

HCC Social Media Policy



Introduction

Overview and Scope

1. Social media can be a very useful tool in the promotion of a charity and can be extremely effective in building relationships with its supporters and other organisations.
2. The purpose of this policy is to help staff members or volunteers develop an online presence that is ethical and legal, while maximising the benefits of utilising emerging social media technologies when communicating with the public. It sets out how employees and volunteers should behave when posting from HCC's social media accounts and guidance for using personal social media accounts.
3. The scope of this policy extends to all trustees, staff members, volunteers and church members who engage in online conversations or share content using social media sites. It is the responsibility of each user to adhere to this policy. Where inappropriate use of social media may constitute an offence under criminal law, referral will be made to the appropriate authorities. In addition, users in breach of the policy will be liable to disciplinary action under relevant HCC procedures.
4. There are two sections to this policy:
 - a. Section A extends to members' use of social media including personal use, where this use impacts on the HCC, other employees/volunteers and the wider community.
 - b. Section B outlines the additional responsibilities of Staff/volunteers who use HCC social media sites, or who are asked by their line manager to use or participate in social media sites, as part of their job responsibilities.

Section A: General Social Media Use

Acceptable Use

5. Staff/volunteers may use their personal accounts for work related purposes during regular hours but should ensure that it does not interfere with their regular duties.
6. Use of social media accounts for purposes outside of their work should be contained to break times.
7. Staff/volunteers are personally accountable for any breach of HCC's Social Media Policy, whether posting as a private individual or in the performance of their duties as an employee or volunteer of HCC.

Posting Content to Social Media Sites

8. Staff/volunteers should presume that everything they post online will be public and permanent, regardless of the privacy settings they assume are applied.

9. Staff/volunteers should be aware that social media content may easily become available to the public, colleagues and the media, and that inappropriate use could damage their reputation. HCC reserves the right to act on any information obtained from online sources if it indicates that a member of staff/a volunteer is in breach of this Social Media Policy or other HCC policies.

10. Staff/volunteers should familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions of any social media site that they use and note that many companies that operate social media platforms specify that, by posting on their sites, the company is granted irrevocable, perpetual, non-exclusive license to use and distribute content for any purpose, commercial, advertising, or otherwise.

11. When using a personal social media account, employees should consider including, where appropriate, a disclaimer stating that the views expressed are not necessarily those of HCC.

Posting Guidelines

12. The following guidelines must be considered when posting content to any social media account for any purpose, whether the content be text, images, video, audio or links to other sources.

- a. Staff/volunteers should respect the dignity and privacy of others and should always consider how their online behaviour may affect other users and reflect on themselves and HCC.
- b. Special care must always be taken when dealing with any content related to children and vulnerable adults. No content relating to children or vulnerable adults should be posted online without the express approval of the Safeguarding Lead Trustee.
- c. Staff/volunteers should adhere to copyright law and secure permission prior to posting, sharing or distributing copyrighted materials.
- d. Staff/volunteers must not use social media for any of the following under any circumstances:
 - to post inappropriate, discriminatory or defamatory comments, including comments about colleagues, or members of HCC.
 - to bully, harass or intimidate colleagues or members of HCC.
 - to post threatening, obscene or profane comments.
 - to express or support sexist, racist, sectarian or homophobic views.
 - to express support for illegal activities or organisations.
 - to disseminate misleading information.
 - to share confidential or sensitive information.
 - to view or distribute sexually explicit or offensive content.
 - to infringe or violate someone else's rights.
 - to post personally identifiable information that could be used to locate any individual without that person's written permission.
 - to post content that could create a security risk for HCC, HCC's staff or volunteers, in any way which may be unlawful.

Section B: Use of HCC-Affiliated Social Media Sites

Social Media Site Creation

13. An HCC affiliated social media site is defined as any site that could reasonably be perceived to be associated with or representative of HCC.

