



1.0 Definition of social media

- 1.1 For the purposes 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. This includes (but isn't limited to) social forums such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Social media also covers blogs and video and image-sharing websites such as YouTube.
- 1.2 Employees should be aware that there are many more examples of social media than can be listed here and this is a constantly changing area. Employees should follow these guidelines in relation to any social media that they use.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees.
- 2.2 It does not constitute a contractual term of employment and the company retains the right to amend this policy, in whole or in part, at any time it considers appropriate.

3.0 Use of social media at work

- 3.1 Employees are allowed to access certain social media sites, such as Twitter and LinkedIn from the company's computers or devices at certain times, as long as it is in connection with their work. However, the company may specifically block the use of other social media platforms such as Facebook on its computers at its sole discretion.
- 3.2 The company understands that employees may wish to use their own computers or devices to access social media while they are at work, however they are not permitted to use the company's networks for this purpose. Employees must limit their use of social media on their own equipment to their official rest breaks such as their lunch break.

4.0 Monitoring use of social media during work time

- 4.1 The company reserves the right to monitor employees' use of social media on the company's equipment. The company considers that valid reasons for checking an employee's internet usage include suspicions that the employee has:
 - been using social media for other purposes when they should be working; or
 - acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this policy.
- 4.2 Monitoring will be conducted as it is in the company's legitimate interests and is to ensure that this policy on use of social media is being complied with according to current Data Protection legislation.
- 4.3 Access to particular social media may be withdrawn in any case of misuse.

5.0 Social media in your personal life



- 5.1 The company recognises that many employees make use of social media in a personal capacity. While they are not acting on behalf of the company, employees must be aware that they can damage the company if they are recognised as being one of our employees.
- 5.2 Employees are allowed to say that they work for the company, which recognises that it is natural for its staff sometimes to want to discuss their work on social media. However, the employee's online profile (for example, the name of a blog or a Twitter name) must not contain the company's name.
- 5.3 If employees do discuss their work on social media (for example, giving opinions on their specialism or the sector in which the company operates), they must include on their profile a statement along the following lines: "The views I express here are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer."
- 5.4 Any communications that employees make in a personal capacity through social media must not:
- bring the company into disrepute, for example by:
 - criticising or arguing with clients, colleagues or rivals;
 - making defamatory comments about individuals or other companies or groups; or
 - posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;
 - breach confidentiality, for example by:
 - revealing trade secrets or information owned by the company;
 - giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague or customer contact) or company (such as a rival business); or
 - discussing the company's internal workings (such as deals that it is doing with a [customer/client] or its future business plans that have not been communicated to the public);
 - breach copyright, for example by:
 - using someone else's images or written content without permission;
 - failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something; or
 - do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:
 - making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
 - using social media to bully another individual (such as an employee of the company); or
 - posting images that are discriminatory or offensive [or links to such content].

6.0 Use of social media in the recruitment process



6.1 Unless it is in relation to finding candidates (for example, if an individual has put his/her details on social media websites for the purpose of attracting prospective employers), the HR department and managers will not, either themselves or through a third party, conduct searches on applicants on social media. This is because conducting these searches during the selection process might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics (for example, sexual orientation or religious beliefs) played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with the company's equal opportunities policy.

7.0 Disciplinary action over social media use

7.1 All employees are required to adhere to this policy. Employees should note that any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action. Serious breaches of this policy, for example incidents of bullying of colleagues or social media activity causing serious damage to the company, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal.

Date originated	September 2023
Date updated	
Version	1
Author	HR
Approved by	Board
Date for review	September 2025