



Social Media Policy  
of  
University of Kelaniya

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## 1. Introduction

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

However, there are also a number of risks associated with the use of social media resulting potentially serious misinformation for stakeholders and ultimately impacting the reputation of the university and.

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 social media;
2. Ensure a consistent approach to 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 social media, protecting user as well as the university;
5. Ensure staff and students do not compromise their personal 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 social media presence and that of the University.

## 3. Scope

This Policy shall apply to:

1. Any social media platform hosted on 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 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, 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 reputation of the university and members of the university and also 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 from regularly and monitored on a frequent basis. 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 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 which harasses, bullies or otherwise intimidates
- post or promote content which instructs, causes or coerces others to harass, bully or otherwise 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**:

- use 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 acknowledgement.

The university logo must be placed appropriately, top left or middle of the post/flyer and must be in line with guidelines for using 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, University of Kelaniya (e.g.: ICT Centre, University of Kelaniya) and page username should contain 'UoK' (e.g.: ICTCUoK)

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 Webmaster of the university before publishing/creating by providing name of the page, purpose and administrator details.

Head of the administrative unit such 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, head of the administrative unit will be responsible for the content of the page.

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.

Administrators of the site, if a need arises, in consultation with 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.

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

Auto-population must not be selected for access to any social media account on desktop devices. Where staff are 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 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 personal social media sites of staff or students. However, if a member of staff notices, or is made aware of, social media activity on a staff or student account which raises welfare concerns or constitutes misconduct, they should alert 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 situation, and it is vital that the information provided is timely, consistent and accurate.

All communications on social media from the University in an emergency situation will be issued via the social media sites of the University. In order 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 a such incident.

### **Personal and professional accounts of staff**

Social media can be an important tool for 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 oneself 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 staff do 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 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 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 activities of users. This includes, but is not limited to, files, data, programs and electronic communications records. The opinion of the Legal officer 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 Legal officer of the University is of 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 Vice-Chancellor of the University. Council of the University must be informed about such investigations.

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](mailto:webmaster@kln.ac.lk)

Violations of the university 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

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

<b>Document title</b>
Social Media Policy
<b>Approving body</b>
Council, University of Kelaniya
<b>Enforcement Authority</b>
Vice-Chancellor, University of Kelaniya
<b>Operational responsibility</b>
Webmaster, University of Kelaniya
<b>Date of approval</b>
<b>Review date (s)</b>
-
<b>Edition no.</b>
1
<b>Date of effect</b>
<b>Document classification (Public, Internal, Confidential, Secret)</b>
Public