



## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY – PERSONAL USE

<b>Date approved:</b>	March 2020	<b>Date Policy will take effect:</b>	Immediately	<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	March 2021
<b>Approved by:</b>	Shannan Human, Head of People and Culture				
<b>Signature:</b>					
<b>Custodian title &amp; e-mail address:</b>	Shannan Human – Head of People and Culture Shannan @uow.edu.au				
<b>Responsible Unit:</b>	People and Culture				
<b>Supporting documents, procedures &amp; forms of this policy:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bullying Prevention Policy</li> <li>Code of Conduct</li> <li>EEO Anti-discrimination Policy</li> <li>Grievance Policy</li> <li>IT Policy</li> <li>Performance Management Policy</li> <li>Privacy/Confidentiality Policy</li> <li>Respect for Diversity Policy</li> <li>Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy</li> <li>Social Media Policy</li> <li>UOW IT Acceptable Use</li> <li>UOW Internet Access Guidelines</li> </ul>				
<b>References &amp; Legislation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSW Anti-discrimination Act 1977</li> <li>Racial Discrimination Act 1975</li> <li>Sex Discrimination Act 1984</li> <li>Human Rights Commission Act 1986</li> <li>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</li> <li>Age Discrimination Act 2004</li> <li>Fair Work Act 2009</li> <li>Copyright Act 1968 (Commonwealth)</li> <li>Crimes Act 1900</li> <li>Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998</li> </ul>				
<b>Audience:</b>	Internal – UOW Pulse employees only				
<b>Expiry Date of Policy (if applicable):</b>	In place until reviewed				



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## 1 Purpose of Policy

- 1.1 UOW Pulse, like all other modern organisations, engages with and is affected by social media. Social media is a valuable tool, as a means of communication and retaining consistent connections with customers. Increasingly, social media use is blurring the lines between working and personal lives.
- 1.2 This policy was developed so employees feel able to participate online, while being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations as an employee of UOW Pulse. This policy also outlines the minimum standards required by employees when using social media, the circumstances in which UOW Pulse may monitor use and actions brought against employees for breaches of the policy.
- 1.3 This policy is not intended to unreasonably curtail the personal use and freedoms of UOW Pulse employees using social media. This policy is intended to provide a common sense guidance of social media use to retain UOW Pulse's integrity.
- 1.4 UOW Pulse acknowledges the right of employees to use social media during non-working hours. It is the manner that employees choose to utilise social media that UOW Pulse encourages employees to uphold respect for the privacy, rights and sensitivities of other people. Inappropriate use of social media has the potential to cause harm to other employees and the UOW Pulse business.

## 2 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
<b>Discrimination</b>	The unjust or prejudicial treatment of people, because of an inherent personal difference.
<b>Harassment</b>	Aggressive behaviour, unwanted pressure or intimidation, creating a tense environment.
<b>Misrepresentation</b>	The act of giving a statement that is either incorrect or misleading in providing an account or opinion of something.
<b>Pornographic Material</b>	Writing, pictures, films and video clips of a sexually explicit or arousing nature
<b>Social Media</b>	For the purposes of this policy, social media includes, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social networking sites, e.g. Facebook, Google+, Tumblr</li> <li>• Professional networking sites, e.g. LinkedIn</li> <li>• Video and photo sharing sites, e.g. YouTube, Instagram, Flickr, Pinterest, SnapChat, TikTok</li> <li>• Weblogs, including personal and corporate blogs</li> <li>• Forum and discussion boards, e.g. Yahoo! Groups, Google Groups, Reddit</li> <li>• Micro-blogging sites, e.g. Twitter</li> <li>• Any other websites that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools</li> </ul>

## 3 Application & Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all UOW Pulse employees.
- 3.2 The scope of this policy includes the use of social media by a UOW Pulse employee, during their non-working hours, and on their personal social media accounts.

## 4 Principles of Online Comment

- 4.2 Everything posted online is public property and the same principles apply to online comment as to any other kind of public comment. However, due to the speed and scope of dissemination, as well as ease of replication, there are additional considerations. Online comments may:
  - i. be viewed immediately;



- ii. be downloaded and stored by others;
  - iii. be replicated at any future point;
  - iv. be reproduced in original form even if later edited or withdrawn;
  - v. reach a wide audience;
  - vi. reach people who were never intended to see the communication;
  - vii. be viewed out of context.
  - viii. not be removable from the internet
- 4.4 Employees must be mindful that their behaviour is bound by the UOW Pulse Code of Conduct – even outside work hours in relation to matters that affect the workplace.

