SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Process Area	Business Systems
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Directorate	Finance & Planning

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001	Nov 2012	First Issue	KK	BD
002	Aug 2015	Reviewed by KK/ST/RS-no changes recommended.	KK	Governing Body
003	Feb 2019	Third Issue – update to include required GDPR updates	ST, TMG	Governing Body

If requested, the College will make the policy available by means of alternative formats including large print, Braille, audio cassette and computer disc. The policy can also be downloaded from the College intranet and made available in alternative languages as required.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Southern Regional College (SRC) recognises that social media sites have become important and influential communication channels for our staff and students. The overall goal of this Policy is to help clarify how best to enhance and protect the personal and professional reputations of our students and staff when participating in social media.

SRC welcomes the responsible use of social media technologies to support, engaged and transformative learning and to reach out effectively to our broader community. Our rich and diverse use of social media also allows us to share, in a public way, the many qualities and strengths of our further education and training institution.

2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to multi-media, social networking websites, blogs and wikis for both professional and personal use.

3. DEFINITIONS

Staff:	Everyone employed directly and indirectly by SRC including non-paid volunteer workers both in work and outside working hours.
Student:	A student is defined as a person who is registered with the College for a programme of learning.
Social Media:	The use of and participation in social media and includes but is not limited to: e-mail, blogs, forums, micro-blogging, social networking, social network aggregation, wikis, social bookmarking social curation sites and tagging, photo sharing, video sharing and virtual worlds. It is acknowledged that the scope of this Policy will continue to evolve as new technologies and tools become available.
College Community	Staff, students, designated partners and governing body.

4. PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

4.1   General (Concerns staff and students)

SRC recognises the open nature of social media which is often used for both personal and professional purposes. Social media can also create a sense of role ambiguity. It may not always be clear when one is speaking on behalf of the College, sharing facts, or sharing personal/professional opinions. This Policy is designed to help our employees and students navigate through this ambiguity and clarify certain responsibilities when posting material online.

It is important to keep in mind the privacy concerns inherent in using social media websites. Any information posted on them can be made public, even when information has been deleted by the

user in some cases. Information can be shared with many people with just a click of the mouse. Therefore, the College expects and encourages all those participating on the sites associated with the College to exercise caution and responsibility when using social media sites.
The social media applicable under this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

Facebook.com, Twitter.com, YouTube.com, MySpace.com, Blogger.com, Typepad.com, WordPress.org, Wordpress.com, LinkedIn.com, imodules.com, Flikr.com, Foursquare.com, Gowalla.com, Scvngr.com, Tumblr.com, Instagram.com, snapchat.com, reddit.com, pinterest.co.uk, plus.google.com, meetup.com, Ask.fm, vk.com.

SRC is open to others voicing their opinions and contributing to relevant discussion through social media platforms. Users may complain or disagree with other posts. However, the nature of such content should at all times remain respectful. Any inappropriate, obscene, or defamatory posts will not be tolerated. Users who abuse this Policy will be subject to College disciplinary procedures.

Social media websites that SRC utilises to establish its own pages or blog sites also have their own terms and conditions and Policies. All employees and students of the College who utilise such sites must adhere to these Policies if they choose to use social media. Neglecting to follow the Policies may lead to removal of these accounts by the site host.

Posts from any users, including students and employees, are not to be considered an endorsement and do not necessarily reflect the mission, values and policies of SRC. Posts and/or comments must come from real user accounts and when needed, provide a valid e-mail address at which the user can be contacted.

Users who choose to post, comment, or link text and/or multimedia on SRC websites or social media sites agree that such material may be reproduced, distributed, edited, and published in any form and on any media. Users agree not to violate copyright laws, post spam or advertisements, impersonate others, or partake in any type of hostile behaviour, in any media.

All content generated on SRC or any other social media sites is public; therefore, we ask that you consider your own privacy at all times before posting and/or commenting.

4.2   GDPR
Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, Data Protection Act 2018 and Data Protection Regulations you must not extract personal data from any social media platform and store it elsewhere. You must at all times adhere to the College's Privacy Notice and Data Protection policy regarding the collection and processing of personal data. This notice is available on the College website.

4.3   Be aware of liability
Individuals are legally liable for their posts on their own sites and the sites of others. Bloggers have been held liable for their comments deemed to be proprietary, copyrighted, defamatory, libellous or obscene.

