

Social Media and the University

The University of Chichester Social Media Policy and Guidelines are designed for employees who use, or wish to use, social media within their role at the University of Chichester.

This information has been written to provide guidance on the University's social media policy and usage; how, why and when to use social media; and etiquette and best practice.

The purpose of the Policy and Guidelines is to;

- Ensure a consistent managed approach, particularly during any serious incidents,
- provide support and best practice guidance for employees using or wishing to adopt social media on behalf of the university,
- encourage effective and beneficial use of social media,
- protect the University and its community, and to;
- create consistency and coherence across the University's social media activities.

Contact

If you have any questions about the content of the Policy or Guidelines, or would like assistance with setting up effective social media channels, please contact the Marketing Communications and Access **Digital Team**:

Email: website@chi.ac.uk **Tel:** 01243 812151 or 07502347760

Address: Holts 1, Bishop Otter campus, College Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 6PE

Kirsty Cleak – Digital Content Coordinator Mikki Collins – Digital Content Assistant

Crisis Control

In the event of a serious incident at the University or in relation to the University please stop all social media and wait for direction for the marketing team. The primary University accounts (www.facebook.com/universityofchichester and <https://twitter.com/chiuni>) will be used to comment on events and only then can other accounts be used. Do not reword messages from the main accounts, please share or copy the message over to your medium when required. If in doubt please contact marketing.

Social Media

Social Media refers to any form of media that encourages online social interaction between users and content creators. Current leading examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, and tools such as blogs. However, the social media landscape is ever changing so this policy refers to any account that aims to gain interaction on behalf of any part of the university with stakeholders.

The University of Chichester has embraced the use of social media as an important and valuable part of its **communication and marketing activities**. It allows us to share our news, events, activities and important information with our immediate audiences and with the wider world, but it also allows us to listen, respond and build relationships with our community, in particular prospective and current students, staff, and alumni.

To ensure the correct and proper use of social media by the University of Chichester it is essential that usage is governed by this University-wide Policy, which is agreed by the Vice Chancellor's Group.

The University expects all who participate in University of Chichester affiliated social media to understand how to use the technology appropriately and to read and follow the Policy set out on this page. Participants should also note that they have a legal responsibility to accurately and fairly represent the University in any public online space, and are expected to uphold the integrity of the University. If you have any queries about the policy, please contact the Marketing, Communications and Access Team.

University of Chichester primary Social Media accounts

- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/UniversityofChichester
- **Twitter:** www.twitter.com/chiuni
- **Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/universityofchichester/>
- **YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFeAbQMjv4VSxjymlt5UHCg>
- **Vimeo:** <https://vimeo.com/chiuni>
- **LinkedIn:** www.linkedin.com/company/university-of-chichester
- **Snapchat:** <https://www.snapchat.com/add/chiuni>

Each of the University's primary channels prominently show the University logo, as well as other forms of branding to communicate to our audiences that content found in these areas is official University of Chichester information.

The University of Chichester Students' Union activity on social media is managed by the Students' Union and is not covered by the University's social media policy and guidelines.

Things to know before you start a Social Media account on behalf of the university

Setting up a new account

Before setting up a new social media group on any platform you should notify the Marketing Communications and Access Digital team who will be able to offer guidance and ensure that your group is listed as one of our official social media presences.

If you already run a social media site or group, please ensure that the Marketing, Communications and Access Digital team is aware of your activity and has the full contact details for the department and person(s) who manages the site. The team maintains a list of all known University official social media presences; if you are not on this list, please contact the Marketing Communications and Access Digital team to be added.

Branding

All social media accounts affiliated with the University must be appropriately labelled and must present a consistent visual identity in order to reflect the subject or theme of the site/group and to help audiences understand the site/group's relationship to the University of Chichester.

Sites/groups should refer to the full term (in this word order) 'University of Chichester' either in their names/titles or in their descriptions.

All channels maintained by a department should use the University of Chichester logo as their profile picture. An approved set of logo profile pictures in different sizes for each of the common channels is available from the Marketing, Communications and Access team. Other visual elements, such as backgrounds, photos and templates can be provided on request for the more common social media channels.

Social Media Knowledge

Before requesting a new social media account please check that any of the current University social media would not suit your purpose and that you have thought about the following key points:

First, get to know how social media works, you need to have more than a basic knowledge to run an account successfully.

Administration

Who will manage your presence, and how much time can they devote to it? Will your team have time to respond to queries, and who will take responsibility in case of administrator absences? Administrators should also be enthusiastic about social media and have a broad understanding of how it functions and what it offers, and be able to respond to queries within a reasonable timeframe (approx 48 hours).

Identify the type and frequency of content you want to post and consider whether there will be enough content to maintain a healthy level of activity on your site. Also consider what your audience is likely to want to hear from you and how you can meet this demand. Social media will require posts every day.