14. Anyone wishing to create an HCC affiliated social media site must obtain approval from the Senior Leader.

15. HCC reserves the right to monitor any social media sites that affiliate themselves with HCC and, where necessary, to request the removal of sites that reflect negatively on HCC or the removal of content that infringes on HCC's copyright or implies any unauthorised association with another company, charity, church or association.

Responsibilities of Affiliate Site Administrators

16. If you set up an HCC affiliated social media site, you effectively become the administrator for that site on behalf of HCC and are responsible for maintaining the site and moderating content. It is important that at least one other member of staff/volunteer shares administrator responsibilities for the site and has access to the login details in order to ensure continuity and to assist with moderation.

17. Social media accounts must be protected by a strong password and shared only with authorised users. The site administrators must maintain the security of account passwords and are fully responsible for any actions that take place using the account. If a site is no longer required, administrators should deactivate or permanently delete the account as appropriate.

18. Care should be taken when naming accounts to maintain consistency and to ensure accounts can be easily identified as HCC affiliated accounts. Site administrators must have an understanding of the basic principles and etiquette associated with the management of an effective social media site.

Content Guidelines

19. Employees are encouraged to use the following guidelines in social networking practices:

- Be relevant to your area of expertise.
- Do not be anonymous.
- Maintain professionalism, honesty, and respect.
- Apply a "good judgment" test for every activity related to HCC. This could include (but is not limited to):
 - leaking information
 - trade secrets
 - customer data
 - upcoming announcements
 - negative commentary regarding HCC

20. Activity showing good judgement would include statements of fact about HCC and its activities, facts about already public information, or information on HCC's website.

21. In addition to the general policy statements relating to the use of social media outlined in Section A, administrators of HCC social media sites must adhere to the following:

- Ensure that the site complies with the terms and conditions of the social media platform used.
- Ensure that the site does not compromise HCC branding guidelines.
- Secure permission prior to posting, sharing or distributing copyrighted materials.
- Only link to legal content and view any content before linking to it.
- Ensure that content and commentary do not damage HCC's reputation.
- Ensure that content does not include confidential or proprietary information about HCC, its employees or members.

- Manage the site in an effective manner to ensure timely feedback and support, where required.
- Comments made by users are their property and should not be reused without their permission
- Social media platforms should not be used to collect personal information about users.

Moderating Content

22. HCC social media sites should encourage users to share their views by commenting on content within the following guidelines:

- Comments must be relevant to the topic being discussed.
- Comments should be constructive and absent of expletives, obscenity and vulgarity.
- Posts that are off-topic, abusive, contain profanity, are threatening in tone or devolve into personal attacks should be deleted immediately and reported, if necessary.
- Posts with links that are determined to be spam or sales and advertising, or infringe copyright, should be removed immediately.

23. Where possible, guidelines for posting content should be prominently displayed on the social media site, along with a statement that site administrators reserve the right to review all comments and posted materials and remove such materials for any reason.

24. Where possible, complaints should be dealt with via direct message or email, not on a public forum.

25. HCC affiliated social media sites should be monitored and updated on a regular basis.

Beware of Scams

26. Staff/volunteers should be alert to 'phishing'. This is a type of online scam where criminals send out fraudulent messages by email, text or on social media platforms that appear to come from a legitimate source, in order to steal user data. Phishing can involve sending malicious attachments or website links in an effort to infect computers or mobile devices. It is therefore important that the identities of individuals enquiring through HCC's social media should be verified first before any information is shared or discussed.

Financial Information

27. Any online communication regarding the church's financial data is strictly forbidden except through mechanisms managed internally by the HCC Finance Manager.

Matters Potentially Sensitive to HCC

28. Any online communication regarding proprietary information such as strategic decisions, or other announcements deemed inappropriate for uncoordinated public exchange is forbidden.

29. If any employee becomes aware of any other social networking activity that would be deemed distasteful or fail the good judgement test, they should convey this to their line manager.

Agreement

30. All trustees, volunteers, employees, contractors or temporary staff who have been granted the right to use the organisation's internet access are required to follow this policy.