

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR STAFF AND LEARNERS

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Important:

- i. This policy replaces two existing policies:
 - *Social Media Acceptable Use Policy*, dated September 2020
 - *Social Media Acceptable Use Policy for Staff and Teachers*, September 2020
- ii. Please read this policy alongside the college's *ICT Acceptable Use Policy*, the *ICTE- safety Policy*, *Artificial Intelligence Policy*, and the *Learner Behaviour Agreement*.



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1) Who is this policy for and what does it cover?

This Policy and guidance document sets out the principles which Capital City College staff and learners are expected to follow when using social networking accounts, whether these are official college accounts or personal accounts used by staff and learners.

The guidelines are there to help you understand how to use social media appropriately to support your and CCC work. It also highlights what is acceptable and unacceptable when posting and sharing content – on social media and via blogs and personal websites – in relation to Capital City College or any of its sub-brands.

For the purpose of this document:

- “Capital City College”, or “CCC” means the Capital City College Group (CCCG), Apprenticeships+, or “A+” Visionnaire’s, O1 Founders, Mosaic and Vincent Rooms.
- “Social media” accounts include, but are not limited to, X, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Threads, and Bluesky.

2) General principles

- CCC, A+ and all sub-brands actively use social media to promote their activities and reach out to a variety of different audiences – including other educators; commercial organisations; opinion formers; partner organisations; staff; and prospective, current and former learners.
- The group’s social media channels are essentially promotional feeds: sharing learner and staff stories and successes, as well as sharing useful guidance and information related to the college’s courses of education more generally.

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- Capital City College encourages learners and staff to use social media to enhance and supplement their learning and their college experience, as well as to share the good work that the Group and colleges do.
- Whilst activity on all platforms is encouraged, CCC will no longer approve the use of X as a promotional platform given the lack of control we have to post within a safe environment and the lack of monitoring safeguards in place.
- Staff and learners who use social media at college must ensure that this use complies with the college policies on the Acceptable Use of ICT and Artificial Intelligence. Learners should only use social media in classes when this has been permitted by teachers, tutors, Learning Centre staff and line managers.
- Always gain the consent of anyone who you photograph or video for your social media account(s) – see also Section 8 below.
- It's important to remember that anything posted on social media is effectively permanent. Although a post can be deleted, it will remain stored online and therefore can be accessed, copied and re-used at any point in the future.
- When someone clearly identifies their association with CCC and/or discusses their work on social media, via a blog, or through a work-related personal website, they are expected to behave appropriately and in ways that are consistent with the Group's values, policies and code of conduct, and complies with the Group's ICT Acceptable Use Policy, the Learner Behaviour Agreement, the ICT E-safety Policy, and the Artificial Intelligence Policy. Therefore, staff and learners who identify themselves as being associated with CCC or any of its colleges:
 - If they are a member of staff, they must identify themselves via their account biography as a member of staff of either CCC or their college centre.
 - Must not engage in activities on these channels which might bring CCC and/or their college into disrepute, including sharing or linking to

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incidents in the college or abusive content, images or pornographic material.

- Must not use the Internet in any way to bully, harass, attack or abuse other people.
- Must not post derogatory or offensive comments, including but not limited to sexist, racist, sectarian or homophobic views.
- Must not post confidential information and personal or sensitive details about other people.
- Post must remain apolitical, CCC is an apolitical organisation.
- Never say something via social media that you would not be prepared to say face-to-face or would not want to be seen by a wider audience.

A good guiding rule is this: if you are unsure about whether to post something, check with a colleague or your line manager first. And if you are still in doubt, do not post it!

Note that we reserve the right to monitor posts on social media sites if there is cause for concern, to prevent crime or to protect the Group's reputation.

3) Setting up departmental or team social media accounts

A number of departments, centres and teams around the Group have set up social media accounts to share their work. A 2018 audit revealed over 35 such accounts across the Group – some of which were inactive, or which had only posted a handful of times.

We are attempting to rationalise the number of such accounts and, wherever possible, our intention in the future will be to reduce the number of separate departmental accounts, to leave a small number of accounts that represent large areas of the college's activities, and which post good quality and relevant content frequently.

Therefore, **if you want to set up a departmental social media account, bearing the name, logo or any other information linking the account to CCC or any of our colleges, you must:**

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- Discuss with and gain approval from your Head of School or Head of Service and the Head of Digital Marketing to check no similar account exists and discuss the need for it. Contact marketing@capitalccg.ac.uk to make a request. The Marketing department will set up the account so that the team can keep a log of all the accounts ensure an appropriate email address and password are used and facilitate its deactivation when the account is no longer needed.
- Although the account will be set up by the Marketing department, the login details will be shared with you, and you are responsible for the day-to-day running, posting and monitoring. Learners must never have access to the login details or post on the accounts directly. They are for employees only.
- Ensure that the account complies with the college policies on the Acceptable Use of ICT.
- Don't 'Follow' or comment on any current learners' personal social media accounts, as this could give rise to inappropriate contact outside normal teaching and working environments or hours.
- Do not download software posted or recommended by individuals or organisations that you do not know.
- Think very carefully about what posts you share, like or comment on, and who and which organisations you follow – as the account is an official college account, what you do on it reflects on the college and the group!
- Tag CCC and the relevant college in any post so that marketing can keep oversight of what is being posted via supplementary group accounts.
- Keep in mind that if the account is found to breach the acceptable use of ICT, the Learner Behaviour Policy or the ICT E-safety Policy, or the Artificial Intelligence Policy, the account will be deactivated and an investigation initiated.

