



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

Social Media Policy

1. Introduction

The term “social media” refers to a set of online tools that supports social interaction among users.

Social media has radically changed the way we communicate and interact – both as an institution and as individuals – and offers opportunities to connect and engage with a range of key stakeholder groups including prospective and current students, staff, alumni, donors and friends of the University.

Members of the UWI community have begun, like many other users, to adopt social media and become more innovative in their use of available social media platforms both in professional and personal capacities.

The University of the West Indies (UWI) currently maintains a vibrant official social media presence on networks such as Facebook, Flickr, Twitter and YouTube and new opportunities for stakeholder engagement across other social platforms are continuously emerging.

The UWI welcomes the use of social media to facilitate greater knowledge sharing, enlightenment and stakeholder engagement. At the same time, UWI recognises that inappropriate use of social media has the potential to damage the image, reputation and perceptions of the UWI brand since the lines between personal voice and institutional voice can be blurred on social media platforms.

This Policy is intended to assist the UWI community to leverage the maximum benefits while mitigating risks of social media networking. This Policy aims to exert positive influence on and help shape the online social behavior of the University community in

physical and virtual UWI spaces or while using facilities that are owned and/or controlled by UWI.

Purpose

This Policy outlines the UWI's position on the appropriate use of social media by members of its community. It seeks to clarify how best to enhance and protect personal and professional reputations when participating in social media. It serves to facilitate and encourage the proper use of social media while sensitizing users about the risks of anti-social activity with a view to protecting UWI from liability that may be vicariously incurred when members of the community misuse UWI's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) systems.

1.1 Scope

This is a University-wide policy and shall apply to all UWI entities as defined in section 2 of this Policy and any individual who uses any of the UWI's ICT systems (including, but not restricted to, computing facilities), or who connects to any of the UWI's data networks at any UWI campus or facility regardless of its location.

This Policy applies to all students, whether part-time or full-time, who are registered in any UWI course or programme, or with any UWI entity/franchise, and to all UWI staff, whether permanent or temporary and including staff on sabbatical as well as visiting scholars to our University.

This Policy applies to all UWI Social Media Sites and to the activities permitted by these sites. It applies to sites and any activity that falls within the genus of social media, whether they are current or come into existence on or after the date of the approval of this Policy. Examples include weblog posts (blogging), event updates, news updates, chats, discussion boards/posts, photo/video sharing, music and radio broadcasts and gaming.

2. Definitions

Blog

A contraction of the term "weblog". This is a type of website, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video.

Competent University Authority

The Marketing & Communications Office or any other person/body performing the function of monitoring and regulating UWI Social Media

Sites as designated by the Campus Principal or his nominee on the relevant campus.

Copyright

The set of exclusive rights granted to the author or creator of an original work, including the right to copy, distribute and adapt the work. These rights can be licensed, transferred and/or assigned.

Publish/publication

Any work in whatever form made available to the public at large.

Social media

The set of online tools that supports social interaction between users.

UWI data network

Any data network which UWI owns, rents, leases or manages, either directly or under a sub-contract.

UWI entity

Any Campus, School, Department, Institute, Unit, Centre, Section, Sub-Section, or other unit of teaching, research or administration of the UWI, including any project or programme in which any of them is involved. Bodies such as the Guild of Students, Student Associations, Alumni Association Chapters and entities owned by the UWI, for example, UWI Consulting Inc. are also UWI entities.

UWI ICT resources/systems

Any Information and Communications assets including but not limited to hardware, software, networking and communications equipment, services and facilities and data and information which are owned, leased or loaned by the UWI or its agents irrespective of where these items may be located.

UWI Marks

The UWI name, the UWI Coat of Arms and all other words, logos, signs or marks whether registered or not, that belong to or are associated with UWI.

UWI Social Media Sites

These are official social media outputs by UWI entities acknowledged as representing the University by virtue of recognition by the Competent University Authority.

UWI spaces	Any physical, virtual space or facility that is controlled by the UWI.
UWI staff member	A member of the academic, senior administrative, professional, and other non-academic staff, whether permanent or temporary and including staff on sabbatical as well as visiting scholars.
UWI student	A student whether part-time or full-time, registered in any UWI course or programme, or with any UWI entity/franchise.

