



DUNMORE LANG COLLEGE

Social Media Policy

Policy Title:	Social Media Policy
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dunmore Lang College is committed to providing an environment free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment/bullying including such conduct effected by social media use. Members of the Dunmore Lang College community and all visitors are also bound by Macquarie University Policy Guidelines, State and Federal Laws.

2.0 PURPOSE

To provide information and explanation of the potential implications of social media use. It is primarily designed to ensure members of the Dunmore Lang College community are familiar with these implications and have a guide to appropriate and acceptable use of social media in the context of Dunmore Lang College.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Social media refers to websites, apps, and online communication tools that enable people to create, share, and interact with content and with each other. These platforms support activities such as posting text, images, and videos; commenting and reacting; participating in discussions; building online communities; and following public figures, brands, or trends.

Examples of social media platforms include:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- TikTok
- Snapchat
- X (formerly Twitter)
- LinkedIn
- YouTube
- Pinterest
- Reddit
- Tumblr
- Wikipedia (collaborative content platform)
- Blogs and microblogging sites
- Messaging-based social platforms like WhatsApp, Discord, and Telegram

4.0 SCOPE

Social media is an increasingly prevalent, effective, and influential form of communication, and it has become an integral part of modern life. Dunmore Lang College recognises that students, staff, conference guests, and contractors may use social media both personally and professionally while onsite or engaging with the College. The College also uses social media to connect with students, alumni, and the broader community.

Because social media can blur the boundaries between personal and professional expression, all members of the College community must carefully consider their online conduct to protect both their own reputation and that of the College.

Although social media introduces new communication tools, the same laws, policies, professional expectations, and behavioural standards apply online as they do offline. All members of the College community remain responsible for complying with relevant requirements, including the Dunmore Lang College Student Code of Conduct, the College Student Handbook, Macquarie University policies and regulations, other applicable College policies, and State and Federal legislation.

4.1 Guiding Principles for the use of social media

In addition to the College's behavioural expectations, common courtesy, and all legal requirements, the following principles provide further guidance that is relevant to the use of social media:

- a) **Be genuine, credible, and respectful.**
Communicate honestly and courteously in all online interactions.
- b) **Recognise that each social media platform is different.**
Before posting, make sure you understand the purpose, norms, and communication styles of the platform you are using.
- c) **Post appropriately and thoughtfully.**
Social media content spreads easily. If you would not feel comfortable saying something aloud to a room full of people, you should not post it online.
- d) **Maintain confidentiality.**
Do not share confidential, private, or sensitive information. Only disclose material that is already publicly available.
- e) **Do not engage in misconduct.**
Never use social media to harass, vilify, abuse, bully, or unlawfully discriminate against any individual or group.
- f) **Protect your own safety and privacy.**
Be cautious before sharing personal details, such as your location or activities. Review and adjust your privacy settings to safeguard your information.
- g) **Be aware of legal liability.**
You are responsible for what you post. Consider potential legal consequences, including breaches of confidentiality, copyright infringement, or defamation.
- h) **Consider the impact on others.**
Think about how your post may affect individuals or groups. If you would not say something to someone directly, you should not say it online.
- i) **Be clear about the capacity in which you are posting.**
If you hold multiple roles, ensure you distinguish between them. When posting in a

personal capacity, make that clear, and do not represent yourself as speaking on behalf of the College.

j) Uphold the reputation of the College.

Use social media responsibly and never post content that could bring the College into disrepute or cause harm to its reputation.

k) Remember that online posts are permanent written communications.

Social media posts can be stored, shared, and accessed indefinitely, and may carry the same legal and evidentiary weight as formal written documents, including breaches of privacy, confidentiality or defamation.

l) Do not use social media to express grievances.

Concerns about the College, staff, or residents should be addressed through the College's Grievance Procedure or discussed directly with the Principal, Dean of Students, or a Resident Adviser—not published online.

4.2 College Harassment Officers

Dr Alasdair Murrie-West - Principal
principal@dlc.nsw.edu.au

Emily Itto - Dean of Students
dean@dlc.nsw.edu.au

4.3 Breaches

Minor breaches

Minor breaches happen when students post or support content on social media that is immature or shows a lack of common sense or judgement.

This kind of content is unlikely to seriously harm, but it still goes against the College's values, including respect and tolerance.

