

**Social Media
 Policy & Procedure**

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 CEO

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This policy pertains to **Northridge House Education and Research Centre at St Luke's Cork**, hereafter referred to as **the Centre**.

INTRODUCTION

Definition

Social media is the collective term referring to social and professional networking sites (for example Facebook, LinkedIn, Messaging Services such as WhatsApp, Vyber, Messenger etc.), microblogs (such as Twitter), blogs, wikis, boards and any other online fora and the policy extends to all such sites and incorporates any future developments of such media.

'Social media' is the social interaction among people in which they create, share or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

Breaches of this policy will be investigated, and the Centre retains the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Purpose

In line with GDPR Legislation this Social Media Policy provides guidance and direction to the staff of Northridge House when utilising all types of online social media sites and networks.

This policy applies to all employees of the Centre either participating personally, or communicating on behalf of the Centre, while online. It covers all forms of social media use whether accessed during employment, or during personal time, whether using the IT resources of the Centre, or any other resources, including but not limited to employee/learner personal computers, tablets, mobile phones or other devices or through publicly available internet access.

Misuse or abuse of social and digital media can cause significant injury to third parties and can also impact negatively on the credibility of Northridge House.

Consequently, the Centre takes any misuse or abuse of social and digital media by employees and learners very seriously and can lead to significant disciplinary and legal actions.

Information Security Policy

Each user is responsible for respecting and protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the information they process at all times.

THE CENTRE CODE OF STANDARDS AND BEHAVIOURS

There is an implied term of mutual trust and confidence between employer and employee in all employment contracts. A very negative, defamatory, or damaging posting or communication by an employee may entitle the employer to proceed with the Centre's Disciplinary Process, defamatory material is posted on a social networking site, defamation claims may also arise against the employee.

Where a member of the public takes legal recourse against a staff member for any item posted on social media, and where that action leads to a successful claim for damages and the Centre is implicated in such damages; the Centre will seek to recover the legal costs and

damages paid from the individual responsible for the posting. Additionally, where an employee posts comments or information regarding a colleague, resident or any other person and a claim is then made by that person, the Centre will seek to recover all and any costs that is incurred from the employee.

Employees must not improperly disclose (during or following termination of employment), information gained in the course of their work. Employees are expected to comply with the Code of Standards and Behavior at all times. Breaches of the code will constitute a breach of the terms of employment and may result in disciplinary action being pursued in accordance with agreed procedures.

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE EMPLOYEES

All IT resources are the Centre's property and are dedicated for business purposes only. Inappropriate use is not acceptable. Excessive activity is not permitted. Personal use must not interfere with your work commitments.

As appropriate:

A limited amount of personal use of the internet and social media is permitted on the organisation's equipment, provided the following rules are observed:

- Personal use must not occur during working time, but instead must occur during break time and outside of your normal working hours
- Personal use must comply with the requirements and general principles of this policy and all other internet, IT, security, and data protection policies.

Applies to all Employees at all Times.

The organisation recognises that employees use social media tools as part of their daily lives. Employees should always be mindful of what they are posting, who can see it, and how it can be linked back to the organisation and work colleagues. All employees should be aware that the organisation regularly monitors the internet and social media in reference to its work and to keep abreast of general internet commentary, brand presence and industry/customer perceptions.

The organisation does not specifically monitor social media sites for employee content on an on-going basis; however, employees should not expect privacy in this regard. The organisation reserves the right to utilise for disciplinary purposes any information that could have a negative effect on the organisation or its employees, which management or any person comes across in regular internet monitoring, or is brought to the organisation's attention by employees, customers, members of the public, etc.

All employees are prohibited from using or publishing information on any social media sites, where such use has the potential to negatively affect the organisation or its staff. Examples of such behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- publishing material that is defamatory, abusive, or offensive in relation to any employee, manager, office holder, shareholder, customer, or client of the organisation.

- publishing any material that potentially discloses sensitive or personal information about any person connected with the Home (including employees, residents, and their families) regardless of whether the individual is identifiable.
- publishing any confidential or business-sensitive information about the organisation.
- Publishing material that might reasonably be expected to have the effect of damaging the reputation or professional standing of the organisation.

Rules regarding Usage

All employees must adhere to the following when engaging in social media.

- Be aware of your association with the organisation when using online. Social networks. You must always identify yourself and your role if you mention or comment on the organisation. Where you identify yourself as an employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you would present yourself with colleagues and clients. You must write in the first person and state clearly that the views expressed are your own and not those of the organisation. Wherever practical, you must use a disclaimer saying that while you work for the organisation, anything you publish is your personal opinion, and not necessarily the opinions of the organisation.
- You are personally responsible for what you post or publish on social media sites. Where it is found that any information breaches any policy, such as breaching confidentiality or bringing the organisation into disrepute, you may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- Be aware of General data protection regulations – you must not post colleagues' details or pictures without their individual permission. Photographs of company events should not be posted online. Employees must not provide or use their company password in response to any internet request for a password.
- Material in which the organisation has a proprietary interest – such as software, products, documentation, or other internal information– must not be transmitted, sold, or otherwise divulged, unless the organisation has already released the information into the public domain. Any departure from this policy requires the prior written authorisation of the DOE.
- Be respectful at all times, in both the content and tone of what you say. Show respect to your audience, your colleagues and customers and suppliers. Do not post or publish any comments or content relating to the organisation or its employees, which would be seen as unacceptable in the workplace or in conflict with the organisation's Policies and procedures. Make sure it is clear that the views and opinions you express are your own.
- Recommendations, references, or comments relating to professional attributes, are not permitted to be made about employees, former employees, customers or suppliers on social media and networking sites. Such recommendations can give the