3. Statement of Liability

The University of the West Indies (UWI) shall not be liable for any errors, omissions, loss or damage, including indirect and/or consequential loss and/or damage claimed or incurred due to any use of any social media site that does not comply with this Policy or the policies cited herein.

4. Policy Statements

This section explains the UWI's position on social media and its response to various issues which may arise in the event of inappropriate use of social media by members of the UWI community.

4.1 Use of the UWI Marks

- (i) Use of UWI Marks without permission is illegal. Campus Marketing and Communications Offices are the agencies (acting on behalf of the University Registrar) from which persons or entities wishing to use UWI Marks should seek permission. The UWI's Brand Identity Guidelines is the official document which references the usage of the UWI Marks and all other pertinent brand matters.
- (ii) UWI Marks shall only be used on social media sites designated as "UWI Social Media Sites".

4.2 Applicable Laws

Persons making postings shall respect the laws relating to copyright and other intellectual property rights, defamation, privacy, and other applicable laws.

4.3 Content

4.3.1 Compliance with other UWI policies

- (i) Information published on social media sites should conform to all applicable UWI policies, including but not limited to:
 - a. Acceptable Use Policy, Information and Communication Technology
 - b. Conflict of Interest Policy
 - c. Electronic Mail and Messaging Services Policy
 - d. Policy on Intellectual Property
 - e. Policy on Release of Information about Students
 - f. The Policy and Procedures on Sexual Harassment
 - g. UWI Brand Identity Guidelines
 - h. Web Policy
- (ii) Content posted by UWI members shall conform to The University's principles of confidentiality and information disclosure which are included in the relevant Codes and Principles of Ethics for both staff and students.

4.3.2 Considerations when discussing work-related activities on social media

- (i) As a general principle, content posted on any social media site should conform to the tenets of good taste. There shall be no posting of biased statements on matters such as politics, religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, *inter alia*; statements that contain obscenities or vulgarities. Statements posted should follow UWI's non-biased position and be respectful at all times.
- (ii) It should be noted that all UWI Social Media Sites represent UWI. Therefore, content providers must ensure that information placed on any UWI Social Media Site represents the values of UWI.

- (iii) Content posted by UWI members shall not portray colleagues in an unfavourable light in respect of matters including, but not restricted to, religion, sexual preference, race, nationality or disability.
- (iv) Members of the UWI community are reminded of their duties and obligations to maintain staff, student and third party confidentiality and shall not use social media sites to transmit or discuss confidential information. Content posted by UWI members shall conform to the UWI's principles on confidentiality and information disclosure.

4.3.3 Compliance Requirements

- (i) This policy does not include matters related to the use of social media to support teaching and learning at UWI. A policy on Blended Learning, which specifically governs the use of online strategies and technologies to advance teaching and learning, is currently being drafted by UWI's Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.
- (ii) UWI entities, lecturers or other personnel interested in supporting their taught courses with social media should not initially seek to establish separate social media accounts, but should first determine whether existing facilities may be utilized and should contact the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning on their relevant campus for guidance.
- (iii) UWI entities, lecturers or other personnel already using social media for teaching and learning should have their sites reviewed/assessed by the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning on their relevant campus to ensure compliance with institutional policies.
- (iv) UWI entities, lecturers or other personnel already using social media for purposes other than teaching and learning should have their sites reviewed/assessed by the Competent University Authority on their relevant campus.
- (v) Any UWI personnel desirous of using social media should consult the Competent University Authority on their relevant campus for appropriate guidance prior to use.

5. Penalties for Misuse

Where there is evidence of misuse of social media, the UWI may restrict or prohibit the use of its ICT resources and/or, where appropriate, request external entities to take action against offenders.

UWI members who breach this Policy may face disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment in the case of staff members; and suspension or expulsion in the case of students.

