

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY (STUDENTS)

Approving authority	Governing Board
Purpose	This policy provides students with guidelines for the appropriate use of media and social media.
Responsible Officer	President and CEO
Next scheduled review	September 2026
Document Location	http://www.ozford.edu.au/higher-education/policies-and-procedures/
Associated documents	<p>Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Child Safety Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Diversity and Equity Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Engaging Managing and Monitoring the Performance of Education Agents Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Free Intellectual Enquiry in Learning and Teaching Policy</p> <p>Marketing and Advertising Materials Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Occupational Health and Safety Policy</p> <p>Privacy Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Use of Information Technology Facilities and Services Policy and Procedure (Students)</p> <p>Social Media Procedure (Students)</p>

1. PRINCIPLES

Ozford Institute of Higher Education (herein after referred to as ‘the Institute’) recognises the importance of social media as a communication tool that is regularly used by its students, students and associates to connect with each other and the broader community. Accordingly, and in recognition of the rapid growth and application of social media, the Institute has recognised the need for a policy to ensure that those who use these media as part of their professional role, in a personal capacity, study or association with the Institute do so consistent with Institute guidelines for acceptable use.

The following five principles apply to the use of social media for Institute students:

- show respect for human dignity and adhere to the Institute Mission and values;
- do not use social media to bring Institute, staff or students into disrepute;
- do not imply Institute endorsement of personal views;
- ensure confidentiality of information obtained through the Institute is maintained; and
- do not use social media to the detriment of Institute academic and professional activities.

This policy includes all social media sites and covers all future social media systems and access to social media by any means including via computer, tablet, mobile phone, handheld or wearable device.

2. SCOPE

This policy sets out the Institute's expectations for the use of social media by Institute students for educational and personal use purposes where they can be identified as the Institute students.

This policy does not apply to use of ICT facilities and services. Students should instead refer to the *Use of Information Technology Facilities and Services Policy and Procedure (Students)*.

3. DEFINITIONS

Identifiable Personal Use

'*Identifiable Personal Use*' is defined as the use of social media where a student can be identified as being enrolled at the Institute through means including but not limited to the person's social media name, character, profile or comments.

Institute Environments

Institute environments means any physical or virtual place made available by the Institute for use by a child for teaching, learning or Institute activities, including:

- the campus;
- Online learning environments; and
- Other physical environments where the Institute operates or conducts activities.

Physical environments are the physical places where an organisation operates or conducts activities, such as a building, facility or space and includes physical environments operated by third parties such as student advocates and homestay accommodation.

Online environments are any technological platforms which an organisation uses or controls, such as computers, phones, websites, intranet, email, social media and video conference facilities regardless of where such platforms may be accessed by students.

Media

Any organisation that publishes material for consumption by the general public or specific interest groups, including print, radio, television and online. Media organisations include those that are publicly and privately owned, run by volunteer organisations, including students, and have an international, national or local focus.

Post

Post in this policy refers to any shared or created content put on social media. This could be a post on Facebook, a message in Skype or content created and edited on Wikipedia.

Severe misconduct

Severe misconduct includes but not limited to

- acts dishonestly in relation to admission to the Institute;
- knowingly makes any false or misleading representation about things that concern the student as a student of the Institute or breaches any Institute :Policies or Procedures;
- harasses or intimidates another student, a member of staff, a visitor to the Institute, or any other person while the student is engaged in study or other activity as an Institute student,

because of race, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, sexual preference, disability, age, political conviction, religious belief or for any other reason;

- Misuses any facility in a manner which is illegal, or which is or will be detrimental to the rights or property of others. This includes the misuse, in any way, of any computing or communications equipment or capacity to which the student has access at or away from the Institute premises while acting as an Institute student, in a manner which is illegal, or which is or will be detrimental to the rights or property of others;
- steals, destroys or damages a facility or property of the Institute or for which the Institute is responsible

Social Media

Social media are online media designed to allow information to be shared, disseminated and created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. This policy applies to all social media including but not limited to:

