



Social media policy

Version: 1.1 | Version effective: 24/09/2021

Audience

Department-wide

Purpose

This policy provides principles to empower employees to determine appropriate conduct while using, supporting or participating in social media accounts, platforms and forums in a personal capacity.

The department has a separate procedure which outlines the requirements for the use and management of official departmental use of social media and online communications, the [social media for school and departmental promotion](#) procedure.

Policy statement

The department acknowledges the growing popularity of social media both as a communication and educational tool and supports its appropriate use. It also acknowledges the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to the government or the department, other client groups, and/or employees, through the inappropriate use of social media. Employees are responsible for the content they publish on social media platforms so it is important they understand what is expected of them while using social media in a personal capacity.

Principles

- Employees maintain appropriate boundaries between their personal and professional lives online.
- Employees are respectful in their online interactions.
- Employees maintain appropriate privacy settings on their personal social media accounts.
- The department may take disciplinary action when an employee's personal use of social media reflects seriously and adversely on the public service and/or contravenes the employee's obligations under relevant legislation, the [Code of Conduct for the Queensland public service](#), whole of government or departmental policies and guidelines.

Requirements

All employees

- When using social media in a personal capacity, you should:
 - conduct yourself in accordance with the expectations and responsibilities of an employee generally
 - ensure your communications and conduct do not interfere with your work performance, compromise you professionally or cause damage to the relationship between you and the department.
- Understand your obligations under relevant departmental policies, legislation and guidelines including the [Code of Conduct for the Queensland public service](#) and the department's [Standard of Practice](#).
- Comply with relevant legislation and lawful requirements including but not limited to:
 - anti-bullying, anti-harassment and anti-discrimination legislation
 - intellectual property and copyright law requirements
 - information privacy legislation, and
 - federal legislation where using a 'carriage service' (includes phone or the internet) to menace, harass or cause offence may be a criminal offence.
- Understand the impacts and recognise the public visibility of your conduct and communications online, including what you 'like', share, comment on, 'follow' or 'join' on a social media platform.
- Understand the terms and conditions of the social media platforms you use.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that your online conduct and communications will be understood as representing your own personal view and not those of the department or Queensland Government. Do not falsely imply (whether intentionally or not) that you are authorised to speak on behalf of the department or the government, or that any views you express are those of the department or the government.
- Do not post material that is, or might be construed as, inappropriate or improper conduct in a personal capacity that reflects seriously and adversely on the public service.
- Do not use or disclose on social media any confidential information or personal information obtained in your capacity as an employee of the department. This includes personal information or images of employees, clients or students, without written consent from the parent / carer (in accordance with the [obtaining and managing student and individual consent](#) procedure), or individual (if over 18 years of age).
- Follow the department's [Use of ICT Systems](#) procedure and [Standard of Practice](#) when using departmental facilities and devices to communicate on any social media platform.
- Understand that personal comments you make on social media about a public issue may limit your capacity to perform your duties in an independent and unbiased manner.
- Inform your manager, principal or supervisor, or Integrity and Employee relations, of any conduct or communications that may not meet the requirements of this policy.
- Conduct and/or communication in a personal capacity which is considered to be inappropriate or improper will be managed in accordance with the department's processes for managing inappropriate employee conduct.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Social media	<p>Social media is an umbrella term covering websites, technology, applications or tools that enable active and participatory publishing and interaction between individuals over the internet. Social media can be characterised by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relationships • user participation • user-generated content • collaboration • multi-directional conversations • highly accessible and scalable publishing • 24/7 operation and availability.
Personal capacity	<p>In this policy personal capacity is any conduct or communications made by a departmental employee outside the scope of their role i.e. not in an official capacity. This may be including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct in work hours, on departmental or personal devices on personal social media platforms • conduct outside work hours on personal devices.
Employee	<p>Any person employed by the department in a permanent, temporary or casual capacity.</p>

Legislation

- [Industrial Relations Act 2016 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Public Service Act 2008 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Criminal Code Act 1899 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Criminal Code Act 1995 \(Cwlth\)](#)
- [Telecommunications Act 1997 \(Cwlth\)](#)
- [Information Privacy Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#)

Delegations/Authorisations

- [HR delegations manual](#) (DoE employees only)

Policies and procedures in this group

- Nil

Supporting information for this policy

- Nil

Other resources

Guidelines

- [Personal use of social media guideline](#)
- [Social media](#) (DoE Employees only)
- [Tips for using social media](#)

Related policies and procedures

- [Code of Conduct for the Queensland public service](#)
- [Conflict of interest policy](#)
- [Conflict of interest procedure](#)
- [Department of Education – Standard of Practice](#)
- [Individual employee grievances procedure](#)
- [Information and Communication Technology \(ICT\) policy](#) (DoE Employees only)
- [Information privacy and right to information procedure](#)
- [Obtaining and managing student and individual consent procedure](#)
- [Preventing workplace bullying, sexual harassment and unlawful discrimination policy](#)
- [Social media for school and departmental promotion procedure](#)
- [Use of ICT systems procedure](#)

Contact

For further information, please contact:

Integrity and Employee Relations

For advice regarding integrity matters, email Integrity@qed.qld.gov.au

To report alleged misconduct and corrupt conduct, email Intake@qed.qld.gov.au

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29/06/2021

Superseded versions

Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.

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