

Social Media and Public Communication Guidance





Social media is brilliant for clubs and societies...

- Promotion
- Community building
- Identity and culture

...but it's also where groups can accidentally create problems



Social Media = Publishing & Public Communication

Social media may feel informal, but it functions as:

- Broadcasting
- Public communication
- Society representation

Audience is unpredictable

Control is limited once shared

Posts are permanent with potential global audience



Why Issues Escalate Quickly

- Screenshots travel instantly
- Context can disappear
- Posts are easily misinterpreted
- Audiences are unpredictable
- Algorithms amplify controversy



Important reality

When you post as a society, you are rarely seen as 'just a student'.

You may be seen as:

- A society
- An SU affiliated group
- The Student's Union
- The University



Structural Position

- Clubs and Societies are not generally considered separate legal entities
- They operate as part of the Students' Union
- SU is therefore both responsible and liable for club and society activity



Why This Matters

- Posts can create wider consequences beyond your society
- Including reputational and legal implications



Common Risk Areas

- Reputational risk
- Defamation / allegations
- Copyright and images
- Privacy / personal data
- Conduct and group chats

Clubs and Societies must avoid content that could risk charity compliance and content that brings the SU or the University into disrepute



Reputational Risk

Ask yourself:

How might this look outside our society?

SU requires content to always align with SU values and avoid anything discriminatory or offensive.



Defamation & Allegations

Avoid posts that:

- Accuse individuals or groups
- Imply wrongdoing
- Attack reputations



Debate versus defamation

- Debate about ideas is fine
- Criticising policies is fine
- Claiming or implying wrongdoing by a person/group is High risk

Focus must be on issues, not individuals

Avoid naming people, organisations or societies negatively

Defamatory statements and personal accusations create legal risk for student groups and the SU.



Copyright & Images

Biggest common mistake:
Google images **are not free** to use

We suggest using Canva - you can use
photos from there free of copyright



Privacy & Confidentiality

Never share

- Personal data without consent
- Screenshots of disputes
- Sensitive internal matters
- Images/photos without consent



Group Chats & Messaging Apps

- Just because they appear private doesn't mean content will remain so
- Although they may be closed, content may not remain contained



Inclusivity and respect

- All media content must promote inclusivity, respect, and diversity.
- Offensive, discriminatory, or harmful language is strictly prohibited.
- Avoid sharing content that could potentially offend or exclude any individuals or groups.
- Welsh language – try to post bilingually to support the SU bilingual policy.



Pause Before Posting

Before posting, ask:

- Could this harm someone/something?
- Could this be misunderstood?
- Do we have permission?
- Would we stand by this publicly?



If you're Unsure

Pause and contact the Students' Union

Seeking advice is good committee practice

This protects:

- You
- Your society
- The SU
- The University



Social Media Should be...

Fun

Creative

Positive

Inclusive

Low-stress

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