



Social Media Policy

Rationale

Mercedes College recognises the growth of social media within our society and the important role it plays in communication today. The College also recognises the availability and sharing of information on a global level poses a heightened risk of exposure to inappropriate and offensive material.

This policy and guidelines govern the publication of, and commentary on social media by of Mercedes College staff and its' community. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.

Before engaging in work related social media, employees must first obtain the permission of the Principal or delegated authority. Groups wishing to set up social networking pages need to be approved by the Principal before being created. Please see the Community Relations Office for more information.

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All users of social media must follow the same ethical standards that Mercedes College employees must otherwise follow.

Definitions

Social media tools are defined in this Policy as all online media which allow user participation and interaction. Some common examples are:

- Social networking sites eg. Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster
- Video and photo sharing websites eg. Flickr, YouTube, Blip.tv
- Micro-blogging and activity stream sites eg. Twitter, Jaiku, Yammer
- Blogs and Blogging platforms eg. WordPress, Blogger, Tumblr
- Forums and discussion boards eg. Yahoo! Groups, Google groups
- Online encyclopaedias eg. Wikipedia
- Other websites that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools eg. wikis

Staff

Social Media Guidelines apply to all staff, Advisory Council, student teachers and volunteers utilising the College's ICT network or engaging in activities that relate to the operations of the College. The staff of Mercedes College will at all times maintain a professional relationship with students based upon the students' best interests. Staff will be active role models for students in being good digital citizens. To avoid ethical and legal risks, all College staff must comply with the Mercedes College Guidelines for the Ethical Use of Social Media (Employees).

Students, Parents and Guardians

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Students, parents and guardians are required to follow the Mercedes College Facebook Guidelines, which form part of this Social Media Policy. These guidelines are also available on the College Facebook page for all users.

When engaging in social media as a representative of the College, you must:

- Be clear that you are representing the College (and have gained prior approval from the Principal or delegated authority to do so).
- Ensure that any references to Mercedes College are factually correct and accurate and do not breach confidentiality requirements.
- Be respectful towards the individuals and communities with which you interact.

Inappropriate use of Social Media:

Breach of the College's Mission and Values as outlined in the 2016-2019 Future Plan which can be found on the College website www.mercedes.wa.edu.au

- Plagiarism or breach of copyright when using or repurposing material.
- Excessive time used browsing social media applications leading to a significant decline in productivity.
- Inappropriate use of language or images that portray the College in a poor light.
- Actions that bring the brand and reputation of the College into disrepute.
- Representing themselves as someone else either within the College or outside of the College.
- Making promises or statements regarding the College's operations which are misleading, fraudulent or false.
- Disclosing personal information relating to students, staff or volunteers, or official information which is confidential or commercial-in-confidence.
- Use of social media to defame, bully or discredit another individual, group or organisation. The College's Behaviour Management Policy forms part of the College's Pastoral Care Policy which can be found on the College website.
- Conducting private business.
- Using discriminatory, defamatory, abusive or otherwise objectionable language in content.
- Accessing, downloading or transmitting any kind of sexually explicit material or violent images.
- Accessing, downloading or transmitting information on the use and construction of weapons, explosives and other tools of violence or terrorism.
- Accessing, downloading or transmitting any material deemed to be illegal under West Australian or Australian Commonwealth law.
- Accessing, downloading or transmitting hate speeches and overt racism; material extolling the inherent or moral superiority or inferiority of a particular race, ethnic group, or sexual orientation; racial epithets; or religious bigotry.
- Compromising the privacy of any person.
- Attempting to gain unauthorised access to the computing resources of other organisations.
- Disruption of the integrity of the College's data or information services.
- Not complying with laws covering libel, defamation, privacy and the protection of intellectual property.
- Statements that might be interpreted as being in contravention of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Staff, students and parent volunteers making official use of social media must:

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- Read, understand, and comply with this Social Media Policy and Facebook Guidelines.
- Avoid any statement and image that might bring the College into disrepute.
- Not commit the College to any action or initiative without appropriate authority.
- Not disclose official information unless authorised to do so or unless it is already in the public domain.
- Be aware of laws covering libel, defamation, privacy and the protection of intellectual property.
- Be apolitical, impartial and professional, and avoid any statements that might be interpreted as being in contravention of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

PRIVACY

a) *Privacy Policy*

The privacy of College students, families and staff is very important to us. The MEL Privacy Policy can be found on the website www.mercedes.wa.edu.au.

b) *Photographic Permission Form*

The College Enrolment Application, completed by the parent of all incoming students, includes the Photographic Permission Form for the use of images by the College and other governing bodies, in accordance with the new Australian Privacy Laws (2014).

NOTE: In the event that the College would wish to publish a student's name in recognition of an achievement, a separate permission form will be issued.

COMMUNITY FACEBOOK GUIDELINES

We encourage past, present and future families, friends and staff of the College to engage with the College through our online forum. We welcome your thoughts, news and experiences.

We kindly invite people to stay on topic, be courteous to other participants and avoid making offensive comments. Please understand that while we make reasonable efforts to monitor participation to ensure that all people behave in a respectful way, we do not moderate all comments and cannot always respond in a timely manner to online requests for information. Mercedes College has the right (but not the obligation) to review, edit and/or delete any comments it deems inappropriate.

By following the guidelines below all members of our online community will feel welcome and valued.

BE RESPECTFUL It is important that all members of the community are treated with dignity and respect. Please don't use hostile or obscene language, or make negative comments about students, families or staff at the College. This is a page for supportive conversations and is not a forum for debating controversial or personal issues.

COPYRIGHT please be aware of copyright laws, intellectual property rights and the Privacy Laws when posting, sharing and commenting. The College will delete posts that contain discriminatory or defamatory posts that relate to ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation or belief; or that encourage illegal activity.

FAMILY FRIENDLY our Facebook page has users that are under 18 years of age. Explicit language and images have no place here and will be removed.

MODERATION/DELETING POSTS please feel free to express yourself. However, any posts that violate these guidelines will be deleted by our moderators.

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NON-COMMERCIAL the College does not accept posts of a commercial nature on our Facebook page and will be deleted.

BLOCKING: Violation of these Community Guidelines will result in you being blocked from posting on the Mercedes College Facebook page.

Facebook Terms of Service: All actions on this page are subject to the Facebook Terms of Service <https://www.facebook.com/legal/terms>

For further information, please contact the Mercedes College Marketing & Community Relations Department marketing@mercedes.wa.edu.au

Thank you for being part of our online College community.

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