



## Windsor Academy Trust

<b>Social Media Policy</b>	
<b>Responsible Committee:</b>	Windsor Academy Trust, Board of Directors
<b>Date revised by Board of Directors:</b>	December 2016
<b>Next review date:</b>	March 2019

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# Windsor Academy Trust (WAT)

## Social Media Policy

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## **1. About this Policy**

1.1 This policy is in place to minimise the risks to the WAT Trust through use of social media.

1.2 This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Wikipedia, Whisper, Instagram, Vine, Tumblr and all other social networking sites, internet postings and blogs. It applies to use of social media for professional purposes as well as personal use that may affect the WAT Trust in any way.

1.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

## **2. Personnel responsible for implementing the policy**

2.1 Our board of directors has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy, but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for its operation to the Chief Executive.

2.2 Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks lies with the Strategic Leader of IT who will review this policy annually to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

2.3 Senior and Middle Leaders have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that all staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and taking action when behaviour falls below its requirements.

2.4 All staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to a member of the Executive/Leadership Teams. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Strategic Leader of IT.

## **3. Compliance with related policies and agreements**

3.1 Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies. If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, you are prohibited from using social media to:

- a) breach our Information and Communications Technology Policy
- b) breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies
- c) breach any obligations contained in those policies relating to confidentiality
- d) breach our Disciplinary Policy or procedures
- e) harass or bully other staff in any way
- f) breach our Equal Opportunities Policy

- g)** breach our Data Protection Policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague, parent or a student online)
- h)** breach any other laws or regulatory requirements

3.2 Staff should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references, positive and negative, can be attributed to the organisation and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the organisation.

3.3 Staff who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

#### **4. Personal use of social media**

Personal use of social media is never permitted during working hours or by means of our computers, networks and other IT resources and communications systems.

#### **5. Prohibited use**

5.1 You must avoid making any social media communications that could damage our professional interests or reputation, even indirectly.

5.2 You must not use social media to defame or disparage us, (the WAT and academies within) our staff or any third party; to harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties; to make false or misleading statements; or to impersonate colleagues or third parties.

5.3 You must not use social media to upload, post, forward or post a link to any abusive, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory or defamatory content

5.4 You must not express opinions on our behalf via social media, unless expressly and follow the protocols in place (i.e. getting it checked) authorised to do so by your line manager. You may be required to undergo training in order to obtain such authorisation.

5.5 You must not post comments about sensitive WAT, academy/school-related topics, such as our performance, or do anything to jeopardise our trade secrets, confidential information and intellectual property. You must not include our logos or other trademarks in any social media posting or in your profile on any social media.

5.6 You are not permitted to add business contacts made during the course of your employment to personal social networking accounts.

5.7 Any misuse of social media should be reported to a member of the Leadership Team.

## **6. Professional use of social media**

6.1 If your duties require you to speak on behalf of the organisation in a social media environment, you must still seek approval for such communication from the Executive/Leadership Team who may require you to undergo training before you do so and impose certain requirements and restrictions with regard to your activities.

6.2 Likewise, if you are contacted for comments about the organisation for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, direct the enquiry to the WAT Executive PA

6.3 The use of social media for professional purposes is subject to the remainder of this policy.

## **7. Guidelines for responsible use of social media**

7.1 You should make it clear in social media postings, or in your personal profile, that you are speaking on your own behalf. Write in the first person and use a personal e-mail address.

7.2 Be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that you are personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see.

7.3 If you disclose your affiliation with us on your profile or in any social media postings, you must state that your views do not represent those of your employer (unless you are authorised to speak on our behalf as set out in paragraph 5.4). You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to Trust Stakeholders

7.4 If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from posting it until you have discussed it with your Line manager.

7.5 If you see social media content that is complementary, or disparages or reflects poorly on us, you should inform your line manager or Executive/Leadership Team

## **8. Monitoring**

8.1 We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for professional/educational purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your use of such resources and systems.

8.2 If you notice any use of social media by other members of staff in breach of this policy you should inform your line manager or Leadership Team

8.3 For further information, please refer to the WAT Acceptable Use Policy.

## **9. Recruitment**

We may use internet searches to perform due diligence on candidates in the course of recruitment. Where we do this, we will act in accordance with our data protection and equal opportunities obligations.

## **10. Breach of this policy**

10.1 Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. [Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.]

10.2 You may be required to remove any social media content that we consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.