
Social Media Policy



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Privacy, Dignity & Respect Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. Definition of social media

1.1.1. For the purposes of this policy, social media is a term commonly used for websites and mobile based channels which allow people to interact with each other by sharing data, information, opinions, knowledge and interests. As the name implies, social networking involves the building of online communities and networks, encouraging participation and engagement.

1.1.2. This includes online social forums such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Social media also covers blogs and videos and image-sharing websites such as YouTube and Flickr. You should be aware that there are many more examples of social media than can be listed here and this is a constantly changing area. You should follow these guidelines in relation to any social media that you use.

1.2. Scope

1.2.1. This policy applies to all employees who are directly employed by B3. This policy also applies to any agency workers, students and volunteers whilst on placement within B3.

1.3. Purpose

1.3.1. The purpose of this Policy is to set out clear expectations. You must ensure that you are complying with the policy and make sure you conduct yourself online in the same manner that would be expected of you in any other situation and to uphold the reputation of B3 and the reputation of your profession.

1.4. In order to ensure that this policy is relevant and up to date, comments and suggestions for additions or amendments to this policy are sought from users of this document. Areas of practicality, user-friendliness, points of technicality, etc., will all be considered. If however, points of technicality are made, these must be backed up with written evidence and source of information.

2. Responsibilities

2.1. Managers

2.1.1. It is every Managers responsibility to ensure that their teams are aware of this policy and the parameters that are outlined and to react in an appropriate manner when informed of instances where behaviour is not in accordance with this policy.

2.2. Employees/Volunteers/Agency Workers

2.2.1. You must ensure that you are complying with the expectations of this policy to support the reputation of B3 and where relevant, your

professional standards. You must ensure you conduct yourself in an appropriate manner whilst communicating on line at all times.

3. Expectations

- 3.1. When you use a social media site it is expected that you behave in a manner which would be expected of you in any other situation and to uphold the reputation of B3 and that of your colleagues.
- 3.2. When you make any personal comments in relation to B3, your profiles must contain a disclaimer that the “views expressed are personal and are in no way a reflection of the organisation”. Please be aware that this disclaimer does not free you from your obligations under the code of conduct or B3 confidentiality guidelines.
- 3.3. You must obtain permission if using B3 trademarks, logos or brand and the same applies for service users. Unless given permission by management, you are not authorised to speak on behalf of B3.
- 3.4. Whilst using social networking sites in a personal capacity and not acting on behalf of B3 it should be recognised that your actions can still damage B3’s reputation. This list is not intended to be exhaustive. All communications that are made, even in a personal capacity you must not:
 - 3.4.1. Behave in a manner that would not be acceptable in any other situation
 - 3.4.2. Bring B3 into disrepute
 - 3.4.3. Breach of confidentiality
 - 3.4.4. Make comments that could be considered to be bullying, harassment or discriminatory against any individual
 - 3.4.5. Use offensive or intimidating language
 - 3.4.6. Pursue personal relationships with service users
 - 3.4.7. Comment on work related issues
 - 3.4.8. Post remarks which may unwittingly cause offence and constitute unlawful discrimination in the form of harassment
 - 3.4.9. Distribute sexually explicit material
- 3.5. It is recommended that you:
 - 3.5.1. Keep your personal and professional life separate as far as possible. For example, you could keep Facebook just for close friends and family, use Twitter for sharing information with people you may not know, and use LinkedIn for building and maintaining professional relationships.
 - 3.5.2. Where you identify yourself as working for B3 or a member of a professional body, you should act responsibly at all times and uphold

the reputation of your profession. Even if you do not identify yourself as working for B3, be aware that your conduct online could still jeopardise your professional registration if it calls your fitness to practise into question.

- 3.5.3. Recognise that you as an employee you are liable for anything you present or write online.
- 3.5.4. Don't put yourself at risk of unnecessary allegations — so think about B3's values, behaviours, policies and procedures and look to replicate this online.
- 3.5.5. Think about your boundaries and whether this is an appropriate thing to share. Ask yourself "is this confidential?" and whether you would share this information in a face to face conversation with all those you are connected to. If you would not share, then you should not post.
- 3.5.6. Protect your own privacy. Think through what kinds of information you want to share and with whom, and adjust your privacy settings. On Facebook, you can adjust your privacy settings at group level to share different levels of information with different kinds of friends. Remember that the more your personal life is exposed through social networking sites, the more likely it is that this could have a negative impact.
- 3.5.7. Do not use social networks to build or pursue relationships with service users, even if they are no longer engaged in the service. If you receive a friendship request from a current or ex-service user, Facebook allows you to ignore this request without the person being informed, avoiding the need to give unnecessary offence.
- 3.5.8. Never post pictures of service users, even if they ask you to do this. If your mobile phone has a camera, you should not use it in the workplace. Remember the learning you took from the safeguarding and working with vulnerable adults/children training.
- 3.5.9. Social networking sites should not be used for raising and escalating concerns (commonly referred to as Whistle-blowing).
- 3.5.10. Remember that everything you post online is public, even with the strictest privacy settings. Once something is online, it can be copied and redistributed, and it is easy to lose control of it. Presume that everything you post online will be permanent and will be shared.
- 3.5.11. You can take action if you find yourself the target of complaints or abuse on social networking sites. You can remove someone from your friends list and block them from interacting with you, and most sites will include mechanisms to report abusive activity and provide support for users who are subject to abuse by others. If you are very concerned about someone else's behaviour online, you should take steps to raise your concern, including if necessary with your academic institution or with us. In the most serious circumstances, for example

if someone's use of a social networking site is unlawful, you should also report the incident to the police.