Your goals

Do you want to improve internal communications, promote your area, or increase attendance at your events? Define what your main goal(s) are and how social media will help you achieve this.

Your audience

Spending time thinking about your primary audiences will help you choose the right social media channel(s) for your goals and maximise your success. Consider carefully which platforms will be most effective for you – not all channels work for all purposes. Bear in mind your audience demographic and how your content will suit each channel's medium.

What is success?

Define how you will measure the success of your channel(s) – better communication? Increased web traffic? Increased event attendance? Decide how and when to evaluate your activity to ensure that your time is being spent effectively.

Name and design

Spend time thinking about an appropriate name for your presence that is simple, clear, and reflects what you do and your connection to the University of Chichester. The name should also have longevity – altering your name in the future can cause confusion and, in some cases, may not even be possible.

Evaluation

As well as setting aside time for full evaluation of your site/group, on-going evaluation should be part of your daily social media activity. Consider what content is most valuable to your audience and what garners the biggest response and adjust your approach accordingly.

For additional advice and support on creating or editing the visual identity for your area, please contact the Marketing, Communications and Access Digital team.

If, after reviewing the above, you need a social media account, please remember the following when running your account:

Be respectful

Anything you post on your site/group reflects directly on both the institution and on your particular area. Be professional and respectful at all times and do not engage in arguments or extensive debates with anyone who is critical of the institution. While it can be appropriate to put right any incorrect assertions, or provide extra detail to counteract any criticism, try to do so in a way that will be construed as friendly, rather than combative or oversensitive.

Timeliness is everything

Because social media allows us to share information almost instantly, audiences often expect information to appear straight away. While that's not always going to be feasible, you should be prepared to provide relevant information in response to new developments, announcements or emergencies, and to do so in a timely manner. A short amount of accurate information delivered at the time of need can often be more valuable than a lengthy report the day after.

However, if you think answering a question might take a while, making the commenter aware that you have seen and are dealing with their question is better than silence.

You may also wish to manage expectations. Where possible, make it clear when the people interacting on your social media platforms can expect a response. If you reply to one student at 1am in the morning then they will all expect it.

Tone of voice

Developing a tone of voice that is friendly and relatively informal is essential – you are engaging in a social forum, so behaving in a social manner is going to be far more effective than talking in a dry, verbose or overly formal way. You should also adopt a consistent voice across sites, if you are using more than one channel to represent your area.

However, using slang, ‘text speak’, or using sentence fragments is generally not appropriate either. As a Higher Education institution spelling, punctuation and grammar is critical, so take time to write and check your posts – for both clarity of message and for errors – before publishing them. Writing your message in a Microsoft word document and using the spell check facility is often a good way to check what you have written.

Your content will live forever

Think before you post and remember that anything you share on social media is not private. It can and will be shared, stored and spread globally. Don’t post anything online that could reflect negatively on the University of Chichester or that you wouldn’t feel comfortable seeing on the front page of a newspaper or the BBC website for example.

Do not spam your followers

Keep an eye on the frequency of your posts. Too few and your site/group won’t be effective, but post too many and you risk annoying your followers. As a broad rule of thumb, you should make fewer posts on Facebook (we suggest two a day) than on Twitter (which can handle tens of posts a day – if the content is interesting enough). Also, ensure that all content you post or share is likely to be relevant to a large section of your audience.

Share, share, share

Follow other relevant University of Chichester social media accounts and repost / share / retweet any messages that are relevant to your own audiences. This is a great way of joining up the various university social media sites and strengthening the sense of community

Followers: it’s about quality, not quantity

Rather than focus on getting as many followers as possible onto your social media sites, it is better to first focus on increased engagement with the followers you do have. Fifty students who are constantly engaged with your page and asking questions are better than 500 who click the like/follow button and never come back.

Please Note:

The University reserves the right to require that administrators alter their social media activity including visual identity if it is considered to be detrimental to the University’s public reputation, if the graphics are not of the desired resolution or quality, or if the description does not clearly state the group’s connection to the University of Chichester.

Personal Social Media Accounts

If you are a member of staff (academic or services) with a personal social media account that you also use professionally and/or in connection with your role at the University of Chichester (i.e. to promote your academic work, or to represent your profession or area), the following wording or similar should be included in the brief description/'about me' section:

'The views expressed here are my own and not those of The University of Chichester.'

If you are using your personal profile (such as on Facebook or LinkedIn) to administer a University of Chichester site, please take precautions to prevent your personal information from becoming mixed with any professional content. Alternatively, you could consider setting up 'professional personal' social media accounts separate from any personal presence you may have, to avoid accidental cross-posting of personal and University-related information.

Never disclose sensitive, private or confidential information about the University of Chichester. If you are unsure whether the information you wish to share falls within one of these categories, you should discuss this with the Marketing Communications and Access Digital team.