



# THE BIRMINGHAM & MIDLAND INSTITUTE

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*Charity No. 522852*

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

### **1. Overview**

- 1.1 This policy explains your responsibilities when you use social media, both on Institute premises and in your own time.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all employees and anyone else working for the Institute.
- 1.3 If you are an employee, this policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend it at any time.
- 1.4 Your use of social media may, along with your wider use of Institute IT resources, be monitored to make sure you are complying with this policy. Whenever you use our IT resources and systems, you give us your consent to monitor your activities.
- 1.5 If you breach this policy you may face action under our Disciplinary Policy. We may require you to remove any social media content that in itself breaches this policy and may invoke the Disciplinary Policy if you fail to do so. In addition, you could face legal proceedings if comments you post about the Institute or named individuals are found to have harmed their reputation.

### **2. What is social media?**

- 2.1 We define social media as any websites and applications that allow users to create and share content and/or take part in online networking.
- 2.2 This policy also covers personal blogs, any posts you might make on other people's blogs, and to all online forums and noticeboards.

### **3. Using social media at work**

- 3.1 You must not use Institute IT resources to access social media unless you need to do so as part of your job. You also must not use your own IT equipment — your personal phone, for example — to access social media during working hours.
- 3.2 You must not post personal content on any Institute social media account you are authorised to use. These accounts belong to us, and your access will be stopped if you abuse this policy in any way. If you leave the Institute your access will also be stopped and we will ask for your user names and passwords. We may also ask for them at any other time and in either case you must supply them on request.

#### **4. Your responsibilities when using social media**

- 4.1 Always identify yourself and make it clear your opinions are your own and you are not speaking on the Institute's behalf. You might consider doing this in a disclaimer. Use a personal email address, not your Institute email address, and do not create a social media account that could be mistaken for a corporate account we have set up, or could set up.
- 4.2 It is your duty to protect the Institute's interests and you must not publish anything that could directly or indirectly damage these or compromise our reputation. You must never speak on the Institute's behalf on social media unless authorised to do so and you must always make sure anything you do post is accurate and lawful. Always get your colleagues' permission before posting images of them or any of their personal details.
- 4.3 You must take personal responsibility for your social media content. If you can be identified as working for the Institute, you must make sure your profiles, and anything you post, fit with how we expect you to present yourself to business associates and colleagues. Be mindful that even if you do not name us as your employer, people who know you and where you work may still make an unwelcome association with the Institute. If you are in any doubt about what is and is not acceptable, please talk to your manager.
- 4.4 You must always show respect to others when using social media. You must never criticise the Institute, our clients, suppliers, business associates, your colleagues or anybody else you come into contact with professionally. Our other Policies — in particular the Harassment and Bullying Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy — give guidance on the type of behaviour we consider unacceptable in the workplace, and we expect you to maintain the same high standards when using social media. Specifically, we will not tolerate any of the following:
- abusive or threatening language;
  - sexually explicit language or images;
  - unlawful or disrespectful comments;
  - trolling (starting or pursuing arguments in an online community with the intention of disrupting normal discussions within that community);
  - false or misleading statements;
  - impersonating your colleagues or third parties; or
  - inciting somebody to commit a crime.

If another Institute employee is bullying, harassing or victimising you using social media, you must follow the process laid out in our Harassment and Bullying Policy

- 4.5 You are obliged to respect Institute confidentiality at all times and not to use social media to comment on sensitive business matters, including — but not restricted to — the following:
- our intellectual property;
  - our trade secrets;
  - our current or future trading performance;
  - any information intended for internal use only; or
  - anything else that is not already in the public domain.

We also insist that you never use our logo, trademark, or other corporate artwork in anything you post or as part of any of your social media profiles.

- 4.6 You must remain aware at all times of the public nature of social media. Even content posted on a restricted forum can quickly be shared across other social media and you must assume that

anything you publish anywhere will sooner or later reach the public domain. When you share content posted by others, remember that you may be seen as giving tacit approval to opinions that could bring the Institute into disrepute.

4.7 You must never air grievances about the Institute or any of its activities on social media. You should use our internal process if you want to make a complaint, raising it first with your manager. If the issue remains unresolved, you must then follow our Grievance Policy.

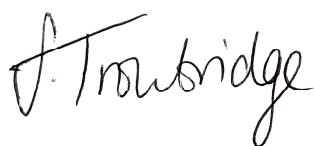
## 5. Other social media guidance

5.1 Always respect copyright and always check whether or not a third party's content is protected before you reuse or re-post it.

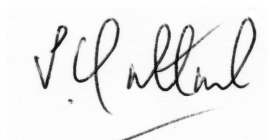
5.2 You are not allowed to add the details of business contacts you make while at work to any of your personal social media accounts.

5.3 The contact details of any business contacts you make while working for the Institute belong to us and must remain confidential. When you leave the Institute, you must give us this data and delete any copies you have, including any you have added to your social media accounts.

5.4 You should contact your manager if you find anything posted to a social media site that breaches this policy or otherwise brings the Institute into disrepute.



Dr Serena Trowbridge,  
Vice President



Stephen Hartland  
Honorary Secretary

Reviewed: September 2020

Next Review: September 2021