SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AND GUIDE

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, at least once a year. UK DCTN will amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

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Contents

Introduction

What is social media?

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Why do we use social media?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating the UK DCTN's work. It is important for some staff to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of the UK DCTN.

Why do we need a social media policy?

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if discussing issues relating to UK DCTN's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for *staff members of all levels and trustees,* and applies to content posted on both a *work computer or a* personal device*.* Before engaging in work-related social media activity, all concerned must read this policy.

Setting out the social media policy

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of UK DCTN, and the use of social media by staff in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help staff support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the charity and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

Point of contact for social media

The UK DCTN Network Research Co-ordinator is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, please contact the *Research Coordinator* on *ukdctn@nottingham.ac.uk*. No other staff member or UK DCTN trustee can post content on UK DCTN's official channels without the permission of the UK DCTN Network Manager

Which social media channels do we use?

UK DCTN uses the following social media channels:

Twitter: https://twitter.com/UK_DCTN
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ukdctn

Guidelines

Using UK DCTN's social media channels — appropriate conduct

1. The UK DCTN Research Co-ordinator is responsible for setting up and managing UK DCTN's social media channels. Only those authorised by the UK DCTN Network Manager will have access to these accounts.

2. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for UK DCTN, and accurately reflects UK DCTN's agreed position.

3. Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions, help and engage with them.

4. Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Also check the quality of images.

5. Always pause and think before posting. That said, reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.

6. If staff outside of the UK DCTN wish to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, they should speak to the Network Manager about this.

7. Staff shouldn't post content about supporters or service users without their express permission. If staff are sharing information about supporters, service users or third-party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from UK DCTN. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, staff must ensure they have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.

8. Always check facts - do not repost things that cannot be verified and take care to only re-post from trusted sources. Staff should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.

9. Be honest. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.

10. Staff should refrain from offering personal opinions via UK DCTN's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about UK DCTN's position on a particular issue, please contact the UK DCTN Network.

11. It is vital that UK DCTN does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials.

12. Staff should not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.

13. Staff should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of UK DCTN. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, we can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.

14. The UK DCTN is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties.

15. If a complaint is made on UK DCTN's social media channels, staff should seek advice from the UK DCTN Network Manager before responding and follow the UK DCTN Complaints Policy.

16. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the UK DCTNs reputation. Examples might include: complaints from patients or health professionals and participants in studies we are involved in. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental.

The Research Coordinator regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of UK DCTN so we can catch any issues or problems early. If there is an issue that could develop or has already developed into a crisis situation, the Research Coordinator will discuss with the UK DCTN Manager.

If any staff outside of the UK DCTN become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on UK DCTN's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the UK DCTN Manager immediately.

Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. UK DCTN staff and trustees are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with UK DCTN's values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive the UK DCTN. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of UK DCTN. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about UK DCTN's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent UK DCTN's positions, policies or opinions."

2. Staff who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at UK DCTN should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager. Similarly, staff who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for UK DCTN should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager.

3. Those in senior management, and specialist roles where they are well known in their field of expertise, must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing UK DCTN's view.

4. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with the UK DCTN and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself.

5. The UK DCTN works with several high-profile people. Please don't approach high profile people from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support the UK DCTN, as this could hinder any potential relationships. This includes asking for retweets about the UK DCTN.

7. If a staff member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to UK DCTN, they should talk to the UK DCTN Network Manager immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

8. UK DCTN is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing UK DCTN, staff are expected to hold UK DCTN's position of neutrality. Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from UK DCTN, and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

9. Never use UK DCTN's logos in social media posts unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the Research Co-ordinator.

10. Always protect yourself and the UK DCTN. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. When you are using social media sites at work, it is important that you do so safely.

11. Think about your reputation as well as the UK DCTN's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.

12. We encourage staff to share tweets and posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support UK DCTN and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage staff to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the UK DCTN Network Manager who will respond as appropriate.

Further guidelines

Libel
Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether staff are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring UK DCTN into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

Copyright law
It is critical that all staff abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

Confidentiality
Any communications that staff make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that UK DCTN is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story/publication/funding success that is embargoed for a particular date.

Discrimination and harassment
Staff should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official UK DCTN social media channel or a personal account. For example:
- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

Lobbying Act
Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose. In most cases, spending on charity campaigns that are in accordance with charity law will not be regulated under electoral law. However, the Lobbying Act, which was passed in January 2014, states that during national elections (known as regulated periods) spending on campaigning activities may be regulated.

Charities which spend more than £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, during the regulated period, need to register with the Electoral Commission. To abide by the Lobbying Act, campaigning activities on social media must not be seen as intending to influence people's voting choice.

Protection and intervention
The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. For example, Facebook. However, if a staff member considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the UK DCTN Network Manager immediately.

Under 18s and vulnerable people

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, staff should ensure the online relationship with UK DCTN follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Staff should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online, and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. Staff should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and UK DCTN content and other content is appropriate for them.

Responsibilities and breach of policy

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of UK DCTN is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect.

Public Interest Disclosure

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, if a UK DCTN staff member releases information through UK DCTN's social media channels that is considered to be in the interest of the public, whistleblowing procedures must be initiated before any further action is taken.