



THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE

Within the University of Sydney

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY - STUDENTS

This policy provides our College community with a code of conduct for the use of social technologies that are consistent with the College's expectations and values, while protecting the reputations of our community members and the enduring, high quality reputation of the College within the academic, alumnae, university, college, corporate and wider communities¹.

Social Media refers to, but is not limited to, platforms such as: blogs, micro-blogs (e.g. Twitter/X), wikis, social media, social networks and networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn), social bookmarking services (e.g. Pinterest), user rating services (media sites), fan communities, forums, chat and messaging within games, gaming platforms; chat (text and/or voice) applications on any platform (e.g. Discord), photo sharing (e.g. Instagram, SnapChat) and video sharing (i.e.: TikTok, Vimeo, Vine, YouTube).

This policy applies to all students (resident and affiliate) and any student visitors to The Women's College. It assumes strict adherence to the College's Internet Policy and Conditions. Any behavior which compromises the reputation of the College will be handled accordingly and may result in the termination of a student's residency or affiliation.

Key Principles

The following principles apply to students regarding social media use:

- It is expected that students adhere to this policy at all times when commenting or posting college-related content
- Students are not authorised to provide comments and views *on behalf of* the College on any media platform at any time—including social media
- The College's name and/or branding/crest must not be used in association with personal accounts or comments on social media sites without the express written permission of the Principal. The exception is when listing The Women's College on a LinkedIn profile. LinkedIn automatically populates a College Crest.
- Images and/or recordings of students in identifiable Women's College attire (including other College-owned material, facilities or resources) must not be associated with open personal accounts.
- Students are not authorised to establish social media accounts or pages in the College's name, or contribute comments or material as a representative of the College, without the written permission of the Principal.
- Students must ensure their personal online activities, do not impact or potentially impact the College's reputation, or the reputations of any member of the College community, university or general public.
- When using personal accounts to comment, students must ensure views are solely their own, and they must not associate themselves or their views with the College.
- The College does not endorse any recordings (audio or visual) on social media sites that have not received written permission from the Principal or her delegate. Any approved postings of images and/or recordings must have the permission of the person/s in those images/recordings. If in doubt, the advice of the Dean of Students must be sought.

¹ See the appendix to this policy for additional advice when using social media.



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- Students must not act unlawfully when using social media (e.g. breach copyright, impersonate or falsely represent another person)
- Students should always aim to protect their confidential information and any other information about themselves. Students must not disclose information about the College or other members of the College community that is not publicly available
- When using the College internet and computers, students must be judicious in the items they send and forward. Material such as spam, jokes and chain letter email forwards are the oldest form of internet-based social media, and these are not appropriate content to associate with the College
- A student's online presence should always be respectful and always considerate of the rights and confidentiality of others
- Students should speak respectfully about the College and its past, current and potential staff, students, families, and other institutions (e.g. the University, other colleges, businesses, etc.). Students must not intimidate, abuse, gossip, threaten, harass or engage in behaviour that will impact others, reflect negatively on themselves, others or the College's reputation. The use of copyrighted materials, unfounded or derogatory statements, or misrepresentation is not viewed favourably by the College and can result in disciplinary action and those involved may be subject to, in extreme circumstances, criminal investigation
- Students must always honour the privacy rights of current staff, students and the public.

Breaches

Should a student contravene this policy and thereby harass, harm or otherwise negatively impact the well-being of another student, person or entity, or harm the reputation of the College, that student may have their College residency or affiliation cancelled, after due process.

Related policies include

- Bullying Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- Grievance Management Policy, Guidelines and Procedures
- Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Student Leaders Guidelines

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Dr Tiffany Donnelly
Principal



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APPENDIX TO SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

General Expectations and Advice

The keys to success in social media are being transparent and honest about identity, being thoughtful before posting, and respecting the purpose of the community where postings are made.

If an error is made, it must be corrected quickly and visibly and then contact with the Dean of Students must be made so any adverse response can be managed.

Social media often span traditional boundaries between formal and informal/personal relationships. Privacy settings to restrict personal information on otherwise public sites should be employed. Profile photos and avatars should be chosen judiciously, as well as the type of photos uploaded.

There is no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can retrieve posts years after the publication date. Caution to reduce any potential impact on the future reputation and career path of the person who makes the posting is wise. Comments can often be forwarded or copied by a third party without the poster's consent. Archival systems save information even if a posting is deleted.

Students should delay any posting if they feel strongly about a person/subject until they are calm and clear-headed to ensure they do not post something they may later regret.

The College understands that for efficient student communication, "closed" social media groups may be required. These groups should be approved by the Dean of Students in advance, and following approval:

1. Add the Dean of Students to the College group
2. Audit followers to ensure only current Women's College students have access, If inheriting an established social media account
3. Delete the group at the end of the year.

The College's various "closed" Facebook and other forums are monitored by the Dean of Students/Senior Student and potentially harmful or inflammatory comments will be removed. Students are encouraged to raise issues in person with the staff or House Committee rather than undertake "flaming", "trolling" and/or negative discussion on social media. The College acknowledges that various social media pages (whole College, wing groups, special interest groups, etc.) are important for internal student communications, but these groups are reminded they all need to adhere to the conditions of this policy.

It is important to maintain confidentiality. Confidential or proprietary information about the College, its staff, alumnae or fellow students must not be posted. Students should aim to exercise commonsense, restraint, be judicious and follow the College's policies, and the law.

As a guideline, students should only post on subjects they would feel comfortable discussing with their parents and lecturers or a staff member.

Students must respect the College's time and property. As stated in the Internet Policy and Conditions, the College's computers and electronic devices are to be used for College-related activities. Personal sites should be maintained by students in their own time and on personal equipment.