6. User Acceptance

All users of UWI's ICT resources are required to signify acceptance of UWI's ICT Policies upon login to UWI's ICT resources and data networks. UWI's Social Media Policy & Guidelines are included in the list of UWI's ICT Policies governed by the following User Acceptance Clause:

User Acceptance Clause

As of August 1, 2009 unless you have formally indicated your acceptance of UWI's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) policies you will not be able to login to your assigned computer or join UWI's domain using your personal computer. You can view the ICT policies at <http://www.uwi.edu/projects/policies.aspx>. Queries relating to the ICT policies should be directed to the Campus Registrar.

If you have not yet indicated your acceptance of the ICT policies, you can do so now by clicking the 'ok' button below.



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

Social Media Policy Guidelines

These guidelines have been produced to assist members of the University community and those using The University of the West Indies (UWI) ICT resources to access social media sites. These guidelines complement UWI's Social Media Policy and should be read and used in conjunction with it.

1. DEFINITIONS

Competent University Authority

The Marketing & Communications Office or any other person/body performing the function of monitoring and regulating UWI Social Media Sites as designated by the Campus Principal or his nominee on the relevant campus.

Copyright

The set of exclusive rights granted to the author or creator of an original work, including the right to copy, distribute and adapt the work. These rights can be licensed, transferred and/or assigned.

Publish/publication

Any work in whatever form made available to the public at large.

Social media

The set of online tools that supports social interaction between users.

Top level UWI Social Media Sites

Institutional social media sites which represent the entire campus (as opposed to singular UWI entities) and where the Marketing & Communications Offices or another Competent

University Authority serve as the main administrators of these social media sites.

UWI entity

Any Campus, School, Department, Institute, Unit, Section, Sub-Section, or other unit of teaching, research or administration of the UWI, including any project or programme in which any of them is involved. Bodies such as the Guild of Students, Student Associations, Alumni Association Chapters and entities owned by the UWI, for example, UWI Consulting, Inc. are also UWI entities.

UWI ICT resources/systems

Any Information and Communications assets including but not limited to hardware, software, networking and communications equipment, services and facilities and data and information which are owned, leased or loaned by the UWI or its agents irrespective of where these items may be located.

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The UWI name, the UWI Coat of Arms and all other words, logos, signs or marks whether registered or not, that belong to or are associated with UWI.

UWI Social Media Sites

These are official social media outputs by UWI entities acknowledged as representing the University by virtue of recognition by the Competent University Authority.

UWI staff member

A member of the academic, senior administrative, professional, and other non-academic staff, whether permanent or temporary and including staff on sabbatical as well as visiting scholars.

UWI student

A student whether part-time or full-time, registered in any UWI course or programme, or with any UWI entity/franchise.

2. GENERAL BEST PRACTICE

General Guidelines

These apply to all social media users within the University community.

- i. **Confidentiality** - Confidential information about students, staff and third parties affiliated with UWI, projects, research, or processes should not be posted without prior permission from the owner of that information. Where there is doubt, it is best to abstain from posting or seek further clarification.
- ii. **Security** - Use of social media in a manner that does not compromise the security of an individual or UWI. Avoid posting the home address, private telephone number or private email address of individuals (including yourself).
- iii. **Transparency** - Ensure that all material posted is true and accurate, while not compromising confidentiality. When uncertain, seek clarification or avoid posting the material altogether.
- iv. **Privacy** - Ensure that all material posted on UWI Social Media Sites receive the necessary approval. Remember that social media content is publicly accessible. All material posted should be appropriate for a public forum.
- v. **Respect others** - Make constructive comments. Be cordial in disagreements; avoid comments that may be inflammatory.
- vi. **Be aware of liability** - Ensure that all material posted can be disclosed publicly and does not violate copyright laws, is not defamatory, libelous, obscene, or generally inappropriate.
- vii. **Business solicitation** - Commercial solicitation from any external organization for example, advertising an event, service or product for profit or employment opportunity for profit is not permitted.
- viii. **Understand personal responsibility** - Protect your privacy. Ensure that you post material that you are comfortable having in the public domain.
- ix. **Correct mistakes** - Mistakes are a normal occurrence; acknowledge when mistakes occur and be up front and quick with the correction.

