Procedure 7.3 Social media protocols

Introduction

The use of Social media is a growing part of communications at the Academy. Members of the Academy's community (students and staff) use social media to build online awareness of Academy events, activities, and accomplishments. These platforms are used to build a sense of community among and communicate with key audiences, from prospective students and parents to alumni and sponsors. Thus, these protocols are applicable for staff as well as students at the Academy.

Operational description

Academic departments and students are encouraged to create and maintain an online presence using social networking websites. The Academy is active on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

The Academy's social media protocols provide information about rules, laws and guidelines for the use of social media platforms.

Adherence to these protocols is intended to avoid copyright claims and other liabilities that might arise from the posting of inappropriate or unauthorised content, including pictures and video in which a third party claims a copyright or other intellectual property right.

Do not post any information on social media platforms that may be considered contrary to the Academy's mission. Our mission is to provide students with a broad-based liberal arts education that offers students intellectual, moral, and spiritual preparation that enables them to lead meaningful and satisfying lives.

The following guidelines apply to faculty, staff (including interns), and students who engage in online conversations for work-related purposes or who are asked by supervisors to use or participate in social media as part of their job responsibilities.

What to consider when using Social media

General guidelines

Staff and students are encouraged to share news, events or promote work through social media tools and engage in conversations with the community you build. Social media offer an excellent, low-cost way to share information that is available to the public. The best way to do it is to link to the original source.

When sharing information that is not a matter of public record, please follow the following guidelines. Failure to do so could risk future participation of the Academy on social media sites.

Maintain confidentiality

Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the Academy, its students, alumni, or your fellow employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow Academy policies.

Do no harm

Think, before posting. There is no such thing as a *private* social media site. Search engines can turn up posts and pictures years after publication. Do not post information that may harm the Academy, colleagues, or classmates. Avoid posting while feeling emotional about a subject – wait until you are calm and clear-headed.

Admit mistakes. Be upfront and be quick with your correction. If posting to a blog, modify earlier posts when necessary and clearly indicate the change.

Keep in mind that parents, classmates, and future employers will read your blog or social media posts, as well as prospective students, their parents, alumni, lecturers and Academy administrators.

When you engage

Emerging platforms for online collaboration are offering new ways to engage with students, colleagues, and the world at large. While it is enticing to share personal opinions about controversial topics or news events, any conversations should be related to the work you are doing at the Academy, especially your area of expertise.

When you post

Academy staff, faculty and students are personally responsible for the content published on blogs, wikis, or any other form of user-generated content.

Guidelines when posting on behalf of the Academy

Provide unique, individual perspectives on what's going on at the Academy, whether it is a department or in the classroom. Please post meaningful and respectful comments on your expertise; in other words, no spam, self-promotion to personal accounts, or remarks that are off-topic or offensive.

Reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate. When disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it appropriate and polite.

Be transparent. Your honesty-or dishonesty-will be quickly noticed in the social media environment. If you are blogging about a position at the Academy, use your real name, state your position, and be clear about your role. Disclose any vested interest in points of discussion.

Posts should contain only factual information!

Be judicious. All statements must be true and not misleading and all claims must be substantiated and approved. Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or any parties that are in litigation without the appropriate approval.

Use a disclaimer for any non- Academy social media sites to which you may contribute.

Example: *The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent the official views of Docklands Academy, London.*

Monitoring use of social media sites

Staff should be aware that any use of social media tools is monitored and, where breaches of this policy are found, action may be taken under our disciplinary procedures. Assign an administrator who can regularly monitor postings and content.

Where evidence of misuse is found we may undertake a more detailed investigation, involving the examination and disclosure of monitoring records to those nominated to undertake the investigation and any witnesses or managers involved in the investigation. If necessary such information may be handed to the police in connection with a criminal investigation.