

Social Media for Teaching and Learning Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

Preamble

(1) Southern Cross University acknowledges the important role social media can play in the lives of our students and staff. Social media can be especially useful in teaching and learning to enable students and staff to communicate and collaborate in new ways and to create, share and use information to develop new understanding and knowledge. However, in supporting the use of social media for teaching and learning the University must fulfil its duty of care and legal obligations, along with its commitment to ensure that core learning experiences are equitably accessible to all students.

Purpose

(2) The purpose of this Policy is to establish principles and processes for the use of Social Media for teaching and learning purposes.

Scope

(3) This Policy applies to all University staff and students.

Section 2 - Definitions

(4) For the purposes of this policy:

a. Social Media

- i. means internet applications that enable public or semi-public collaborative, shared or distributed knowledge work (Allen 2011); and
- ii. includes all applications ranging from those which are:
 - centrally-managed and supported by SCU; and which may be either internally hosted on SCU servers or externally hosted;
 - not centrally-managed or supported by SCU but that SCU has some control over purpose and access and which may be either internally or externally hosted; or
 - external applications owned and hosted by a third party.

b. Teaching and Learning Activities include:

- i. all activities designed to allow or support students to achieve the unit learning outcomes; and
- ii. communication between staff and students, staff and staff, or students and students, for purposes related to clause (4) b.i.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(5) The University supports Staff and Students' use of Social Media to communicate, collaborate, share or otherwise distribute knowledge in teaching and learning situations, subject to strict adherence to the limitations specified in clauses (6) to (15).

(6) When using Social Media for Teaching and Learning Activities, Students and Staff must at all times:

- a. behave appropriately (see clause (10));
- b. respect the privacy of other individuals (see [Privacy Management Plan](#));
- c. familiarise themselves with and respect the Social Media provider's terms of service (see clause (14)); and
- d. respect the copyright and intellectual property of others (see [Copyright Policy](#)).

(7) The posting of information by Staff or Students to Social Media for Teaching and Learning Activities shall constitute representing Southern Cross University.

(8) Staff who are aware of student-created Social Media which is either implicitly or explicitly associated with the University or its activities should advise students of their responsibilities under this Policy.

(9) A user must not use Social Media Teaching and Learning Activities for or on behalf of any party for the purpose of profit-making or commercial activity, unless written permission has been obtained from the Executive Director Information and Physical Resources or an approved nominee.

Appropriate Standards of Behaviour

(10) Students and staff who use Social Media for Teaching and Learning Activities (including communicating with Staff or Students) must do so in accordance with Australian Law, and relevant Southern Cross University By-Laws, Rules and Policies, including, but not limited to this Policy and the:

- a. [Code of Conduct](#);
- b. [Computing Conditions of Use Policy](#);
- c. [Copyright Policy](#);
- d. [Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy](#);
- e. [Intellectual Property Rights Policy](#);
- f. [Privacy Management Plan](#);
- g. [Rules - Student Misconduct Rules](#); and
- h. [Student Rights and Responsibilities Charter](#).

Designing Social Media Teaching and Learning Activities

(11) Staff who design Social Media Teaching and Learning Activities must do so in accordance with this Policy and the:

- a. [Assessment Policy](#);
- b. [Flexible Learning Policy](#);
- c. [Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Policy](#); and
- d. [Unit Statements Policy](#).

(12) In particular, all teaching and learning information that is core to students achieving the unit learning outcomes (including learning resources, communications and assessment information) must be made available through unit learning sites on University supported learning platforms (e.g. Learning Management System) before and while that

information is made available through Social Media.

(13) Where staff and students choose to use external Social Media platforms for Teaching and Learning Activities, they must familiarise themselves and comply with the provider's terms of service.