impression that the recommendation is a reference on behalf of the organisation, even when a disclaimer is placed on such a comment. Any request for such a recommendation should be dealt with by stating that this is not permitted in line with organisation policy and that a formal reference can be sought through HR, in line with the HR reference procedure.

- Once in the public domain, content cannot be retracted. Therefore, always take time to review your content in an objective manner before uploading. If in doubt, ask someone to review it for you. Think through the consequences of what you say and what could happen if one of your colleagues had to defend your comments to a customer.
- If you make a mistake, be the first to point it out and correct it quickly. You may factually point out misrepresentations, but do not create an argument.
- It is very important that employees immediately report any inappropriate activity or behaviour regarding the organisation, its employees or third parties. Inform DOE. All allegations made in good faith will be fully and confidentially investigated. You are required to cooperate with all investigations of alleged policy violations.
- This policy extends to future developments in internet capability and social media usage.

THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR MARKETING PURPOSES WITHIN THE CENTRE

The Centre uses social media to share information, gather feedback and create a dialogue with members of the public. The Centre also uses these platforms to promote the activities of the Centre and its community of Business Networks. The Centre welcomes feedback and ideas from all followers and will endeavour to join the conversation where possible. However, the Centre may not be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received. This social media policy may be revised at any time.

What to expect

If you follow us on social media, you can expect information covering some or all of the following:

- Press releases, statements, and news articles.
- The Centre brand campaign content. This includes case studies, videos, insights and may take a multimedia form.
- Business Network news and updates.
- Event information and occasional live coverage of events, conferences, and awards.
- Alerts about new content on our website and relevant newsletter content.

- Workforce insights, news, and expert thought leadership on the world of work.
- Communications about relevant government policy, evaluations, announcements, research, activities, Annual Reports and national reports or events that Northridge House Ireland are involved with, support in some capacity or deem to be of national importance.
- Sharing of relevant industry insights and collaborative workforce development initiatives with other agencies, international bodies.
- Other practical information on how to access the Centre programmes
- Other content that we deem to be relevant to our core business audience in Ireland.

Availability

We update and monitor our social media accounts during normal office hours 8.30am – 4.30pm Monday to Friday. We will also update and monitor the account outside of these hours at our own discretion.

The various social media platforms we operate from may occasionally be unavailable, and we accept no responsibility for lack of service due to downtime.

Who we are?

All of the official Northridge House business profile pages listed below are managed by the Communications team in Northridge House. The content of these pages will only be posted by staff of the Centre.

- Twitter <https://twitter.com/educationslh>
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Stlukeshomeeducationcentre/>

Centre Networks

There are numerous Centre Business Networks in operation that have a social media presence. The Centre takes no responsibility for individual Business Networks' social media conduct.

Following, Sharing and Retweets

If the Centre follows another Social Media account, it does not imply an endorsement of any kind. If you follow our account, we will not automatically follow you back. Content retweeted or shared by the Centre does not imply any endorsement of the message posted/tweeted or the individual or organisation it originated from.

Retweets (RTs) and post shares are not an endorsement.

@Replies/Comments and Direct Messages

The Centre welcome feedback from our followers and will try to join the conversation where possible.

However, the Centre may not be able to reply individually to all the messages it receives on social media. The best means of communicating a query to the Centre is by using the Contact Us link on our website or emailing us on info@northridgehouse.ie

Please do not include personal/private information in your tweets/messages to us.

Abusive/Spam Tweets/Messages

Abusive or spam tweets/messages will result in followers being blocked and reported directly to the social media platform provider. We reserve the right not to comment on any messages and to delete comments if they are deemed inappropriate.

Comments on all social media platforms and moderation policy

Comments are generally enabled on all of the Centre social media platforms. We reserve the right however to disable comments on occasion. Comments posted on videos are the views of individuals and do not represent the views of the Centre. The Centre does not accept responsibility for the content of any comment and reserve the right to remove comments that:

- contain abusive, obscene, hateful, indecent, or offensive language, or link to obscene or offensive material, illegal material.
- are not relevant to the video posted.
- constitute spam or promote or advertise products.
- are designed to cause nuisance to the page administrator or other users.

Specific Managerial Responsibilities

The Director of Education has overall responsibility for approving or declining information relayed on social media.

REFERENCES

IBEC - Social Media Policy (May 2011)

St. Luke's Home Social Media Policy

Social And Digital Media Policy and Guidelines for HSE Employees (April 2012)