STUDENT SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1   PURPOSE

The objective of this Policy is to encourage the safe and positive use of social networking.

The Policy sets out protocols for using social media and provides guidance for students in their personal use of social media.

The guidelines set out in this Policy complement the University College Student Handbook.

2   SCOPE

2.1   This Policy is applicable to all students.

2.2   For purposes of this Policy, "**social media**" shall include (but not be limited to):
- social networking sites (for example Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn,);
- video and photo sharing websites (for example Flickr, YouTube, SnapChat, Tik Tok);
- blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs;
- blogs hosted by media outlets (for example 'comments' sections or newspaper editorials);
- micro-blogging (for example Twitter);
- wikis and online collaborations (for example Wikipedia);
- forums, discussion boards and groups (for example Google groups, Reddit);
- video-on demand and podcasting;
- online multiplayer gaming platforms (for example World of Warcraft, Second life);
- instant messaging associated with your college duties and/or experience (e.g. a student WhatsApp group;
- geo-spatial tagging (Foursquare); and
- any other emerging electronic / digital communication applications.

3   POLICY STATEMENT

3.1   University College is committed to ensuring that students are aware of, and understand this Policy. This should enable them to participate professionally or personally, while being mindful of their responsibilities as University College students.

4   SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

4.1   **Personal use of social media**

4.1.1 University College students should be aware that content published on social media is, or may become, publicly available, even from personal social media accounts. Students must therefore ensure that they:
- are mindful that their behaviour is bound by the University College Code of Conduct (located in the Student Handbook) ("**Student Code of Conduct**") even when material is posted anonymously or using an alias or pseudonym;
- make clear that any views expressed are their own, and not those of University College;
- do not use a University College email address to register personal social media accounts;

- do not make comments that are obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful about staff, fellow students or the College;
- do not share intimate photos online without consent;
- do not post comments or images that are, or could be perceived to be:
  - made on behalf of University College (for example re-posting an image from a University College social media account without permission);
  - compromising public confidence in University College; or
  - bringing the College into disrepute.

4.2 Things to consider when posting on social media

4.2.1 Even when personally engaging on social media, a University College association on an individual's profile has the ability to affect the College as a whole. If individuals identify their affiliation with University College in profile or comments, other users will naturally associate them with the College.

4.2.2 Students should always think before they post, be civil to others and their opinions and not post personal information about others unless they have their permission. The behaviour of students should be consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.

4.2.3 When considering making personal comments online, students should reflect on the following questions:
- Are these comments lawful? For example, do they comply with anti-discrimination legislation and laws relating to defamation?
- Could these comments cause discord within the College community?
- Are these comments consistent with how the community expects a representative of University College to behave?
- Could these comments lower or undermine the reputation of University College?
- Could there be reputational damage if a prospective employer read these comments?

4.3 The Internet is forever

4.3.1 Words and images published on the internet can remain visible to the public for a long time. Content can also be replicated and shared beyond the original intended audience and sent to recipients who were never expected to see it, or who may view it out of context.

4.3.2 Students should be aware that according to the terms and conditions of some third-party sites, the content they create is the property of the site where it is posted and so may be re-used in ways which they had not intended.

4.3.3 Before posting to a social media site, students should understand the tool/platform they are using. It is recommended that they read the terms of service and user guides and look through existing content to get an idea of the posting etiquette and any cultural and behavioural norms associated with the social media platform they intend to engage with.

4.3.4   Students should not rely on a social media site's security settings as a guarantee of privacy. They should also adjust their privacy settings according to their own needs. It is important to remember that even if someone does not identify themselves online as a University College student, they could nonetheless be recognised as such.

5   SANCTIONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE

5.1   As a member of the University College community, students' behaviour, both in and out of the College, must be consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.

5.2   Failure to comply with this Policy may constitute a breach of the Student Code of Conduct. Examples of failure to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct in a social media setting include making derogatory or obscene posts about fellow students, alumni, College staff and/or the College on a social networking site.

5.3   If a student is found to have breached the Student Code of Conduct, the Head of College and Deans may determine that it is appropriate to impose sanctions as outlined in the Student Handbook.

6   RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS
6.1   Relevant UC Documents
- Student Handbook (including the Student Code of Conduct)

7   APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Policy Owner	Details
Approval Authority	Council
Advisory Committee to Approval Authority	Governance Committee
Policy Owner	Head of College (in capacity as Company Secretary) / Dean of Students
Next Review Date	February 2022

Version Control	Date Approved	Description of Change
V1	18 February 2021	Original