Social Media Procedures

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1. Purpose

The use of social networking sites has become an integral part of everyday life for many people. Warrington & Vale Royal College recognises that the growth in social media, particularly social networking sites, has created increased opportunity for networking, marketing and an exchange of ideas.

The term 'social media' is used here to describe social networking sites including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, Snapchat, blogging, vlogging sites, SMS text messaging and mass distribution of emails.

The purpose of these social media guidelines is as follows:

- Outline the responsibilities of members of staff who utilise social networking platforms.

- To encourage good practice

- To safeguard the college, its staff and students

- To promote effective and innovative use of social media as part of the college's activities.

2. Scope

The Social Media Procedure sets out the college's expectations and general principles of the usage of social networking platforms.

The procedure applies to all staff in any role on a permanent, temporary or casual basis and all students. The procedure also applies to any individuals who are linked with Warrington & Vale Royal College including volunteers and students carrying out work placements within college.

3. Responsibility

Staff and students should use social media responsibly. Any form of harassment or bullying via social media will not be tolerated.

- Staff and students should adhere to the procedures during college hours and outside of working/college hours. Failure to follow the procedures may result in disciplinary action.

- All college managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff or students for whom they are responsible are aware of the procedures.

- The Marketing Department is responsible for the maintenance and monitoring of official college social media sites.

- Staff should comply with the college's policy on General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Any personal information and photographs where

students can be clearly identified must not be disclosed on social media posts unless consent has been given (preferably written).

4. Procedures

- Staff and students should take effective precautions when utilising social media sites to ensure their own personal safety and to protect against identity theft.

- Staff should comply with the college's policy on General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) when posting photographs of students on social media platforms.

- Students should have opted in for their photographs to be used for marketing purposes when they enrolled. If a student did not consent at enrolment or at the time of their photograph being taken, their photograph must not be used on social media.

- Warrington & Vale Royal College allows staff and students to access social media sites using college computers. However, users must ensure that access adheres to this policy, and does not interfere with work or academic duties.

- The college has set up official pages on a number of social media sites and the Marketing Department has overall responsibility for the content on these pages. Any posts or articles added to these sites will be moderated by the Marketing Department.

- In relation to personal social media pages, staff should not accept offers from existing students to become a 'friend' or 'follower'. Staff and students should not publish personal identifiable information of college employees or students.

- When posting views or articles on social networks, staff and students should refrain from posting comments about the college that purports to represent the views of the college, unless they are approved by the Director Marketing, Admissions & Employer Engagement.

- When using social media, staff and students should never post or send abusive, defamatory messages or post articles, images or other media which could be deemed as detrimental to the college's image or reputation.

- Staff and students should not create corporate social media accounts under names that include Warrington & Vale Royal College, or that use the college branding, without consulting the Director Marketing, Admissions & Employer Engagement.

5. Monitoring

The Marketing Department will be responsible for monitoring the college's official social media platforms. This includes granting administration rights to college members of staff who require access to upload information.

- Curriculum Managers are required to monitor social media sites that have been set up by their department and they are required to inform the Marketing Department of the site, to enable the Marketing Department to monitor the page/site.

- The Marketing Department reserve the right to shut down or hide social media pages, sites and blogs that have been created by departments without authorisation by the Marketing Department or if the content is deemed unprofessional and not in line with college values and professional standards expected from the college.

6. **Corporate social media accounts**

A corporate social media account is one which identifies as being related to Warrington & Vale Royal College.

Those running such accounts should:

- Ensure that they get agreement from the Marketing department before creating an account. This is to ensure that marketing can keep track of accounts and as people change, the account can be kept up to date. It is also to check whether we already have an account which meets the needs of that audience.
- Agree the name of the account with the marketing team.
- Set the account up from your WVR email account, not from a personal account.
- Ensure that account profile information clearly states the purpose of the account and the hours during which it is monitored.
- Ensure that the social media account is kept up to date, posted from frequently and questions responded to promptly within operating hours.
- Ensure the name of the Account Manager (one central person) and any other administrators is sent to the marketing team. This is important so that training can be kept up to date with all those running accounts, and in case of emergency such as hacking.
- Ensure that passwords are kept with the marketing department, again in case of hacking or a post attracting significant negative comments.
- If someone posts a complaint or negative feedback about Warrington & Vale Royal College within a page you manage, then you should take the conversation offline as politely as possible. Do not let it escalate online.
- Never tag a student's social media account.