



Social Media Policy

September 2023

Version 1.0
Approved by the Board of Governors

Introduction

By staying active on social media, you can benefit both your career and professional experiences. Further, social media can assist and benefit how you engage with your stakeholder audiences and develop your reputation. Nevertheless, there are very large risks and penalties that can result from incorrectly using social media. This is especially true when personal and professional boundaries can become vague on social media.

Purpose

The social media policy is in place to reduce the risks to Vantage when using social media and thus applies to the use of all forms of social media on platforms that include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snap Chat, TikTok, YouTube, Wikipedia, Instagram, blogs and any other social networking sites.

This policy wholly applies to the use of social media for business and personal use that may impact the image and reputation of Vantage in any way.

The policy covers all stakeholders such as students, staff, volunteers, of Vantage but does not form part of any student or staff contract of employment and so may be amended at any time.

All Vantage students and staff must take responsibility in complying with this policy by ensuring that they take the time to both read and understand it.

Prohibited use of social media

Any misuse or improper use of social media on or off-campus must be reported to the Vantage Press Office, a line manager or a senior academic staff at the earliest opportunity.

Social media use must never breach any Vantage policies, the Staff handbook or the Student handbook

Any social media posts or communications **must not**:

- Bully, harass or discriminate others.
- Make hateful or insulting **comments** relating to sex, gender reassignment, race, nationality, disability, sexual preferences or sexual orientation, age, religion, faith or beliefs.
- Posting hateful or insulting **images** relating to sex, gender reassignment, race, nationality, disability, sexual preferences or sexual orientation, age, religion, faith or beliefs.
- Go against British Values.
- Breach any confidentiality.
- Breach any copyright.
- Give away confidential information about a colleague, student or partner contact.

- Reveal Vantage's internal and sensitive information, workings, agreements with partner organisations, any plans that have not been authorised by Vantage's senior management or press office.

Further social media guidance

Students and staff members are asked to follow the below general advice when using social media:

- Always be clear and courteous.
- Report vile and rude comments but do not respond to them.
- Never share confidential and, or, sensitive details.
- Engage positively, respectfully and professionally with all posts.
- Be transparent on social media profiles and do not conceal your identity.

Official use of social media accounts

Only designated persons are authorised to post official social media vetted content and material on Vantage's social media accounts.

Helping Vantage on social media

Although not contractual, Students and staff can assist Vantage by increasing its online support and impact by interacting, liking, sharing, following and retweeting official social media content.

Image Consent

Prior to using any images of students or staff, you must first seek their permission before posting online.

Guidelines for social media use

All students and staff are active ambassadors of the organisation, at all times, whether acting in person or online and on campus or off campus.

All students and staff must not share anything on social media that they would not say in public.

All students and staff must be proficient, professional, polite, and honest.

Unless you are authorised to post on Vantage's official social media, it is advisable to (1) discuss the appropriateness of posts with senior staff and (2) to add 'my own views' or 'these views are my own' on social media posts.

Breach of this policy

Breach of this policy may be regarded as gross misconduct resulting in action up to and including dismissal from the organisation. Additionally, where behaviour and conduct are found to be unacceptable, Vantage will manage the matter internally. However, where behaviour and conduct are considered illegal, Vantage will report the matter to the relevant authorities such as the Police.

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