



DOCUMENT TYPE	D	
ADMINISTRATIVE	5	
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECH.	6	
WEBSITE MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT	4	
NUMBER	005	

SOCIAL MEDIA PROCEDURE

Parent Policy Title	Website Operational Framework Policy									
Associated Documents	Website and Intranet Compliance Procedure Website Operational Procedure									
Preamble	<p>Social media forms an important part of La Trobe University's communications platform.</p> <p>Unlike any other medium, social media provides the means to engage and participate in two-way communications with targeted audiences. It is also extremely useful way of disseminating a diverse array of messages including news updates, research findings, and increasingly, marketing and promotional messages, quickly and efficiently.</p> <p>Given its importance to La Trobe University's overall communication strategy La Trobe expects that all people representing the University through social media channels are knowledgeable of and adhere to this procedure in order to avert problems that may arise from engagement in the social media space. This procedure provides guidance, encouragement and support for those who communicate through social media.</p> <p>This procedure applies to all social media activity undertaken by staff and students, or contractors and agencies, representing La Trobe University in an official capacity when using social networking sites and Web 2.0 applications hosted either internally on University infrastructure (e.g. Yammer) or externally by third parties (e.g. Facebook or Twitter).</p> <p>Be advised that routine monitoring of comment in social media channels occurs for various reasons.</p>									
General	<p>Social media presents many opportunities to communicate in new and exciting ways. However, in addition to its many positive aspects, use of social media can cause embarrassment and reputational damage, and even result in defamation actions. While the University takes the risk of these occurrences seriously, the University believes that a straightforward, common sense approach, based on the key tenets of transparency, honesty and authenticity is the best way to mitigate against the risks associated with the use of social media.</p>									
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Advice on effective use of social media	This section of the procedure provides useful advice on how social media can be best used for your advantage.																						
1.1 Integration	Consider social media channels in conjunction with all other available options. By taking into consideration intended audiences, and their preferences for the delivery of information, an overall communication strategy can be implemented which best harnesses the different attributes of different communication tools.																						
1.2 Transparency	Be honest about your identity and your motives. If you are commenting on La Trobe University, or matters related to it in your own time, it is best to identify your association with the University and declare your views as your own and not those of the University. If you are posting content for promotional purposes or for any other official purpose make sure you are authorised to do so and adhere to La Trobe's policies.																						
1.3 Accuracy	Have all the facts before you post to avoid posting misleading or incorrect information about you or the University. If you make an error, be the first to acknowledge it and move on. Do not try to revise history.																						
1.4 Consider your tone	Always consider the content of your message and the audience receiving it. As its name suggests, social media encourages a more relaxed casual voice, however a more formal tone may be appropriate in certain circumstances.																						

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1.5 Think before you post	If you feel angry or worked-up about a subject, delay posting until you are calm and clear-headed. The internet acts as a virtual global archive meaning once information is posted online, it may be too late to recall or change it. And remember, there is no such thing as a 'private' social media site.
1.6 Be respectful	Be respectful of other people and their opinions. Never be abusive. If you do disagree with someone's opinion and wish to say so be sure to do so in a polite and constructive manner.
1.7 Stay active and add value	The best way to add value to your online community is to post relevant information on a regular basis (frequency depending on the expectations of your audience). Do not post simply for the sake of it – if your posts are of no interest to your audience, they will eventually disengage. Importantly, make sure to interact with your audience by responding to their comments or questions in a timely manner. Engaging with your audience will help keep them engaged with you. Also make sure you proactively manage spam and abusive posts.
1.8 Protect your privacy	Be honest about who you are but protect your privacy at all times. Also be cautious not to divulge information that may compromise your professional confidentiality.
2. Standards for personal and professional use of social media	This section of the procedure sets out standards for personal and professional use of social media.
2.1 Do not use social media in ways likely to bring La Trobe University into disrepute.	Do not post any content that is inflammatory, racist, sexist or offensive. Never upload offensive or explicit written, audio or video content. You are personally responsible for all content you publish and any comments you make. Ensure you do not post comments that may be contrary to La Trobe's Statutes (e.g. Use of Computer Facilities Statute), Regulations, policies, procedure or any laws.
2.2 Do not disclose confidential information obtained through work	Do not post commercial information about La Trobe or confidential personal information about the University's students, alumni or employees. Posting such information is in breach of University policy and procedures and may break the law. Please comply with La Trobe's Privacy Policy at all times.
2.3 Do not imply La Trobe University endorsement of your personal	It is appropriate for people to make public comment within their area of expertise. However, staff are not permitted to represent themselves as spokespersons for La Trobe University unless authorised to do so. If you post directly about La Trobe University in your personal time, please

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views	identify your association with La Trobe as a staff member, alumnus or student, and mention on your site or post that you are sharing your personal views and opinions, not representing the organisation. Comply with the University Code of Conduct .
2.4 Do not undermine your effectiveness at work.	Please remember that La Trobe University's facilities and your work time are to be used for University related business, so when on-campus use social media channels within reason. The use of social media at work should be directly related to accomplishing work goals such as seeking sources for information or working with others to resolve a problem. As a rule, it is best to conduct your personal business in your own time.
Status	New. Approved by the Chair, PRC in his capacity as Vice-Chancellor, 12 August 2011, Minute 39.8; endorsed by the Directors' Committee, 12 July 2011.
Approval Body	Vice-Chancellor on recommendation of the Planning and Resources Committee
Initiating Body	Executive Director, Marketing and Engagement
Definitions	<p>Social media: The term 'social media' broadly describes Web 2.0 technologies that underpin the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Typified by sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn et al, social media enables people to communicate easily via the internet to share information and resources.</p> <p>Web 2.0: The term Web 2.0 is associated with web applications that facilitate participatory information sharing and collaboration via the internet. A Web 2.0 site allows users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue as creators and consumers of user-generated content in a virtual community, in contrast to websites where users (consumers) are limited to the passive viewing of content that was created for them. Examples of Web 2.0 include social networking sites, blogs, wikis, video sharing sites, hosted services and web applications.</p>
Date Effective	12 August 2011
Next Review Date	August 2013
Keywords	social media, web, internet, user generated content, dialogue, web 2.0.
Owner/Sponsor	Executive Director, Marketing and Engagement

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		Policy Database Document Reference Number 564005D

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La Trobe University acknowledges the works of Deakin University, Curtin University, De Paul University and Laurel Papworth which provided inspiration for these guidelines.