## 5 Social Media Standards

- 5.1 Employees of UOW Pulse should remember that they may be identifiable as a UOW Pulse employee, through information they make available on social media or through the content they post, and the reflection of this on UOW Pulse.
- 5.2 UOW Pulse permits the access of social media in the workplace in a personal capacity, and will not block this use unless there is a negative impact on the performance of duties.
- 5.3 Whether using social media in a professional or personal capacity, employees are personally responsible for content they publish online. What is published, regardless of whether it is withdrawn, may remain accessible indefinitely. It can be forwarded, quoted or misquoted.
- 5.4 UOW Pulse personal social media policy is guided by the following standards in the personal use of social media:
- i. Avoid mixing professional and personal use of social media
  - ii. Do not imply that UOW Pulse has approved your statement, or endorses what are your personal views. Such conduct can be constituted as misrepresentation.
  - iii. Do not use the UOW Pulse name, or brand names, unless permitted to do so.
  - iv. Do not refer to UOW Pulse, its members, customers, suppliers, competitors or employees with malice, or what may be construed as malicious intent
  - v. Disregard the privacy, rights and sensitivities of other people, which may be inferred as discrimination or harassment.
  - vi. Do not upload, post, forward or post a link which may create undue liability for UOW Pulse, cause embarrassment to UOW Pulse, its clients or employees.
  - vii. Do not disclose confidential information obtained through work
- 5.5 UOW Pulse strongly encourages employees to avoid contributing to any discussion which may be in breach of this policy, and to, if necessary, report any potential breaches of this policy.

## 6 Rules for use of Social Media via UOW Network

- 6.1 As users of the University of Wollongong's IT infrastructure, UOW Pulse employees are to be aware and familiar of the [UOW IT Acceptable Use Policy](#). This policy outlines the requirements and conditions of such use, for example, expressly prohibiting the upload, forward and posting of links to any of the following types of material:
- i. pornographic material;
  - ii. a false and defamatory statement about any person or organisation;
  - iii. material or data which could reasonably be deemed abusive, offensive, obscene or indecent in a workplace setting
  - iv. material which the average person deems likely to harass, intimidate, harm or distress;
  - v. material in breach of copyright or other intellectual property rights
- 6.2 UOW Pulse employees are reminded that even if they believe they are not identifiable online as UOW Pulse employees, they are using a resource that has the capacity to follow their use.



## 7 Grievances

- 7.1 Misuse of social media can, in some circumstances, cause embarrassment, humiliation, discrimination, harassment, and may constitute a criminal offence or otherwise, giving rise to legal liability against the writer or UOW Pulse.
- 7.2 Any employee who feels that they have been discriminated, harassed or bullied, or are offended by material posted or uploaded by a UOW Pulse colleague onto social media should inform their manager or People and Culture.
- 7.3 Employees are to remain aware that any use of social media, whether personal or for work purposes, may come under investigation should a grievance be lodged. Where breaches of this policy are found, the UOW Pulse Performance Management Procedure will be followed.
- Where a grievance is lodged, an investigation may involve the disclosure of monitoring records to those nominated to undertake the investigation, as well as witnesses or managers involved in the investigation.
  - If necessary, information connected to criminal activity may be handed to NSW police in connection with a criminal investigation.

## 8 Responsibility

- 8.1 Employees are responsible for:
- Preventing UOW Pulse from being brought into disrepute through their actions on social media
  - Refraining from comments that are obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to or about your work or about another person or entity,
  - Acting in a manner consistent with policies, procedures, programs and activities which support UOW Pulse policies and programs,
  - Complying with the grievance process outlined in this policy; and
  - Reading and understanding this policy.
- 8.2 Managers are responsible for:
- Adhering, complying and leading by example under this policy
  - Communicating this policy among employees, including its broad implications
  - Fair decision making which takes into account this Policy
  - Acting consistently with policies, procedures, programs and activities when enforcing this policy
- 9.1 Failure to adhere to this policy can result in broad ramifications including reprimands, being stood down from work, or termination of employment.

## 9 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	2016	AGM	New policy
2	24/11/2017	April Alexander, Project Manager: Digital Marketing	Replace all reference of 'UniCentre' with 'UOW Pulse'. Update contact number for UOW Employee Assistance Program
3	Nov 2018	Shannan Human, Senior People and Business	Minor wording changes, changes to structure and update with legislation
4	March 2020	Shannan Human – Head of People and Culture	Updated references and legislation, updated typos.

## Appendix A

In the event an employee is experiencing negative effects derived from social media interactions about them they are encouraged to seek support from the University Employee Assistance Program who can be contacted on 1300 361 008.



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All support is confidential between the employee and the support person. UOW Pulse is not privileged to information discussed at these meetings.