

Peterhouse - Social Media Guidelines

The College recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities that a social media presence offers. Social media provides the opportunity to share information about the College's activities and how they can be supported and we want to enhance the College's profile online.

Social media accounts provide a flexible delivery platform. The College actively encourages its members and staff to make effective and appropriate use of them; and to engage in conversations with colleagues and the community.

These guidelines are written to help College members and staff plan, setup and manage social media Accounts, such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and LinkedIn. This guidance is for all members and staff who directly or indirectly, represent the College online. It applies to online communications posted at any time and from anywhere, whether to an individual, a limited group or the world.

Personal vs professional profiles on social media

The College respects privacy and understands that staff may use social media accounts in their private lives. However, personal communications likely to have a negative impact on professional standards and/or the College's reputation are considered in this guidance.

Professional responsibilities apply regardless of the medium being used. All social media communications that might affect the College's reputation, whether made either in a private or professional capacity, should be thought through carefully.

Professional communications are those posted through an institutional account.

Personal communications are those made via a private social media account. Where a private account is used which clearly identifies Peterhouse as your employer it must be made clear that you are not communicating on behalf of the College. An appropriate disclaimer, such as:

“the views expressed here are my own and in no way reflect the views of Peterhouse” should be included.

If you or the content that you post links you to the College, expect that it could be re-published by the national or international press and by proxy, attributed to Peterhouse.

Private communications that do not refer to Peterhouse (either implicitly or explicitly) are outside the scope of this guidance.

The University and Colleges are strongly committed to the principle of freedom of speech and expression, and this includes interactions through social media. It should be noted, however, that social media is a tool known to be used by terrorists to encourage others to adopt extreme beliefs or attitudes. All members of the College that use social media are therefore expected to use it responsibly. The University and Colleges take seriously their requirement to report content or views that promote or incite criminal extremist behaviour on their social media platforms or as a result of the misappropriation of their brands. If any student or Fellow has concerns regarding extremism and radicalisation they should contact the Senior Tutor (senior.tutor@pet.cam.ac.uk). If any staff member has concerns please contact Belinda Steel - HR Manager (belinda.steel@pet.cam.ac.uk).

Behaviour

The College recommends that all members and staff using social media adhere to the standard of behaviour as set out in this guidance.

Social media should not be used to screen job applicants or students as part of the recruitment selection process, nor to screen potential donors. However, it is fine to use social media to promote vacancies. Members and staff should not use social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of colleagues or make ill-considered comments or judgments about other members or staff.

Digital communications should be professional and respectful at all times and in keeping with this guidance.

Unacceptable conduct, (e.g. defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) will be considered extremely seriously by the College and will be reported as soon as possible to a relevant member of staff, and escalated where appropriate. The College will take appropriate action when necessary.

Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, the College will deal with the matter internally. Where conduct is considered illegal, the College will report the matter to the police and other relevant external agencies, and may take disciplinary action.

The College permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media accounts. However, where we suspect excessive use, and consider this use to be interfering with relevant duties, we may take disciplinary action.

The following general guidelines apply to College members and staff posting content via social media:

Do:

- Check with a line manager before publishing content that may have controversial implications for the College
- Use a disclaimer when expressing personal views
- Make it clear who is posting content
- Use an appropriate and professional tone
- Be respectful to all parties
- Ensure you have permission to 'share' other peoples' materials and acknowledge the author
- Express opinions but do so in a balanced and measured manner
- Manage your social media account(s) on behalf of the College
- Think before responding to comments and, when in doubt, get a second opinion
- Set up a shadow system i.e. a colleague who can edit posts
- Seek advice and report any mistakes to your line manager

Don't:

- Don't make comments, post content or link to materials that will bring the College into disrepute
- Don't use Peterhouse branding on personal accounts
- Don't publish confidential or commercially sensitive material
- Don't breach copyright, data protection or other relevant legislation
- Consider the appropriateness of content, and don't link to, embed or add potentially inappropriate content
- Don't use social media to air internal grievances