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- Keep the account passwords and login details safe.
- If an account is no longer needed, notify the marketing team at marketing@capitalccg.ac.uk
- Follow the relevant CCC and/or college official social media accounts from your account, and feel free to share/ Like posts from the official college or CCC accounts.

Before you seek permission to set up a departmental social media account, think about what the purpose of the account will be, and how you are going to manage it. It is important that at least one other member of staff shares day-to-day responsibilities for the site and assists with moderation.

If you become aware that a social media account has become inactive, please notify the Marketing team at marketing@capitalccg.ac.uk so they can attempt to close it.

4) Setting up personal social media accounts for work purposes

Marketing does not have control over your personal social media accounts. However, you are reminded that if your account in any way identifies you as being a member of our staff or learner, you must comply with the Acceptable Use of ICT, the Learner Behaviour Agreement, and the ICT E-safety Policy. Breaches of these through your personal social media accounts can result in an investigation and potentially disciplinary action. Here are a few things to bear in mind the appropriate use of personal social media accounts for staff and learners:

- Follow the relevant CCC and/or college official social media accounts from your account and feel free to share/ Like/ posts from the official college or CCC accounts.
- For staff, don't 'Follow' any current learners' personal social media

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accounts, as this could give rise to inappropriate contact outside normal teaching and working environments or hours.

- For learners, consider whether your account complies with the Learner Behaviour Agreement.
- Think carefully about what posts you share, Like or Retweet and who and which organisations you follow – it’s your social media account, so these activities reflect on you personally.
- Make it clear to visitors to, or followers of, your social media accounts, that it is a personal social media account and not an official college one.
- Do not download software posted or recommended by individuals or organisations that you do not know or trust.

If you are a learner and you wish to set up a social media platform to share your college activities, speak with your tutor, who should then contact the Marketing team for guidance.

5) Posting to blogs, personal websites and posting on forums online

The college encourages activity which enables staff to share their subject expertise or experiences with a wider audience – including via blogs and websites and commenting on professional forums such as the comments sections of education trade media like *Tes* and *FE Week*.

However, if staff and learners use a blog, personal website or online forums or user groups to discuss their work for Capital City College they must identify themselves as a member of staff/learner – for example by including a simple and visible disclaimer such as “*These are my personal views and not those of Capital City College or xxxxx centre*”, and must not reveal confidential or sensitive information about themselves, the Group, staff, learners, its policies,

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business-sensitive information or internal discussions. If you are in any doubt about what is confidential, or if there is any conflict of interest involved in your posts, please consult your line manager or tutor. They in turn should contact the Marketing team if they have any concerns or questions.

If you wish to or are asked to, write a piece for the media (eg: *Tes* or *FE News*) perhaps as a result of your blogging or posting to social media on a subject – that is usually fine, but you must first contact the PR and Communications Manager for approval and guidance (use the email address pressoffice@capitalccg.ac.uk)

6) Keeping safe while using social media

Staff and learners should at all times take effective precautions when using social media to ensure their own personal safety. The Marketing and Communications team can direct learners and staff to materials and expert opinions if advice is needed in this respect.

Staff and learners should always exercise caution when interacting with and responding to posts on social media sites that could be deemed contentious. Your social media presence and your status as a member of CCC staff or learner at a CCC college can be easily blurred and it may be hard to tell when one ends and the other begins. Because of this, you must not use your social media account(s) to abuse other social media users (also known as ‘trolling’).

7) Radicalisation and extremism on social media

Radicalisation can be seen as a psychological process akin to grooming and social media is one of the tools that can be used for this. Social media can be employed as a propaganda platform by anyone (terrorism and extremism are not specific to anyone’s belief system or ideology). These groups use online tactics and social media to influence and recruit people and often post videos that are violent or incite violence. You must not access this kind of content

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while at work or college and never post any content that could be deemed as extremist propaganda or has the intention of grooming or radicalising individuals.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill law states that any use of social media to foster extremism may lead to the institution being in breach of the new duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Staff should therefore be aware of their role with regard to the safeguarding of learners and must read the CCC Safeguarding, Child Protection and Adults at Risk Policy.

If you are concerned about a member of staff or learner who you think may be at risk of being radicalised or wish to seek to support yourself, please contact your centre's Safeguarding Lead, or refer to Part 2 of the CCC Safeguarding, Child Protection and Adults at Risk Policy.

To report suspected online terrorist content please use this link:

[https://www.gov.uk/report- terrorism](https://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism)

Further information about the use of social media for online radicalisation is here: [The use of social media for online radicalisation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation)

8) Consent

Social media allows photographs, videos, personal details and comments to be shared widely. However, it may not be appropriate to share some college-related information in this way. For example, there may be an expectation that photographs identifying someone taken in college will not appear publicly on the Internet or any information that could identify an individual, without their knowledge and consent. Therefore, staff and learners should be considerate to their colleagues/ peers and should not post information when they have been asked not to. They should also remove information about a colleague/peer if they ask them to do so.

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9) Whistleblowing and disciplinary action

Staff wishing to make a complaint about, or report a potential breach of this policy, should do so via marketing@capitalccg.ac.uk

If a member of staff or learner is found to be engaging in any form of online activity that is deemed as cyber bullying, bringing the reputation of CCC and/or the college into disrepute, and/or uses the Internet in any way to attack or abuse learners, staff members, teachers or tutors, that person could face disciplinary action under the relevant college procedures.

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