



Social Media Policy

Context

The Federation recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities that a social media presence offers. We aim to build relationships and work with others to share information about the Federation's activity online, and how to better support it.

A social media account provides a flexible delivery platform which enables the Federation to engage in conversation with colleagues and the community. Federation staff and colleagues in Houses are encouraged to make effective use of it.

The Federation's policy on social media is designed to provide clarity and consistency for staff and students. Our approach is to support staff to engage with our communities, while providing appropriate guidance and training on best practice.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Federation's [IT policy: Acceptable use of IT Facilities provided by The Cambridge Theological Federation.](#)

Authorisation and Review

This policy was approved by the Management Committee of the Cambridge Theological Federation on 14th April, 2015

The impact of this guidance will be monitored regularly by the Federation's Social Media Policy Group to reflect the changing online environment and technologies. The guidance may also be amended where particular concerns are raised or where an incident has been recorded.

Houses within the Federation should designate one of their staff as their Social Media Champion, whose responsibility it is to ensure that staff and students are aware of, and adhere to, the social media policy. Ideally, the named individual selected should have knowledge of how social media works, a clear understanding of the institution's approach, practices and guidance, and the ability to deliver effective training.

Scope

The policy applies to all members of the Federation Community, including student members and staff.

The policy applies to use of social media platforms in the Federation, including when these platforms are accessed by personal devices linking to the Federation's network and systems.

The Federation network also falls under the supervision of the University of Cambridge Computing Service and all users are subject to its rules and guidelines.

For the purposes of this policy, social media is defined as any online interactive communication tool which encourages participation and exchanges. Common examples include Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Skype, Instagram, Pinterest, and LinkedIn.

This guidance is for all staff who directly or indirectly, represent the Federation online. It applies to online communications posted at any time and from anywhere, whether to an individual, a limited group or the world.

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

Professional responsibilities apply regardless of the medium being used. All social media communications that might affect the Federation'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 the Cambridge Theological Federation as your employer it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the Federation. An appropriate disclaimer, such as "the views expressed here are my own and in no way reflect the views of the Cambridge Theological Federation" should be included.

Private communications that do not refer to the Federation are outside the scope of this guidance.

Behaviour

All members of the Federation using social media must adhere to the standard of behaviour as set out in this guidance.

Whilst it is acceptable to use social media to promote job vacancies, staff should not use social media to screen applicants as part of the recruitment selection process. 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 of staff, either within the Federation offices or the Houses that comprise the Federation.

Digital communications by staff 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 Federation and will be reported as soon as possible to a relevant member of staff, and escalated where appropriate. The Federation will take appropriate action when necessary.

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

The Federation permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites. 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 staff posting content via social media:

- check with a line manager before publishing content that may have controversial implications for the institution
- 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 presence on behalf of the Federation
- think before responding to comments and, when in doubt, get a second opinion
- set up a shadow system, e.g., a colleague who can edit posts
- seek advice and report any mistakes to your line manager

Staff of the Federation must not:

- make comments, post content or link to materials that will bring the Federation into disrepute
- use Federation branding on personal accounts
- publish confidential or commercially sensitive material
- breach copyright, data protection or other relevant legislation
- link to, embed or add potentially inappropriate content
- use social media to air internal grievances

Security

Staff are responsible for ensuring that passwords and other access controls for Federation social media accounts are of adequate strength and kept secure. Passwords should be robust and under no circumstances should they be shared with anyone other than authorised users. Staff should be familiar with privacy settings and ensure that these are appropriate for both content and intended audience.

When making use of social media sites there are various security risks to address. Staff should be aware of the risk of false information being posted on the institution's behalf, where an account is hijacked for example. Staff should inform the Federation's IT Officer immediately if they believe that any of the Federation's social media accounts may have been hacked.

e-Safety

The Federation takes e-safety and its duty of care seriously. The Federation will do all that it reasonably can to ensure that learning and working environments, including online forums, are safe for staff and learners.

All staff should attend e-safety training before setting up or using Federation social media accounts.

Use of other people's materials

Sharing content such as images, photographs and video is extremely popular and easy to do via social media sites. While this may have value in an educational context, there is a real risk of breaching the rights of individuals who own the different media e.g. images rights, patents, copyright in a blog, or rights associated with collaborative outputs. All staff should ensure they have permission or other justification to share content in this way. Content is particularly risky where it is commercially valuable, confidential and/or sensitive.

Staff will not post any images, photographs, videos, text etc. via social media sites without appropriate permission from the rights holders. If unsure, staff are advised to check permissions attached to digital content prior to posting via social media.

Personal information

Personal information is information about a particular living person. No personal information will be shared via social media sites without consent, unless it is in line with the Federation's Data Protection Policy. Authorised staff posting content or setting up accounts are responsible for ensuring appropriate informed consents are in place. Members of staff should include their name, email and job title where possible. It is at their discretion whether they wish to post additional contact information.

Staff must keep colleagues' personal information safe and secure at all times. When using social media sites, staff should never publish colleagues' personal information. By its very nature, social media enables and encourages users to share data, including personal data e.g. a photograph of an identifiable living person. The Federation must process all personal information that it collects and uses in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998. All uploads, storage, communications must be lawful and fair. Staff intending to use a social media site must therefore ensure that all parties know what type of information they are expected to share, for what purpose and who will have access to it. Even where consent is in place to process personal data, staff must also ensure that adequate security is in place to protect it. Information that should not be shared may range from name and registration number to sensitive personal data relating to personal experiences or assessed work

Education and training

The Federation will provide staff with training on its guidelines and policies.

Staff who use Federation social media accounts will be trained on relevant safeguards and acceptable practice. New, or temporary members of staff, will also receive this training as part of the induction process.

Additional training is offered to senior staff and Principals of Houses on social media practice. It is expected that all relevant staff will attend at least one session per academic year.

Incidents and response

The Federation will act immediately to prevent, as far as reasonably possible, any damage to an individual, their rights or the Federation's. Notification about such incidents should be directed immediately to the Federation IT Officer or a line manager. Where it appears that a breach has taken place, the Federation IT Officer will review what has happened and decide on the most appropriate and proportionate course of action. Where the IT Officer considers the incident to be serious, this will also be reported to the President of the Federation.

Where staff are in receipt of offensive, unacceptable content via social media, this should be reported to a relevant line manager immediately.

Where questionable content has been sent to the Federation, the Federation IT Officer should be informed prior to any response being submitted.

Moderation

Many social networks offer an opportunity for members of the public to comment below content that has been posted on behalf of the Federation. This should not go un-checked, and the following moderation policy (adapted for each social media platform) will be implemented and followed:

The Cambridge Theological Federation welcomes the community's contributions to the online discussion environment on its [Facebook Page] (e.g. comments, photos and photo tagging).

This page provides a place to discuss the Federation: its research, events and breaking news. The following guidelines are designed to help provide a quality environment for our fans. Please take a minute to read them and keep them in mind whenever you participate.

The Cambridge Theological Federation abides by [Facebook's] Terms and Conditions, and the Federation asks its [Facebook Fans] to do the same. In particular, please do not "post unauthorised commercial solicitations (such as spam)"; "bully, intimidate, or harass any user"; "post content that is hateful, threatening, pornographic, or that contains nudity or graphic or gratuitous violence"; or "do anything unlawful, misleading, malicious, or discriminatory" on the Federation's [Facebook] Page. It is important to note that all comments and postings by fans on this site ("User Content") do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Federation.

The Federation reserves the right to remove any posts that contain commercial solicitations; are factually erroneous/libellous; are wildly off-topic; or that otherwise violate [Facebook's] Statement of Rights and Responsibilities.

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