Social Media in Teaching and Learning Procedure

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) This procedure describes processes for implementing Social Media in Teaching and Learning at the University of Newcastle.

(2) This procedure supports the [University of Newcastle Social Media Communication Policy](#) and must be read in conjunction with that policy and the [University of Newcastle Social Media Communication Procedure](#) and [Social Media Communication Guideline](#).

Section 2 - Instructions

General Principles

(3) Where appropriate and possible, integrate content and activities conducted in social media channels and the online systems provided by the University of Newcastle. For example, there are tools for embedding YouTube videos available within the Learning Management System.

(4) When choosing social media channels, staff will as far as possible, use channels that meet the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0](#), to ensure that students with a disability are not precluded from being able to access social media content.

(5) Unless social media presence is an integral part of the learning outcomes of a course, creating an identity or a user within a social media channel must remain voluntary for both students and staff.

(6) Use of Social Media Platforms in Teaching and Learning must be in line with the requirements of the [Course Management and Assessment Manual](#).

(7) In addition to University of Newcastle policies, staff and students should note that social media channels will also have their own rules and policies regarding use of their services. These may be formally presented in an end-user license agreement that participants agree to when creating an account or adding content, and may also be described in more general terms in support resources.

(8) Staff should carefully consider whether their personal accounts on social media platforms should be private or open to students.

(9) Consideration must be given to ensuring continuity of Official University social media channels, such as access to passwords in the event of an emergency or staff changes.

Choosing Social Media Platforms for Teaching and Learning

(10) Staff and students participating in social media for teaching and learning purposes need to consider which platform might be most appropriate for the desired activities or outcomes. Such decisions should be reviewed

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regularly. Different social media platforms have different strengths in relation to their use in connecting with people for teaching and learning. The popularity of a particular social media tool among the target group of participants alone does not guarantee it will be a successful platform for teaching and learning. Various other factors should be considered when designing a social media initiative for teaching and learning. Some social media tools are good for disseminating information and engaging with people, while others are good tools for commentary.

(11) Social media tools and services are generally implemented around a model of constant technical updating and development. Users of social media should therefore expect change. Staff and students relying upon social media for teaching and learning need to consider alternative options in the event that a particular platform or service becomes unavailable or change in other ways, so that this can be managed and not impact negatively on teaching and learning experiences.

(12) Successful management of a social media presence for teaching and learning requires time and effort. While the benefits of social media to teaching and learning are acknowledged there are also serious potential personal and legal risks associated with the use of unmoderated or unsupervised social media channels for University matters.

(13) Social media platforms do not always operate with the usual support and governance mechanisms of the University of Newcastle. While staff and students are encouraged to explore innovative ways to utilise these tools for teaching and learning, they need to remember that the University has no control over the practices and policies of these third-party sites and services.

(14) Social media platforms may openly share content across sites and services in ways that participants do not anticipate when publishing content to a site or service. Search engines may index and link to content within these channels, exposing it to wider audiences. Content may be copied, shared or archived in ways not immediately obvious or anticipated. It should be assumed that anything published in a social media channel may become public at some time in the future on the same or a different platform.

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Lisa Wood Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Lisa.Wood@newcastle.edu.au
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Risk" - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

"Course" - When referring to a course offered by the University, a course is a set of learning activities or learning opportunities with defined, assessed and recorded learning outcomes. A course will be identified by an alphanumeric course code and course title. Course types include core courses, compulsory courses, directed courses, capstone courses and electives. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Disability" - As defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (as amended from time to time, or as per any replacing legislation).

"Social media channels" - The University of Newcastle operates a number of social media channels including blogs, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts and an official YouTube channel. The University's official social media channels refer to all channels established by a University staff member/business owner that supports University matters.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Term" - When referring to an academic period, term means a period of time aligned to an academic year for the delivery of a course in which students enrol and for which they are usually charged fees for example semesters, trimesters, summer, winter or full-year term. The academic year for a term is determined by the academic year in which the course commences, not concludes. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Learning Management System" - The web-based system used to help facilitate online interactions between staff and students in their learning and teaching activities.