(14) Subject to clause (14)a, Social Media must not be used in situations where the terms of service establish that the University does not retain ownership of the material(s) supplied to the Social Media

- a. Where the University has no reasonable interest in retaining ownership of the material(s) supplied to the Social Media for Teaching and Learning Activities, the relevant Course Coordinator, in consultation with his or her Head of School, may waive the requirements of clause (14).
- b. If a waiver of clause (14) is approved as per clause (14)a, the waiver and approval must be reported to the relevant School Board at its next meeting.

(15) Social Media must not be used in situations where the supply of teaching and learning materials to Social Media may constitute a breach of SCU copyright (see Copyright Policy).

Section 4 - Procedures

Designing for Social Media in Teaching and Learning

(16) Staff designing for social media in teaching and learning situations must, in the first instance, comply with clauses (11) to (15). In addition (where not already stipulated in the Policies listed at clause (11)), staff must ensure that:

- a. directions and links to the activity or assessment are based within the SCU online unit learning site;
- b. the Rules Relating to Awards, Rule 3 are adhered to when releasing students' specific grades and feedback;
- c. prospective students are aware, through the unit outline, that participation and possibly the creation of a Social Media account with an external provider will be required to complete the unit;
- d. the necessary control of work is provided for ensuring, for example, that assessment submissions cannot be changed after the submission deadline, and missing assessments can be tracked;
- e. assessment material posted to the Social Media can be adequately retained for record keeping purposes in accordance with the requirements of the Assessment Policy;
- f. copying or retaining information posted by staff or students from the Social Media to University owned systems for record keeping or assessment purposes does not represent a breach of the Social Media owner's Terms of Service; and
- g. before Social Media is chosen as a tool, especially externally-owned Social Media, the Course Coordinator is consulted to confirm it is fit for purpose and accessible to students.

Section 5 - Guidelines

Designing for Social Media in Teaching and Learning

(17) Staff should:

- a. when designing for Social Media in teaching and learning situations:
 - i. consider the desired learning outcomes and the activities students would undertake to achieve these outcomes before choosing the tool;
 - ii. ensure first that SCU supported teaching and learning environments will not support the activities appropriately;

- iii. consider a trial of the proposed Social Media based activity with a small group of students prior to full implementation;
- b. when using Social Media for teaching and learning:
 - i. ensure that core learning activities and communications within a unit are undertaken within the SCU supported learning environment;
 - ii. make clear that the purpose and location of the Social Media activity are clearly indicated within the SCU unit learning site;
 - iii. provide clear explanations of students' required participation;
- c. when undertaking roles in Social Media activities:
 - i. keep personal and University sanctioned or required Social Media sites separate;
 - ii. consider carefully who is allowed to 'follow' or 'friend' relevant Social Media sites;
- d. when considering ongoing use of Social Media:
 - i. be explicit about the intention to maintain or update the Social Media site;
 - ii. develop a plan to deactivate the Social Media site when it is no longer in use, usually at the end of a teaching session; and
 - iii. develop a strategy for archiving the Social Media site, depending on its use and purpose.

(18) References

- a. Allen, M. (2011) Learning in networks of knowledge: improving student outcomes using Web 2.0 concepts and knowledge- networking approach, <http://altc-link.wikidot.com/>
- b. Herriot-Watt University (2008): Guidelines for Using External Web 2.0 Services, <http://www.hw.ac.uk/reference/external-web-2-point-0-services.pdf>
- c. QUT (2012) Social media guidelines for learning and teaching, <http://www.els.qut.edu.au/docs/SocialMediaGuidelines.pdf>
- d. University of Melbourne. (2009). University of Melbourne Social Media, guidelines. <http://socialmedia.unimelb.edu.au/> and <http://socialmedia.unimelb.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/UoM-Social-Media-Guidelines.pdf>
- e. University of Tasmania. (2010). Social media guidelines, http://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/82843/Social-Media-Guidelines.pdf

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Head of Work Unit	Thomas Roche Dean, SCU College +61 2 66269148
Enquiries Contact	Centre for Teaching and Learning