- x. **Respect your audience** - Do not post sensitive material or comments that may be construed as a bias towards or against an individual, group, or entity.

Guidelines for Staff

In addition to the General Guidelines (page 3), the following should also be considered by members of staff.

- i. **Seek approval** - Ensure prior permission is obtained before posting material that reflects a position of The University.
- ii. **Respect University time** - The use of social media for purposes not officially designated as University business should be minimized, or totally avoided, during regular work hours.
- iii. **Use of University Marks** - Use of the various UWI Marks should be guided by the Social Media Policy. Use of UWI Marks by UWI entities is subject to the direction of the Competent University Authority for Social Media (*Section 4 provides information on the Competent University Authority for Social Media*).

Guidelines for Students

In addition to the General Guidelines (page 3), the following should also be considered by students.

- i. Try to engage in meaningful discourse when using a social media platform designed specifically to promote The University.
- ii. Identify yourself but do not disclose personal details that could be used for illicit purposes. Remember to pay due regard to the content and potential audience and ensure that your conduct on social media platforms reflects positively on The University.
- iii. Seek approval to ensure permission is obtained before posting material that reflects a position of The University.
- iv. All material posted can be attributed to you, therefore, ensure that such content is accurate and does not constitute any violation of copyright or other applicable laws.

- v. All official student clubs, associations, organizations, Student Guild and Alumni Association Chapter pages must follow the guidelines contained within this document.
- vi. Use of the various UWI Marks should be guided by the Social Media Policy. Use of UWI Marks by UWI entities is subject to the direction of the Competent University Authority for Social Media (*Section 4 provides information on the Competent University Authority for Social Media*).

When representing UWI

In addition to the General Guidelines (page 3), the following should also be considered by all members of the University community when representing UWI and by all UWI entities (*A definition of UWI entity is found on page 2*).

- i. **UWI Social Media** - All UWI entities wishing to use social media sites to engage with stakeholders on behalf of UWI should first contact the Competent University Authority for Social Media (*Section 4 below*) in order to determine the best platform to use and also whether existing social media accounts can be used.
- ii. **Content** - Ensure the material posted is aligned to The University's vision, mission and core values. Keep content up to date by assigning a designated content manager, whose responsibility should include, among other things, checking whether content is dated and liaising with the Competent University Authority for Social Media to ensure compliance with the University's Social Media Policy.
- iii. **Understand personal responsibility** – UWI entities have a responsibility to ensure material posted in their personal capacity is clearly identified as such. It is easy to mistake a staff member's post as representing the position of UWI if that post is not explicit in declaring that it is a personal post.
- iv. **Political, religious, racial or other statements** - Remember UWI's non-biased stance and avoid postings which may be construed as being discriminatory against any political, religious or ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation and any others.

- v. **Be respectful** - Ensure that conduct on social media platforms conforms to other general acceptable standards as an employee and/or student, such as showing due courtesy and being mindful of other users.
- vi. **Materials** posted should be conveyed in a manner that is respectful of other users and should reflect positively on The University.
- vii. **Accuracy** - All material posted on behalf of The University should be thoroughly reviewed to ensure its truth and accurate representation of the facts. In addition, an editorial review, possibly of a sample of the material, should also be conducted by the Competent University Authority for Social Media.
- viii. **Be thoughtful** - Give due consideration to material before posting. If there are doubts, seek clarification.

Examples of relevant content:

UWI plans, strategies; major developments of significance to the UWI; major research wins; quality assessment outcomes; funding news; benefits of UWI research; summaries of recent news/media publicity; key staff profile features; individual and team - staff and student achievements and honours; coverage of events of UWI-wide significance (e.g. visiting lecturers, VIP visits); news in brief round-ups.

3. GETTING STARTED WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

The following guidelines are intended to help members of the University community wishing to establish and maintain a social media presence. It is strongly recommended that UWI entities and UWI members consult with the Competent University Authority prior to establishing any social media presence.

