

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Policy number	1	Approved by Senior Exec	23 March 2017
Version	3	Approved by Exec on	30 March 2017
Drafted by	Ellie Clay	Scheduled review date	30 March 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Social media provide opportunities to build communities and encourage dialogue. NUPSA embraces the use of social media by students, staff and Executive members to connect with each other and the wider university community. With the rapid growth and application of social media, NUPSA recognises the need to have a policy to encourage and support the responsible use and management of NUPSA's official social media channels.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 This policy is intended to provide clarity to users of NUPSA's social media channels on how to conduct themselves online. It also informs them of their responsibilities when using social media. It also, encourages social media users to adopt an authentic voice in the online environment, while also acting in the best the interests of NUPSA.

3. POLICY SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to all NUPSA employees, NUPSA Executive members, NUPSA volunteers, NUPSA members and other stakeholders representing or referencing NUPSA on any social media channels, official or otherwise.
- 3.2 This policy does not apply to personal use of social media channels where no reference is made to NUPSA matters.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Social media channels** refer to digital communications channels used to share opinions, insights, experiences, and perspectives via written comments, shared video or audio files. Social media channels include, but are not limited to: social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter); video and photo sharing sites (Instagram, YouTube); blogs (Tumblr, Yammer, NUPSA blog); forums and discussion boards.
- 4.2 **NUPSA** refers to the Newcastle University Postgraduate Students' Association.
- 4.3 **University** refers to the University of Newcastle.
- 4.4 **NUPSA Members** refers to members of NUPSA as outlined by the NUPSA Constitution i.e. currently enrolled postgraduate students at the University of Newcastle.
- 4.5 **Stakeholders** refers to any external or third party entities or persons invested in the activities of NUPSA including, but not limited to: consultants; contractors; university departments and their staff; NUPSA affiliated clubs and their members; ex-officio members of NUPSA.

5. POLICY DETAILS AND PROCEDURES

- 5.1 At all times, NUPSA employees, Executive members, volunteers or any other persons conducting official communications on NUPSA's social media channels must abide by NUPSA's regulations and the University Code of Conduct. NUPSA prohibits the use of social media being used to harass, vilify, bully or discriminate against another person.

NUPSA reserves the right to remove content on any of its social media channels that is obscene, inflammatory, threatening, insulting or in any other way inappropriate.

5.2 Negative comments that do not breach the provisions of this policy must be managed with care and tact. A nominated NUPSA employee or Executive member should respond to the comment as quickly as possible and consider the following actions:

- Acknowledge the error, if there was one.
- Apologise.
- Ask for more information, where required.
- Be transparent and honest.
- Give an explanation, where required.
- Reassure the user.
- Take the conversation offline, if/when appropriate.

5.3 Positive comments should also be responded to in a timely manner. Users should be personally thanked for their feedback, where appropriate.

5.4 NUPSA employees, Executive members, volunteers or any other person conducting official communication on NUPSA's social media channels:

- 5.4.1 Must avoid any statement that might bring NUPSA into disrepute.
- 5.4.2 Must not comment on or disclose any confidential information related to NUPSA or the University, or breach copyright and privacy laws.
- 5.4.3 Must comply with the terms and conditions of the social media channel in use.
- 5.4.4 Should undertake due diligence to ensure user posted content is accurate and compliant with this policy.
- 5.4.5 May adopt an authentic voice when posting content while being mindful of the audience and possible cultural sensitivities.

5.5 NUPSA employees, Executive members, volunteers or any other person participating on NUPSA's social media channels in a professional capacity:

- 5.5.1 Must disclose their relationship to NUPSA, where relevant.
- 5.5.2 Must not comment on or disclose any confidential information related to NUPSA or the University, or breach copyright and privacy laws.
- 5.5.3 Must comply with the terms and conditions of the social media channel in use.
- 5.5.4 Should only offer advice, support or comment on topics that fall within an individual's area of responsibility or expertise.

5.6 Non-compliance with the provisions of this policy is a serious matter. Depending on the severity and implications of the breach, sanctions may include a warning, counselling, or disciplinary action. Breaches may also result in action being taken by a statutory authority and/or agency.