

Social Media Policy

1. Purpose

Social media provides vast opportunities for sharing information and ideas. It also has an important place in promoting and marketing the services, events and activities of UECS Ltd. However, there are circumstances where the use of social media could be detrimental to the reputation of UECS Ltd or cause harm to colleagues. The intention of this policy is to clarify the principles that employees are expected to follow when using social media.

2. Principles

2.1 For the purposes of this policy, the term social media includes, but is not limited to social networking sites, blogs, and content sharing sites.

2.2 Although the use of social media can provide much benefit, it could also pose risks to the Company's reputation and/or to colleagues and therefore guidelines need to be in place to determine acceptable usage.

2.3 Standards for the use of social media in relation to work will be made clear and transparent and will be managed fairly and in a consistent manner.

2.4 The Company does not want to inhibit employees from expressing their views and opinions, and is only concerned with content that references the Company, the University, colleagues, students or customers (including potential customers)

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all UECS Ltd members of staff, workers and contractors.

3.2 This policy specifically refers to personal use of social media.

3.3 As UECS Ltd uses equipment and services provided by the University of Essex, this procedure should also be read in conjunction with the University of Essex guidelines for use of IT facilities, which can be viewed at: http://www2.essex.ac.uk/cs/about/regulations/proper_use.html

4. Guidelines for the use of Social Media

4.1 Employees should consider the privacy of information they are sharing via social media. Careful thought should be given to privacy settings and to whom information is shared with, for example, work colleagues or customers. If this is the case, employees should be aware that they have a greater responsibility to ensure that content published on webpages does not breach any of the principles in this policy.

4.2 If it comes to the attention of the Company that an employee has made derogatory remarks, or comments on social media that could impact the reputation of the Company, disciplinary action may be taken. In these circumstances, consideration will be given to the audience that could have potentially viewed the remark, the nature of the remark and the possible impact to reputation or services.

4.3 When exercising personal views, these should always be represented as such and be made clear that these views are not necessarily the views of UECS Ltd or the University. You should not make comments, remarks or blogs on behalf of the Company.

4.4 Certain information that employees will come into contact with during the course of their employment will be protected by the Data Protection Act 1998. This includes (but is not limited to) personal data such as addresses, contact telephone numbers and dates of birth. Disclosure of this information by social media or any other channel is expressly prohibited. In addition, it will not be

acceptable to disclose general information or comments about students, customers or colleagues, for example names or complaints.

4.5 Employees should be aware that derogatory comments about colleagues posted on social media sites can be a form of bullying and harassment. Therefore caution should be exercised before making remarks that may be perceived in this way whether intentional or not.

4.6 All employees are encouraged to behave in a professional and respectful manner in line with the Company's Equality and Diversity Policy. These principles also apply to the use of social media.

4.7 If an employee is made aware of comments on social media that could be considered derogatory towards other work colleagues or towards UECS Ltd, the University of Essex or Wivenhoe House Hotel Ltd, they must report it immediately to their line manager.

5. Breaches of the policy

5.1 Any breach of this policy could lead to disciplinary action.