- **Establish your target audience** - Determine who your group, club or association is, who your audience is and what type of information your audience wants from you and what they expect. Come up with a basic profile of your most typical customer; this will help shape your choice of platform as well as how targeted your information will be.
- **List tangible goals** - Establish what you want to achieve by using social media. Can it be achieved using another channel? What are the benefits?
- **Find the right channel** - Ask if social media platforms are the best platforms possible for you to engage your audience. Remember that social media platforms require a conversational approach.
- **Dedicate the time** - Have a dedicated resource/person who can invest the necessary time to deal with queries or posts that may appear on your social media sites. Social media consumers expect interaction/engagement in a timely manner, so be prepared to provide information or a service within an appropriate timeframe.
- **Research** - Make sure all information you present is accurate; all your resources are capable of providing information that is current and easy to access.
- **Establish an attractive presence** - Have continuously dynamic content. Content should not be static or in one particular format (i.e.) only text based. Be prepared to produce variety (video, audio and photos). Pay attention to finding a good balance between too many and too few postings.

Treating with negative comments on social media platforms

- **Take note of the comment** - Thank the commenter for his/her feedback and offer redress for their complaint (if any is needed).
- **Don't delay** - Respond to a negative comment as soon as you can as the commenter may become increasingly irate the longer they have to wait. A slow response can damage your reputation.
- **Do not delete** - Unless the comment is abusive (i.e., racist, derogatory, pornographic or obscene), do not delete it. Deleting a negative, but otherwise not abusive comment may aggravate the commenter who may involve other parties in further negative comments/actions.
- **Do not take it personally** - Social media are public forums and your response is being judged, not only by the commenter, but also your followers. Distinguish if the comment is one clearly placed to incite an attack; if so, then you can choose to not respond.
- **Set the tone** - A pleasant positive response will encourage the commenter to tone down the aggression.

For any faculty or staff member, student group or alumni associations wishing to establish and maintain an official UWI Social Media Site, please contact the Competent University Authority for Social Media on your relevant campus for guidance.

4. THE COMPETENT UNIVERSITY AUTHORITY FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

The Competent University Authority for social media is the office authorized by the University to monitor and designate social media sites as official “UWI Social Media Sites”. These offices (listed below) should be contacted for advice and approval on matters related to starting and managing official UWI Social Media Sites.

Cave Hill Campus

Office of Student, Corporate and Alumni Relations

Tel.: (246) 417-4076

Fax: (246) 424-3320

Email: publicinformation@cavehill.uwi.edu

Open Campus

Marketing and Communications Department

Tel.: (876) 927-1201

Email: marketing@open.uwi.edu

Mona Campus

Marketing and Communications Office

Tel.: (876) 977-5941; (876) 977-7346; (876) 935-8348

Fax: (876) 977-6669

Email: marketing.communications@uwimona.edu.jm

St Augustine Campus

Marketing and Communications Office

Tel.: (868) 662-2002 ext. 82315, 82324

Fax: (868) 662-3858/645-6396

Email: marketing.communications@sta.uwi.edu

Vice Chancellery

University Marketing and Communications

Tel.: (868) 662-2002 ext. 82316, 84246

Fax: (868) 662-3858/645-6396

Email: marketing.communications@sta.uwi.edu

Editorial Authority

All UWI Social Media Sites must have a designated administrator who is responsible for the content of the site. The name and contact details for this person should be submitted to the relevant Competent University Authority, as part of the approval process.

Content for release to Top level UWI Social Media Sites should be sent to the Competent University Authority at the relevant campus to be reviewed and edited for style, flow, accuracy, punctuation and length, prior to posting online.

The Competent University Authority at the relevant campus may need to validate content for events and other news. If content cannot be confirmed within set timeframes, the material may be held for future online publication. Decisions regarding the inclusion of submitted materials on UWI Social Media Sites are at the discretion of the Competent University Authority at the relevant campus.

The Competent University Authority at the relevant campus reserves the right to remove comments and block persons from UWI Social Media Sites. This Office may request that users avoid certain subjects or withdraw certain posts from a UWI Social Media Site if these posts are deemed inappropriate. This Office may also report violations and/or seek guidance from external entities on any action considered to be in breach of University policies.