Social Media Policy

Contents

Purpose and Objectives

This policy provides guidance around appropriate behaviour for IH staff and residents when using social media. This policy does not intend to inhibit or prevent social media use, but instead aims to ensure best practice and for the protection of its staff and residents.

IH understands and encourages people to use social media to enhance their learning and promote their work. As social media becomes more common, the lines between personal and professional use become blurred. However, inappropriate use of social media can have far-reaching consequences. Following the policy below will help users manage this risk.

Definition

Social media – online websites and applications that allow users to share content in virtual networks.

Scope

This policy applies to all people who use social media accounts and who are associated with International House, or use IH facilities or services to access social media including; staff, residents, contract staff, IH Board members and IH Student Club. This Social Media Policy attempts to cover all forms of social media including but not limited to:

- maintaining a profile page on one of the social or business networking sites (for example Facebook, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Bebo, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Weibo and WeChat)
- actively engaging in live feed social media communication such as Twitter;
- producing online video and photo content on YouTube or similar mass media sites;
- creating a blog or commenting on other peoples' blogs for personal or business reasons;
- leaving feedback or comments on the IH Facebook or Instagram feeds;
- taking part in online votes or polls (for example Survey Monkey);
- participating in conversations on public or private web forums (message boards);
- wikis and online collaborations (for example Wikipedia);
- online multiplayer gaming platforms (for example World of Warcraft, Second life);
- vod and podcasting; or
- instant messaging (including SMS).

In addition, the IH website is managed by an external provider (LookEducation) who regularly provides IH with analytics and updates and maintains our website's functions.

Guiding Principles

These guiding principles have been developed to help empower IH staff and residents to participate in a healthy and safe social media environment, represent IH, and share the optimistic and positive spirit of International House.

Be respectful: IH supports and encourages robust conversations and debates that allows challenging and controversial opinions to be shared and considered. However, there is a difference between a controversial opinion and a defamatory statement. Users should ensure their online interactions are respectful and courteous. Bullying, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated.

Be accountable: Users should take responsibility for content posted, and ensure its accuracy and compliance with IH policies and procedures. If a user makes a mistake, they should take ownership, admit to the mistake and strive to correct it. Attempt to prevent any escalation or contact IH Director or Deputy Director for support.

Consider privacy: Users should take care online not to reveal personal details they would not ordinarily share with a large audience. They should also be careful not to reveal the identity or personal details of others without express permission, or share details of information or conversations that were obtained or shared in confidence. Refer current IH Privacy Policy.

Speak for yourself: If a user is operating an account as an individual (that is, not as an official IH account), then they should not imply that they are posting on behalf of IH, or that the IH endorses their opinion

Spread the word: If a user is creating an account that will officially represent aspects of IH, they should consult with IH Director/Deputy Director first to ensure the account is consistent in tone and branding with other official accounts.

Guide behaviour: If the user is managing a social media account that acts as a forum for others (such as a Facebook group) they should clearly set expectations for use and communicate expectations. Facebook administrators should monitor content and only approve comments according to protocol.

If in doubt, leave it out! The internet is public and enduring. Regardless of privacy settings, everything posted online has the potential to go public. Users should remember that anything posted online has the potential to be seen by large and diverse groups. If the user would not be happy for these potential audiences to view the content, they should not post it. Similarly, while deleting posts on social media may appear to remove them, posts can be screenshot (photographed) by other users and stored. Search engines also keep posts and content for some time. Deleting content does not necessarily remove it from the internet.

Be transparent: It can be challenging to make a distinction between personal and professional life in the online world. Even when you are talking as an individual, people may perceive you to be talking on behalf of IH. If you have a personal blog that discusses IH, include a disclaimer saying, "The opinions and positions expressed are my own and don't necessarily reflect those of International House." Having somebody else write on your behalf (ghost writing) is not advised, as IH wants to remain as authentic as possible. Additionally, do not use logos (including signature blocks), images, or artwork on your personal pages unless you have been granted permission.

Be who you are: Authenticity is extremely important. IH discourages the use of pseudonyms or false screen names in any sort of online communication that relates to IH. Honesty is after all one of our brand values. If you are blogging or posting about your work for IH, we encourage you to use your real name, be clear about who you are, and identify yourself as one of our staff or residents. If you've got vested interest in something you're discussing, make sure you let people know. However, be sure to protect yourself and your privacy, since what you publish could be around for a long time. Consider your content carefully, and take care before disclosing personal details.

Be sensitive with 'links': Take care when linking to external content, as that could imply you endorse it. Ask yourself, "will this link add value, and is it aligned with our IH values?"

Protect confidential information: Be transparent, however don't post anything about IH which contains or mentions confidential information.

Protect your personal information: The main purpose of social media channels is to share personal information, but it's important to think about what you share. Criminals can piece together information you provide on different sites and then use it to impersonate you or someone you know – or even re-set your passwords. Similarly, "tweeting" real-time about your travels may confirm you aren't at home – letting someone target your location. So, be careful when sharing information about yourself or others.

The internet is forever: Always have in the back of your mind that as soon as you post something, it's on the internet forever. Even if you delete it, people could have shared it, saved copies, or it could have been archived.

All Media

This policy is to be read in conjunction with other clauses in the International House staff and resident handbooks. For the sake of clarity, whatever you do as a staff member or resident of IH online must:

- not interfere with your work commitments or the place you work;
- not mention or link to libellous, defamatory or harassing content, even by way or example or illustration;
- not publish information that is confidential or proprietary to IH;
- refrain from using offensive language; and
- do nothing to bring IH into disrepute.

International House Staff and Resident Blogs

- Posts must not contain or link to pornographic, indecent or illegal material;
- Links to unsavoury, illegal or immoral websites will not be tolerated;
- Posts must not be discriminatory, immoral or unethical in content or contain sexually explicit or inappropriate content;
- Posts must not be defamatory in any way to either a fellow staff member or resident of IH or any other person or company; and
- International House has the right to request and ask for removal of any such content that may be deemed as contravening this policy.

Moderation and Handling Responses

Comments on social networks are often of mixed positive/negative nature, no matter how popular the brand. When dealing with comments, try and follow these three principles: the Good, the Bad, but not the Ugly. If the content posted is positive or negative and is in context to the conversation, or dealing with a legitimate problem, then we approve it, regardless of whether it's favourable to International House. But if the content is ugly, offensive, hateful and out of context, then we delete it.

Real problems: a real problem with IH product or service
- How to deal with it: Response required, consistent message, decide if to reply in public or personal, take steps to fix the problem, and thank them.

Constructive Improvement: A real problem, but the feedback also has an improvement suggestion.
- How to deal with it: Response required, positive message, thank them, try and build loyalty and trust.

Attack: the cause of the feedback is valid, and has made the customer angry and upset with International House
- How to deal with it: respond promptly, acknowledge the source if the issue and what is being done, planned or considered to address it in the future, be positive in tone, offer something back to make amends, e.g. discount, free pass etc. These attacks should also be communicated to the marketing team as soon as they happen, so that we can help manage the conflict.

Spam: comment which has no valid reason for attack. Spammers use negative comments for attention or to promote their own profiles or services.

- How to deal with it: baiting tactics should be ignored and removed.

Summary

In summary, if a breach of this policy and procedure occurs it will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken.

Version Date	Last Reviewed By
July 2019	NHR&G Committee July 2020
July 2019	NHR&G Committee September 2021