all relevant university policies. Those posting content on university social media pages **must not**:

- post or promote content that harasses, bullies, or otherwise intimidates
- post or promote content that instructs, causes, or coerces others to harass, bully orotherwise intimidate
- post or promote content intended to incite violence or hatred
- post or promote abusive content relating to an individual's age, disability, gender, race, religion, or belief.

Content posted or promoted on university pages must be respectful of others and courteous. Official university pages must not be used to criticize or argue with staff, students, or other parties.

Only public information may be posted on official university social media pages. When posting on a page, it is vital to have legal considerations in mind. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring that posts do not breach confidentiality, make defamatory comments, or breach copyright. Communications through social media **must not**:

- be used for the communication of business transactions
- include confidential information about an individual or organization
- discuss the University's internal workings or reveal future plans that have not been communicated to the public
- violate intellectual property
- breach the professionalism and confidentiality rules of the university.
- use someone else's images or written content without permission and/or without acknowledgment.

The university logo must be placed appropriately, top left or middle of the post/flyer, and must be in line with guidelines for using the university logo and university name.

It is also important that content is accurate and does not commit to something which the University does not intend to deliver. If a mistake is made, it is important to be transparent and update the page with a correction.

Managing social media pages

Primary administrative rights for official university social media pages will be assigned only to university employees. Official university social media pages must have a minimum of two administrators to ensure that the page is consistently managed. Should one administrator be unavailable, the second assigned administrator will manage the page. At least one of the two administrators should be a permanent employee of the university.

The name of the page must be indicated as page name, the University of Kelaniya (e.g.: ICT Centre, University of Kelaniya) and page username should contain 'UoK' (e.g.: ICTCUoK)

The Webmaster of the university must be the primary administrator of the official social media page of the university (i.e.: main university page).

Each social media page must get approval from the Webmaster of the university before publishing/creating by providing the name of the page, purpose, and administrator details.

Head of the administrative unit such as Dean, Head of Department, etc., or a member of staff nominated by the head of the administrative unit must be the administrator of the social media page. However, the head of the administrative unit will be responsible for the content of the page.

The Senior Treasurer of a student association or a member of staff nominated by the senior treasurer must be the administrator of the social media page. However, the senior treasurer of the association will be responsible for the content of the page.

If students need access, they must be given the editor role.

When posting news items on social media pages of the university, guidelines for publishing news on university websites must be followed.

Administrators of the site, if a need arises, in consultation with the head of the respective administrative unit, Webmaster of the university, and/or Director, Media unit of the university may hide or delete any material in violation of this policy, or to block a user from a site.

The password of the personal account used to manage social media pages must be strong and secure, and different from the password used to access the university's IT-based services. It is recommended that the personal account be secured with 2-factor authentication.

Where other staff or students are granted temporary access to a university social media account (e.g., as part of a social media takeover), a secure temporary new password must be created and then changed back once the takeover is complete.

Social media pages created by individuals or groups must not use official logo of the university without explicit permission from the webmaster of the university.

Auto-population must not be selected for access to any social media account on desktop devices. Where staff is accessing university sites on mobile devices, it is vital to ensure a suitable screen lock is enabled on the mobile device to prevent unauthorized access. It is recommended that staff should also secure accounts with 2-factor authentication.

Administrators of an official university social media site should not engage in personal activity under the guise of any official university social media site.

Administrators are encouraged to link to source material whenever possible. This activity will reduce the spread of misinformation and drive traffic.

Escalating concerns and issues

If a social media account has been hacked or a post from a university site attracts a number of negative comments and it is not clear how best to respond, staff should alert the head of the respective administrative unit, Webmaster of the university, Director, Media unit of the university as appropriate and seek guidance.

Staff should not actively monitor the personal social media sites of staff or students. However, if a member of staff notices, or is made aware of, social media activity on staff or student account which raises welfare concerns or constitutes misconduct, they should alert the head of the respective administrative unit and/or Webmaster of the university.

Social media in an emergency

Social media provides important information channels for staff, students, and wider stakeholders during an emergency, and it is vital that the information provided is timely, consistent, and accurate.

All communications on social media from the University in an emergency will be issued via the social media sites of the University. To minimize the risk of issuing conflicting and/or incorrect information, it is vital that all other university social media accounts do not post information or updates during such incidents.

Personal and professional accounts of staff

Social media can be an important tool for the professional activities of staff and provide a helpful platform for profile raising and enhancing networks. It is recommended that staff using social media for both professional and personal reasons maintain separate accounts for these purposes as the audiences for each activity are often distinct.

When using social media as a part of their professional capacity, and/or when presenting themselves in social media settings as a university representative, employees must comply with applicable University policies governing employee behavior and acceptable use of electronic and information resources

Personal and professional accounts of individual members of staff should not use University of Kelaniya branding and, if the staff does discuss their work on social media, they should make it clear on their profile statement or elsewhere that the views expressed are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the University.

All employees should consider what they are posting on their individual accounts. The university does not and will not monitor the accounts of staff. However, if a concern is raised regarding content posted on a staff member's social media account and the post is considered to be misconduct, the University has the right to request the removal of content. In addition, the matter may be reported to the head of the respective administrative unit and/or Webmaster of the university and addressed through a disciplinary process of the university.

6. Expectation of Privacy

The university shall operate the electronic communication systems including social media platforms with full respect for privacy and confidentiality as per relevant laws, regulations, and University policy.

If the law enforcement authorities make an official request from the Registrar of the University or as part of an official investigation by the University, the University reserves the right to monitor and/or log the activities of users. This includes, but is not limited to, files, data, programs, and electronic communications records. The approval of the Council of the University must be taken before initiating such actions. Wherever possible, users will be informed in writing prior to taking such actions. If the Senior Assistant Registrar/Legal & Documentation of the University is of the opinion such notifications detrimental to the investigations, the University may access and/or monitor user records and/or activities without prior notification with the written approval of the Vice-Chancellor of the University.

Further, information stored, created, sent, or received via IT systems of the university is potentially accessible under the Right to Information Act, No. 12 of 2016.

7. Enforcement

Reports of problems or violations should be informed to the Webmaster of the university by emailing webmaster@kln.ac.lk

Violations of the university's information technology policies including social media policy may result in appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with the law of the country as well as regulations and policies of the university.

8. Disclaimer

The University of Kelaniya disclaims any responsibility for and does not warrant information and material residing on non-university-managed social media pages. Such material does not necessarily reflect the attitudes, opinions, or values of the university, its staff, or students.

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