Minor breaches include:

- posting jokes that a reasonable person would see as disrespectful or mildly offensive; and
- encouraging low-level breaches of the College Handbook or Code of Conduct on social media.

Serious breaches

Serious breaches occur when students post or support content on social media that a reasonable person would consider offensive or inappropriate.

Repeated minor breaches may be treated as a serious breach.

Just because students at College think something is acceptable does not mean it is reasonable. What is reasonable is judged objectively, based on current community standards.

Serious breaches include:

- posting content that a reasonable person would find offensive because it includes racist, sexist, xenophobic, homophobic, or other intolerant views; and
- posting content that includes someone who has not given permission for it to be shared, where the content could harm that person's reputation or wellbeing.

Severe breaches

Severe breaches happen when students post or support content that is very likely to cause serious harm or offence and shows a clear disregard for the rights of others.

Severe breaches include:

- posting content that is clearly meant to insult or humiliate another person; and
- posting sexually explicit content involving members of the College community.

4.4 Assessment of Breaches

How breaches are assessed

- Alleged minor breaches will be reviewed by the Dean of Students.
- Alleged serious breaches will be reviewed by the Dean of Students and the Principal.
- Alleged severe breaches will be reviewed by the Principal and may be referred to the College Board/ the police where appropriate.

When deciding whether a breach has occurred, and how serious it is, the following factors will be considered:

- whether a reasonable person would find the content offensive or otherwise problematic;
- the context in which the content was posted; and
- what the student appeared to intend or cause by posting it.

4.5 Consequences

Minor breaches

If a minor breach is confirmed, the Dean of Students will decide on an appropriate consequence.

For a first minor breach, the usual consequence is a warning.

Serious breaches

If a serious breach is confirmed, the Principal will decide on an appropriate consequence.

Possible consequences include:

- community service
- removed from social media groups; and/or;
- exclusion from the College for a period of time.

Severe breaches

If a severe breach is confirmed, the Principal will decide on an appropriate consequence and may take legal action to report criminal behaviour/report the breach under the Criminal Code Act 1995.

Possible consequences include:

- cessation of contract and removal from the College

4.6 Appeals

Students may appeal a consequence by writing to the Principal. Any consequences will stay in place unless and until the Principal decides to change or overturn them.

5.0 GUIDING DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THIS POLICY

- Social Media Policy Action Plan
- Student Grievance Procedure
- Discrimination and Harassment Policy & Action Chart
- Sexual Harm and Sexual Harassment Policy
- IT Acceptable Use Policy - Staff
- College Student Handbook
- Code of Conduct – Staff
- Code of Conduct – Students

6.0 REVIEWING AND UPDATING THE POLICY

This policy will be formally reviewed at least every three years and will require renewed endorsement by the Dunmore Lang College Board.

Each substantive review will be undertaken in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Interim updates may occur more frequently where required and will be communicated to student residents at the time of implementation.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Action Chart

Dunmore Lang College is committed to providing a respectful and inclusive community for all residents. Discrimination and Harassment will not be tolerated in our community.

All complaints are taken seriously and dealt with as confidentially as possible and with the aim of mediating a mutually respectful resolution. We will only act with your

permission and if appropriate, a complaint may be referred to an external mediator or agency for assistance and support.

If evidence of a breach has been established but no complaint is made, the College reserves the right to implement education and awareness programmes to address the issue at a whole of community level.

WHO CAN I TALK TO?



- A friend or family member
- Dunmore Lang College Residential Adviser (RA) or Harassment Officer
- Dunmore Lang College Principal or Dean of Students
- Macquarie University Campus Wellbeing
- Student Advocacy and Support Service via Campus Wellbeing
students.mq.edu.au/support/health_and_wellbeing/student_advocacy_and_support/

HOW CAN THEY HELP?



With your permission, the above people and services can support you with:

- ✓ Information about your options including making a formal complaint
- ✓ Support to access counselling services
- ✓ Information about your legal rights and where to obtain further information
- ✓ Advice about available mediation services including organising an external mediator if required
- ✓ Information about the Student Advocacy and Support Service available through Campus Wellbeing

The College respects the rights of individuals to make their own decisions and we will support you in whichever course of action you choose to take. This can include choosing not to take formal action however, we strongly recommend you seek advice about your options and the services available first. There is always an opportunity to come back to the issue at a later date.