4. Use Of Social Media At Work

- 4.1. B3 encourages you to make reasonable and appropriate use of social media websites as part of your work. It is an important part of how B3 communicates with its service users and promotes its services, communicates with its audience and allows communication between staff.
- 4.2. You should use the same safeguards as you would with any other form of communication about the organisation in the public sphere. These safeguards include:
 - 4.2.1. Making sure that the communication has a purpose and a benefit for B3;
 - 4.2.2. Obtaining permission from the Service Manager before embarking on a public campaign using social media; and
 - 4.2.3. Getting a colleague to check the content before it is published.
- 4.3. Any communication that you make in a professional capacity through social media must not:
 - 4.3.1. Bring B3 into disrepute, for example by:
 - Criticising or arguing with service users, colleagues or rivals;
 - Making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups; or
 - Posting images that are inappropriate or has links to inappropriate content;
 - 4.3.2. Breach of confidentiality, for example by:
 - Revealing trade secrets or information owned by B3;
 - Giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague or service user) or organisation (such as a rival business); or
 - Discussing the organisation's internal workings, or
 - Its future business plans that have not been communicated to the public;
 - 4.3.3. Breach of copyright, for example by:
 - Using someone else's images or written content without permission; or
 - Failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something;

4.3.4. Do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:

- Making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
- Using social media to bully another individual (such as an employee of the organisation); or
- Posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or posting links to such content.

5. Excessive Use Of Social Media At Work

5.1. You should not spend an excessive amount of time while at work using social media websites, even if you claim to be doing so as part of your work. This is likely to have a detrimental effect on your productivity. You should ensure that use of social media does not interfere with your other duties.

6. Monitoring Use Of Social Media During Work Time

6.1. B3 reserves the right to monitor your internet usage, but will endeavour to inform you when this is to happen and the reasons for it. B3 considers that valid reasons for checking your internet usage include suspicions that you have:

6.1.1. Been spending an excessive amount of time using social media websites for non-work-related activity; or

6.1.2. Acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this policy.

6.2. B3 reserves the right to retain information that it has gathered on employees' use of the internet for a period of one year.

6.3. B3 reserves the right to withdraw or block your access to particular social media websites from work computers.

7. Social Media In Your Personal Life

7.1. B3 recognises that you may use social media in a personal capacity. Whilst communication through social media networks is primarily a personal matter, this is not the same as it being private. In a lot of cases, written conversations inside these networks can be found through search engines. As a result, personal conversations within social media networks should be considered public rather than private.

7.2. You are allowed to say that you work for B3, and we recognise that it is natural for our staff sometimes to want to discuss their work on social media. However, your online profile (for example, the name of a blog or a Twitter name) must not contain the organisation's name.

7.3. If you do discuss your work on social media (for example, giving opinions on your specialism or the sector in which the organisation operates), you must

include on your profile a statement along the following lines: "The views I express here are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer."

7.4. Any communications that you make in a personal capacity through social media must not:

7.4.1. Bring B3 into disrepute, for example by:

- Criticising or arguing with service users, colleagues or rivals;
- Making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups; or
- Posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;

7.4.2. Breach of confidentiality, for example by:

- Revealing trade secrets or information owned by B3;
- Giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague or customer contact) or organisation (such as a rival business); or
- Discussing B3's internal workings
- Or its future business plans that have not been communicated to the public);
- Taking client information and discussing with client or anyone not permitted access to such information

7.4.3. Breach of copyright, for example by:

- Using someone else's images or written content without permission; or
- Failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something; or

7.4.4. Do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:

- Making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
- Using social media to bully another individual (such as an employee of the organisation); or
- Posting images that are discriminatory or offensive (or links to such content).

8. Use of Social Media In The Recruitment Process

- 8.1. Unless it is in relation to finding candidates (for example, if an individual has put his/her details on social media websites for the purpose of attracting prospective employers), the Service Manager should conduct searches, either themselves or through a third party, on social media only when these are directly relevant to the applicant's skills or claims that he/she has made in the recruitment process. For instance:
- 8.1.1. A prospective employee might claim that he/she has used social media in his/her previous job (for example, as a publicity tool); or
 - 8.1.2. A prospective employee's social media use may be directly relevant to a claim made in his/her application (for example, if he/she runs a blog based around a hobby mentioned in his/her CV or a skill in which he/she claims to be proficient).
- 8.2. There should be no systematic or routine checking of prospective employees' online social media activities, as conducting these searches during the selection process might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics (for example, sexual orientation or religious beliefs) played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with B3's diversity and equality policy.

9. Disciplinary Action Over Social Media Use

- 9.1. All employees are required to adhere to this policy. You should note that any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action. Serious breaches of this policy, for example incidents of bullying of colleagues or social media activity causing serious damage to the organisation, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal. Where this breaches the professional code of conduct of the organisation that you are registered with then your conduct will be referred to them once internal procedures have been completed.
- 9.2. If you find a negative, disparaging, or otherwise concerning posts about B3, its services, or clients, let us know! Please contact the Service Manager. Please do not respond to it without first receiving instruction unless you have specific permission to do so.

10. Electronic Media Consent Form (Appendix A)

B3 produces a range of materials to tell people about our service. From time to time we take photographic images (moving and still) of people and events to illustrate our work.

By completing this form, you give us full permission to use these images in our media applications, which reasonably promotes or advertises B3's aims. (This may include our printed publications; adverts; audiovisual and electronic materials; media work; and any other media we may use in the future.) The images will not be used for any other purpose.

The copyright of any material we generate is the property of B3 Brent Service User Council.

First Name	Last Name
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone	Email
Can we reference your full name?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Please state here if there are any ways in which you do not want us to use photo(s) of you:	
Signed	Date

Thank you