

## Union of Brunel Students Social Media Policy for Clubs and Societies

### Introduction

Social media is an important tool for communication, engagement, and promotion within student groups at Brunel. The Union of Brunel Students encourages clubs and societies to use social media effectively to connect with members, promote events, and enhance the student experience. However, it is important that all social media activity remains responsible, respectful, and aligned with Union values.

This policy is intended to support clubs and societies in making the best use of social media while also being aware of the potential risks and responsibilities that come with it. It is important to remember that content shared online can have lasting effects, and inappropriate or irresponsible use can result in disciplinary action.

### Scope

This policy applies to all clubs and societies affiliated with the Union of Brunel Students and their official social media channels. While this policy does not govern personal accounts, members should be mindful that their online activity can still impact their club, society, and the wider Union community.

### General Guidelines

1. **Stay Respectful** – Ensure that all content shared on social media platforms reflects the Union's commitment to inclusivity and respect for others.
2. **Think Before You Post** – Consider the impact of your posts before publishing. If you wouldn't be comfortable seeing it on a public forum, in a news article, or saying it face-to-face, don't post it.
3. **Protect Privacy** – Avoid sharing personal information about yourself or others without consent. This includes photographs, videos, and contact details.
4. **Comply with Union and University Policies** – Social media use must align with the Union's Code of Conduct and policies, as well as any relevant university guidelines.
5. **Avoid Defamation** – Do not make false or misleading statements that could damage the reputation of individuals, clubs, societies, the Union, or the University.
6. **No Discrimination or Harassment** – Social media should never be used to bully, intimidate, or discriminate against others. This includes content that is racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, or otherwise offensive.
7. **Follow Platform Rules** – Ensure that your club or society adheres to the terms and conditions of the platforms you use, such as Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), Whatsapp and Facebook.
8. **Do Not Endorse or Align with Organisations that Contradict Union Values** – Clubs and societies must not reshare, like, or form alliances with organisations, groups, or individuals that promote hate speech, discrimination, violence, or any views that contradict Union values. Engaging with such entities can result in disciplinary action.

### WhatsApp and Group Chat Protocol

Many clubs and societies use WhatsApp or similar messaging platforms to communicate with members. To ensure these remain safe and respectful spaces, the following guidelines apply:

1. **Keep Conversations Respectful** – All discussions must align with Union values. Any bullying, harassment, or discriminatory language will not be tolerated.
2. **Moderate the Group** – Committee members should monitor the group and address any inappropriate content or behaviour.
3. **No Sharing of Sensitive Information** – Avoid sharing personal or sensitive information without consent.
4. **No Endorsement of Unacceptable Groups or Views** – Group chats must not be used to promote or associate with organisations or individuals that contradict Union values.
5. **Report Issues** – If concerns arise within a group chat, report them to the Union for support and guidance.
6. **Official Communication Only** – WhatsApp and group chats should be used strictly for Official club and society information sharing. If members wish to have a social chat, they should create a separate group for that purpose and they should be clearly labelled as Unofficial.
7. **Respect Time Boundaries** – Members should avoid messaging late at night or very early in the morning. Keep communication within reasonable hours to ensure respect for everyone's time and wellbeing.
8. **Addressing Disruptive Behaviour** – If someone is being disruptive or inappropriate, as the committee you should contact them privately to explain why their behaviour is not acceptable. This can help them understand and correct their actions. If the behaviour continues, report the issue to the Union (Student Activities team).

### **Misuse of Social Media**

Any club or society found to be in breach of this policy may face disciplinary action from the Union. This may include:

- Removal of posts or content
- Temporary or permanent suspension of social media accounts
- Disciplinary action against individuals responsible
- In serious cases, de-ratification of a club or society

### **Best Practices for Clubs and Societies**

- **Engage Positively** – Use social media to promote your club or society in a way that fosters community spirit and inclusivity.
- **Moderate Content** – Regularly check posts, comments, and messages to ensure they align with this policy.

- **Delegate Responsibility** – Assign a responsible committee member to manage your social media accounts and ensure adherence to these guidelines.
- **Use Union Branding Appropriately** – Do not alter or misuse the Union or University logos. Contact the Union for branding support.

### **Support and Reporting**

If you experience or witness inappropriate behaviour on social media related to a Union-affiliated club or society, please report it to the Union. The Union is committed to fostering a safe and positive environment for all students, both online and offline.

For any questions or further guidance, contact the Student Activities Team.