

MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Monash University staff, students and associates.

For the purpose of this policy, references to 'the University' includes activity at Monash University Australia, Monash University Malaysia, Monash University Indonesia, Monash College, Monash Suzhou and the Monash University Prato Centre, unless indicated otherwise.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy sets out Monash University's approach to using, interacting and engaging with media and social media, along with the related responsibilities of its staff, students and associates.

1. General Principles

- 1.1. The University values its impact and influence as an education and research institution that serves communities across Australia and internationally, along with the integrity of its character and reputation.
- 1.2. Freedom of speech and academic freedom are defining values of the University. Media, social media and communications activity by staff, students and associates is supported by the University's [Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy](#).
- 1.3. The University promotes critical and free enquiry, informed intellectual discourse, and public debate, both within the University and in the wider society, and as set out in the [Monash University Act](#). Media and social media are key channels in supporting these objectives; shaping the perception of, and impact on, the community which the University serves.

2. Appropriate use of Media and Social Media

- 2.1. Use of media or social media must adhere to the conduct expected of staff outlined in the [Ethics Statement Policy](#) and [Behaviours in the Workplace Procedure](#), and for students the [Student General Conduct Policy](#) and [Student Charter](#).
 - 2.1.1. Use of media or social media in a professional capacity must also, to the best of the individual's knowledge and expertise, only include content that is accurate and not misleading; and
 - 2.1.2. Official University communications must also adhere to the University's [Brand Book](#).
- 2.2. Staff and students must also have regard to the [Data Protection and Privacy Procedure](#) and the [Data Protection and Privacy Schedule Monash Indonesia](#) if sharing any information about University staff, students or associates on media or social media channels.
- 2.3. Use of media or social media must not:
 - 2.3.1. Include comment that appears to speak on behalf of the University, unless the individual has been identified as an official spokesperson (refer to clauses 3.6 and 3.7);
 - 2.3.2. Include confidential University information, including personal or commercially-sensitive information, or information under embargo without permission or consent;
 - 2.3.3. Interfere with a staff member's duties or a student's studies; or
 - 2.3.4. Use the University's name or brand artefacts (including crest or logo) in the account name or profile without approval from University Marketing, Admissions and Communications.
- 2.4. In addition to 2.2, use of media or social media made in an official University capacity must not:

- 2.4.1. Contradict the principles outlined in the University's [Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy](#) (refer to clause 1.1);
- 2.4.2. Include content, or links to content, that are sexually explicit or pornographic; or
- 2.4.3. Include solicitations of commerce.

3. Engaging with the Media and Social Media

- 3.1. The University acknowledges the important role of staff in providing comment about matters within their area(s) of academic disciplinary expertise or professional expertise, and encourages staff to engage with the media in the course of their work. Students may provide comment to the media about their experience, study or research with the University.
- 3.2. The University also encourages the use of social media to foster social connection, build engagement with internal and external communities and promote the University's objectives – particularly in demonstrating the impact of its research and education for the purposes of driving debate and contributing to public discourse and knowledge sharing.
- 3.3. Staff seeking to make contact with the media in a professional capacity, and any student contact in relation to their experience, studies or research, must comply with the [Media and Social Media Procedure](#).
- 3.4. Staff and students are responsible for ensuring content shared on media or social media channels aligns with this policy.
- 3.5. Staff and students accessing social media in a professional or personal capacity through the University's ICT network, or on University-supplied devices, must comply with the [Information Technology Acceptable Use Procedure](#).

Official spokespeople

- 3.6. Unless they have been authorised to do so, staff must not present themselves as an official spokesperson for the University, and must take reasonable steps to ensure any engagement(s) with the media are not represented as being made on behalf of the University.
 - 3.6.1. Refer to clause 1.2 of the [Media and Social Media Procedure](#) for examples of what constitutes making a statement on behalf of the University.
- 3.7. Media matters relating to communicating on behalf of the University are the responsibility of the Vice-Chancellor or official spokespersons only. Official spokespersons must be authorised by the Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer or Chief Marketing Officer.
- 3.8. Where a matter has been defined as a crisis under the University's [Crisis Management Policy](#) and [Crisis Management Procedures](#), media communication and public comment for the crisis is authorised by the Chief Marketing Officer or Chair of the Crisis Management and Recovery Senior Management Team.

4. University Legal Support

- 4.1. The University will consider the provision of legal support to staff whose actions are aligned with this Policy and accompanying [Media and Social Media Procedure](#) in the event they are the subject of an allegation or legal claim for defamation, or other action contrary to law connected to comments made in a professional capacity. The University will take into account all relevant factors including a staff member's compliance or otherwise with this Policy and the [Media and Social Media Procedure](#). Instances where there is contention around alignment will be assessed and legal support provided on a case-by-case basis.

5. Breach of Policy

- 5.1. The University treats any breach of its policies, procedures and schedules seriously; it encourages reporting of concerns about non-compliance, and manages compliance in accordance with the applicable Enterprise Agreement, relevant instrument of appointment and/or applicable contract terms. A failure to comply with this policy may result in action by the University. Such action may include disciplinary and other action up to and including potential termination of employment for employees, or the cessation of engagements with the University for other persons.

DEFINITIONS

Associates	For the purposes of this policy, 'associates' are defined as contractors, conjoint appointments, affiliates and adjunct appointees.
Expert comment	Any view expressed on a matter of academic disciplinary expertise for academic staff, or an area of identified professional expertise for professional staff.
External audiences	All other people who are not internal audiences of the University. This includes, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alumni; ● Prospective students; ● Industry; ● Government ● Research partners; ● Media; ● Peers; and ● General public.
Internal audiences	The University's staff, current students and members of the governing body and its committees.
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.
Official University capacity	For the purposes of this policy, 'official University capacity' is considered to be activity formally authorised by the relevant delegated authority of the University made for and/or on behalf of the University.
Personal capacity	For the purposes of this policy, 'personal capacity' for staff is considered to be any use not defined as 'professional capacity'. 'Personal capacity' for students is considered as any use outside their study or research with the University.
Professional capacity	For the purposes of this policy, 'professional capacity' for staff is considered to be academic or professional work with, for and/or on behalf of the University.
Public comment	Anything that is said in public or that appears in the public domain.
Social media	Digital communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facebook, Twitter and Instagram; ● LinkedIn, YouTube, Snapchat and Line; ● Weibo and WeChat; ● Forums, such as Reddit and blogs.
University social media channels	The University's official, active accounts on any social media platform, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, WeChat, Weibo, and YouTube. Social media is dynamic and fast changing and these platforms may change over time.

GOVERNANCE

Supporting procedures	Media and Social Media Procedure
Supporting schedules	N/A
Associated policies	Ethics Statement Policy Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Student General Conduct Policy

	Crisis Management Policy
Related legislation	Higher Education Support Amendment (Freedom of Speech) Act 2021 (Cth)
Category	Operational
Approval	Vice-Chancellor's Executive Committee 8 June 2021
Endorsement	Chief Operating Officer 21 May 2021
Policy owner	Chief Marketing Officer
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