- social networking sites: Facebook, Instagram, Google+, Foursquare, LinkedIn;
- any other official and unofficial pages on social and professional networking sites that are set up by individuals, groups, clubs and societies;
- video and photo sharing websites: YouTube;
- micro-blogging sites: Twitter and Tumblr;
- blogs: including corporate blogs, personal blogs or blogs hosted by traditional media publications;
- vodcasting and podcasting sites: including corporate podcasts and personal podcasts;
- forums and discussion boards: e.g. local discussion boards, Whirlpool, Yahoo! Google Groups;
- online multiplayer gaming platforms: e.g. Second Life;
- blogs hosted by media outlets (e.g. 'comments' or 'your say' feature on theage.com.au);
- sharing economy websites, such as Gumtree and Uber
- instant messaging including SMS, Skype, Wechat, Line and Kakao Talk.

4. POLICY

Use of Media and Social Media

- 4.1 The Institute encourages the use of social media as an effective complementary teaching strategy to practice critical thinking and problem-solving skills in collaborative environments. The Institute acknowledges the positive impact that the use of social media in learning and teaching can make to student engagement and experience, active learning, digital literacy and citizenship.
- 4.2 Freedom of speech and academic freedom are defining values of the Institute. Media, social media and communications activity by students is supported by the Institute's ***Free Intellectual Enquiry in Learning and Teaching Policy***.
- 4.3 Use of media or social media must adhere to the conduct expected of students outlined in this Policy and the:
- ***Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure***
 - ***Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure***
 - ***Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure***

- *Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedure*
- *Child Safety Policy and Procedure*
- *Diversity and Equity Policy and Procedure*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy Policy and Procedure*
- *Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure*
- *Use of Information Technology Facilities and Services Policy and Procedure (Students)*

- 4.4 Personal, academic and professional use of media or social media by students must not:
- include content that is misleading or inaccurate;
 - interfere with a staff member's duties or a student's studies;
 - bring the Institute into disrepute;
 - compromise the effectiveness of the Institute;
 - defame individuals or organisations;
 - use the Institute's name or brand artefacts (including crest or logo) in the account name or profile without approval;
 - imply the Institute endorsement of personal views; or
 - disclose without authorisation, personal information or Institute information.
- 4.5 When accessing internal social media networks, students must use the Institute's ICT facilities and services in an acceptable manner. This should not interfere with the academic and study-related work.
- 4.6 In addition to this, when using social media in Institute environments, students must:
- be polite and respectful of the opinions of others at all times
 - be mindful that others may not share the same sense of humour
 - not access or engage with any material that is inappropriate or unlawful. This may include posts that are fraudulent, threatening, bullying, embarrassing, of a sexual nature, obscene, racist, sexist, defamatory or profane, whether obscured by symbols or not
 - not use the Institute's ICT resources to post explicit or sexually suggestive messages
 - not infringe another person's, or the Institute's, privacy or intellectual property rights
 - report issues and any cyberbullying
- 4.7 When using social media in the context of education and when making identifiable personal use of social media, students must not:
- make any comment or post material that is, or might be construed to be, racial or sexual harassment, offensive, obscene (including pornography), defamatory, discriminatory towards any person, or inciting hate;
 - make any comment or post material that creates, or might be construed to create, a risk to the health or safety of a fellow student, contractor, staff member or other person, including material that amounts to bullying, psychological or emotional violence, coercion, harassment, sexual harassment, aggressive or abusive comments or behaviour, and/or unreasonable demands or undue pressure;
 - make any comment or post material that infringes privacy, copyright, is fraudulent, breaches intellectual property rights, constitutes a contempt of court, constitutes stalking, breaches a court order, or is otherwise unlawful;

