Social media policy for official University of Warwick accounts

Definition of ‘official’ accounts

An official University of Warwick social media account is defined as any account representing a department/faculty/team/service or similar in an official corporate context. It does not apply to accounts for individual members of staff using social media in a personal context – either academic or administrative - although some parts of this policy may be useful for individuals to be aware of.

If a member of staff is using and individual social media account for work-related purposes, they should be aware of this policy and also make it clear on their accounts that the views held are their own and not of the University of Warwick.

Before an account is created

Before any official University of Warwick social media account is created, you must get approval from the University’s Marketing department. We will also then be able to add you to the University’s social media directory.

The basics

- Do not post offensive, illegal or libellous material
- Do not post sensitive or confidential information
- Do not share your passwords
- If a team member who has access to your social media profiles leaves, reset your passwords
- Be open, honest and human
- Post regularly – ideally at least once a day during the working week
- Monitor your accounts and respond to incoming messages
- Refer to our social media framework to help shape your social media voice and style

Copyrighted material

You must not post or use copyrighted material – including, but not limited to photography, music and video – without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. For any queries about copyright, contact University Marketing.

You are, however, encouraged to use creative commons media, provided you attribute sources correctly – for an example of how to do this, see the use of images on the social media framework pages on Insite. Good sources of creative commons media include Compfight and Wikimedia Commons.

Retweets/sharing posts from other users

Sharing posts from other users – e.g. retweeting – is a big part of social media and something you should look to do; just be careful what and who you share content from. While functions such as retweets do allow you some to establish some distance between your account and the original author, you will still be held accountable if you share anything offensive, illegal, libellous or similar. Also, be aware of whose content you are sharing; for example, accounts offering essay writing services may send you fairly harmless messages that you may like to share –e.g. congratulating
students at graduation – but it would be inappropriate for an official University account to be associated with their author.

**Account management**

Where possible, have more than one team member responsible for updating and monitoring social media accounts. This is far more sustainable and it allows for team members being on annual leave/off sick or otherwise out of the office.

**Censorship**

Where possible, do not delete comments or responses from your followers unless they are illegal/libellous/sexist/racist etc – people are entitled to their opinion even if it is a negative one. A comment that is simply negative or that disagrees with your opinion is not grounds for removal. For more information, see the section on ‘monitoring and responding’ in the social media framework on Insite.

**Account ownership**

Official University of Warwick accounts are owned, ultimately, by the University of Warwick. For projects/accounts where the University is collaborating with another institution, account ownership will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

**Competitions**

Competitions are a great way to boost engagement on social media accounts, but can easily and unintentionally violate terms and conditions of different social networks. If you want to run a competition, please first contact the [University’s Marketing department](mailto:). You will also need to agree to the following terms:

- Competition details and winners will be announced using the same account i.e. a competition’s winners should not be announced by an individual if the contest was organised via a departmental account.
- A full list of competition terms and conditions should be written in advance, posting on a suitable webpage and linked to when the competition is announced.
- Permission to run competitions should also be sought from your head of department.

**Contact**

For more information, contact Dave Musson, Senior Online Communications Officer (Social Media) on [d.musson@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:d.musson@warwick.ac.uk).

*Although this policy is aimed at staff wanting to create official social media accounts for the University of Warwick, you are free to reproduce and adapt it for your own use – please credit the University of Warwick.*