

Social Media Policy	Policy Owner: Community Engagement
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1. Purpose

This policy summarises how Royal Holloway Students' Union (RHSU) manages the use of social media by staff, student leaders and community members. The growth and use of social media presents a risk to Royal Holloway Students' Union (RHSU) and Royal Holloway University (RHUL), as well as individual student communities. This policy has been designed to mitigate these risks, with a particular focus on protecting the reputational integrity of all parties.

2. Scope

This policy is applicable to RHSU staff, student leaders and community members. Student leaders will encompass all roles held by students that have been selected or elected and will include but is not limited to:

- Student Group Committee positions
- Community Officers
- Academic Representatives (all levels)

It will cover the accounts they use for their roles and within a Union capacity. It will not cover their personal accounts. Behaviours of any individual connected to the Union are to remain professional at all times and inline with employment contracts, code of conducts and the organisations values.

Should anyone want to report the behaviour of RHSU staff, student leaders and community members this can be done using the [RHSU complaints form](#).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of Community Engagement is responsible for overseeing the application of this policy in relation to RHSU Social Media channels, the Officer's social media and any connected accounts.

The Marketing and Communications Manager will oversee the day to day operation of RHSU Social Media channels and ensure the team are trained appropriately.

The Student Opportunities Manager with the support of the Marketing and Communications Manager, is responsible for ensuring student leader roles and their communities supported by the Opportunities Team follow this policy.

The Change and Insight Manager with the support of the Marketing and Communications Manager, is responsible for ensuring student leader roles and their communities supported by the Voice Team follow this policy.

4. Applicable and Related Guidance

This policy relates to and should be read in conjunction with RHSU's Campaigning and Political Activity Policy, the Membership Code of Conduct and the joint Code of Practice for Freedom of Speech.

For all student communities, this policy should be read in conjunction with their own constitutions and RHSU's Byelaws relating to student communities and the code of conduct.

For Sports Clubs only, this policy should also be read in conjunction with the Royal Holloway Sport Brand Usage Guidelines.

Other principles that guide this policy include the Charities Act 2011, The Lobbying Act 2014 (Transparency of Lobbying, Non-party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014), The University and Unions Joint Freedom of Speech Code of Practice and RHSU's Constitution and associated policies

5. Social Media guidance

- 5.1. For the purpose of this policy, social media is any online platform or app that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum.
- 5.2. This includes larger platforms such as Facebook, X, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp and Snapchat but also extends to video sharing sites, forums and blogs.
- 5.3. The above list is not exhaustive and due to the constantly changing digital environment, these guidelines should be followed in relation to any form of social media.
- 5.4. When using social media, an individual or group should not:
 - 5.4.1. Bring RHSU or RHUL into disrepute, for example:
 - 5.4.1.1. Making defamatory comments about individuals, other organisations or groups
 - 5.4.1.2. Posting content that is inappropriate or links to inappropriate content (examples of inappropriate content could include a focus on an unhealthy drinking practices or culture).
 - 5.4.2. Breach confidentiality of the organisation, for example:
 - 5.4.2.1. Revealing information that is subject to an embargo and not in the public arena.
 - 5.4.3. Breach copyright laws, for example:
 - 5.4.3.1. Using someone else's images or written content without permission.

- 5.4.3.2. Failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something.
- 5.4.4. Breach data protection laws, for example:
 - 5.4.4.1. Posting images of individuals without their permission.
 - 5.4.4.2. Sharing any personal information without explicit permission.
- 5.4.5. Do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual directly or indirectly, for example by:
 - 5.4.5.1. Making offensive or derogatory comments relating to an individual's protected characteristics as defined in the Equalities Act 2010.
 - 5.4.5.2. Using social media to bully or harass another individual.
 - 5.4.5.3. Posting images or content that is discriminatory.
- 5.4.6. Advertising or promoting unapproved events, products or services.
- 5.5. When responding to any issues raised by members they should always be treated with professionalism in line with our code of conduct.

6. Student Communities & Leadership roles

- 6.1. Many social media accounts exist across a range of platforms for student communities. These accounts are set up and managed by the communities and passwords for these accounts are held by individual leads.
- 6.2. Day-to-day responsibility for the accounts lies with individual community leads.
- 6.3. Where any content is posted that contravenes the guidelines in this policy, it is the responsibility of the group leads to remove the content as soon as possible and report it to RHSU.
- 6.4. Any reports will be investigated in accordance with Byelaw G of our constitution relating to student communities, all groups are encouraged to provide for their own complaints and disciplinary procedures within their own constitutions which can be used in the first instance.
- 6.5. For the avoidance of doubt RHSU's own statutory complaint and disciplinary procedure (Byelaw K and Byelaw L) is applicable to all RHSU student communities and student leadership roles.
- 6.6. Members personal social media activity is not covered by this policy.