- imply that the student is authorised to speak as a representative of the Institute or give the impression that the views they express are those of the Institute unless authorised by the Institute President and CEO to do so;
 - post inappropriate images that reference or involve the Institute in some way.
 - use the identity or likeness of another student or staff member of the Institute;
 - use or disclose any Institute confidential information obtained as a student of the Institute;
 - compromise academic honesty or encourage cheating or plagiarism including sell, purchase or offer to write assignments or other assessable work, or to request help with such work. Additionally, students are required to take steps to minimise opportunities for others to cheat by not saving work to a shared network drive that is accessible by others and not sharing work on social media sites (for example);
 - make any comment or post material that might otherwise cause damage to the Institute's reputation or bring it into disrepute;
 - use the Institute's crest or logo without permission or use the Institute's name in a manner that is likely to be misleading or bring the Institute into disrepute.
 - use external social media tools for study related internal communications, this excludes Institute approved software such as SharePoint and Skype.
 - use an Institute email address, or anything else that connects the students to the Institute, when making public comment.
- 4.8 Students should be mindful that their social media use in their private time can have, or can be construed as having, a connection to the Institute. Students must ensure that their private use of social media does not create a connection with the Institute which is, or is likely to be, detrimental to the Institute or its community.
- 4.9 Before deciding to post something, students must be aware that:
- comments posted online are available immediately to a wide audience;
 - material posted online effectively lasts forever and may be copied without limit;
 - others may view material posted online out of context or use it for an unintended purpose;
 - a site's security settings cannot be relied on to protect or keep material private;
 - anything posted can be traced back and used to identify the poster as a student;
 - defamation, privacy, copyright and other laws apply to media and social media; and
 - anonymity or a pseudonym cannot be relied on to protect against identification.
- 4.10 Students who are alleged to have misused media or social media will be subject to investigation and, if misuse is established, action will be taken as detailed in this policy.
- 4.11 All breaches of this Policy will be treated seriously.
- 4.12 Any student who becomes aware of misconduct by any student or staff member particularly if they infringe the rights of another person, or that the effect of any use of any facilities is to infringe such rights, must notify the Executive Management team.
- 4.13 The outcome of a substantiated breach of this Policy may include, is not limited to the following:
- Counsel the student on appropriate media or social media use;
 - Suspend or withdraw access to the email service, system access and/or network services.

- Require the student to indemnify or compensate the Institute or a provider for the reasonable loss and damage occasioned by reason of the misuse;
- If the misuse constitutes a potential breach of privacy, refer to and manage this in accordance with the ***Privacy Policy and Procedure***.
- Disciplinary action in accordance with the ***Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure***.

4.14 Students can access the ***Student Grievance s and Appeals Policy and Procedure*** if they are aggrieved by an Institute decision.

4.15 In addition to any disciplinary action by the Institute, a breach of this policy this may lead to civil or criminal proceedings and penalties, which the Institute may report to relevant law enforcement bodies and for which the student will be held personally accountable.

Reporting

4.16 All non-compliance with legislative requirements or severe misconduct incidents will be reported to the Audit and Risk Committee and the Governing Board.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure that this policy is fit for purpose and meets the requirements of the HES Threshold Standards the policy will be:

- 5.1 internally endorsed by the Executive Management Team on development or review, prior to approval by Governing Board, or the Academic Board or other delegated authority;
- 5.2 externally reviewed as part of any independent review of the HES Threshold Standards approved by the Governing Board;
- 5.3 internally reviewed by the Responsible Officer every three years from the date of approval (if not earlier).
- 5.4 referenced to the applicable HES threshold Standard and/or other legislation/regulation.

6. FEEDBACK

Feedback or comments on this policy is welcomed by Executive Management Team of the Institute or other delegated authority.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This policy was developed with reference to the following:

- Monash University, Media and Social Media Policy, 2021 ([Media and Social Media Policy \(monash.edu\)](https://www.monash.edu/media-and-social-media-policy))
- Victoria University Social Media Procedure, 2018 (<https://policy.vu.edu.au/document/view.php?id=429>)

- Australian Catholic University Social Media Policy, 2021 ([Social Media Policy - Policies - Australian Catholic University \(acu.edu.au\)](https://www.acu.edu.au/policies/social-media-policy))

8. VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
1.0	June 2018	Initial Development	GB
2.0	June 2018	Minor formatting and editorial changes	GB
3.0	September 2023	Internal Review	GB
Related legislation/ regulation/standard	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011 (Cth) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth) Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) 2000 (Cth) Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 (Cth) The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth) Victorian Child Safe Standards Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth) Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth) Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth) Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) Equal Opportunity Act 2010 Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic) Spent Convictions Act 2021 SPAM Act 2003 (Cth) Copyright Act 1968 (Cth) Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic), Health Records Act 2001 (Vic), Australian Consumer Law (Cth)		

Note:

GB = Governing Board