Obviously, using SRC computing resources to threaten or harass anyone is a violation of the Acceptable User Policy (AUP) and the College's Equality Opportunities Policy and/or

Harassment Policy which forbids any unlawful harassment which includes any behaviour (verbal, written, or physical) that abuses, assails, intimidates, demeans or victimises or has the effect of creating a hostile environment for any person based on protected characteristics (i.e. race, colour, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, parental status, family relationship status, physical or mental disability, military status). Violating any SRC policy while using social media can trigger consequences under the College Disciplinary Policy.

4.4   Protect confidential and proprietary information
Do not post confidential or proprietary information about SRC students or employees.

4.5   Respect copyright and fair use
When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the College.

4.6   Use SRC intellectual properties only with permission
No user may establish social networking sites that use the SRC logo or other intellectual properties such as photography, video, artwork, and publications copyrighted to the College without authorisation from the Colleges Marketing department. It is a violation of social networking site policies to represent an institution without authorisation.

4.7   Be a respectful community member
When you find yourself disagreeing with others, keep your comments appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a position where the dialogue becomes antagonistic, avoid becoming defensive. Ask the Head of ICT Services for advice on handling sensitive issues and topics.

4.8   When using College e-mail
You are accountable for all activity conducted with your College e-mail address or when identifying yourself as a member of the College community. The @src.ac.uk address attached to your name may indicate to others that you are acting on the College's behalf so be clear when that is not the case.

4.9   Know the terms of service of your social media platform
Be sure to understand and follow the terms of service of any social media platform you use. You are personally responsible for compliance.

4.10   Be accurate and transparent
Have the facts before you post. If you post inaccurate information, then correct it quickly. Social networks are successful when they offer authentic and direct communications via user-generated content. Social networks are interactive with a two-way flow of information. If you are representing SRC when posting, acknowledge this by including your name and job title or department as a signature to your post.

4.11   Respect others' privacy
Take care not to post private information concerning others such as an e-mail from a colleague or contact information. Please exercise good "netiquette." Social networks are in the public realm and are not appropriate venues for the discussion or dissemination of private matters.

4.12   Consider the intended audience when posting

College moderated sites are frequented by prospective students, alumni, friends and other interested parties. The College encourages thoughtful social media interaction and does not seek to censor contributions to these sites. However, profanity, racist, sexist, or derogatory remarks, content that incites hate or encourages unethical or illegal activities, comments on litigation involving the College, spam and off-topic remarks may be removed and the user could be banned from further participation on the site.

4.13   Be relevant and respectful

Be thoughtful, accurate, relevant and respectful on social media sites. Social networks are successful when members contribute thoughtful and relevant content. Have a comment? Post it. Have a suggestion? Tell us about it. Have a different opinion? State it, respectfully. Want to offer a unique perspective? Share it. Want to air a grievance? Take care to ensure that your statements are relevant and do not violate confidentiality and others' privacy. Social networks are often not the best forums for raising grievances that might be better addressed in other venues or handled privately.

4.14   Be aware of your impact

Social media often span traditional boundaries between professional and personal relationships. If you've ever identified yourself as part of the SRC online, readers will associate you with the college, even if you are posting from your own account. Use privacy settings to restrict personal information on otherwise public sites. Choose profile photos and avatars carefully. Be thoughtful about the type of photos you upload.

4.15   Be calm

If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, don't post until you calm down. Even if your settings are "private," posts and comments can be found, copied and forwarded. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post. If you wouldn't say it publicly, don't say it online.

4.16   Resolving conflict

Social media technology is evolving, and no policy or procedure can address all of the particular situations and circumstances that may arise.

5. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

It is essential to maintain a clear professional distance between staff and students and a professional relationship in staff to staff interactions. To keep that professional distance staff should not be interacting with students online other than through official SRC channels such as;

- SRC e-mail accounts;
- SRC Moodle;
- SRC Facebook (Marketing and Communication section only);
- SRC School Facebook pages (authorised accounts only).

Posting personal or sensitive information online, particularly if that information has been sourced as a result of a staff member's role within the College, could constitute a breach of data protection legislation.

Inappropriate behaviour on social media sites where SRC is linked to the individual will represent a breach of college rules and will result in disciplinary procedures being actioned.

For example, it would be inappropriate of staff to:

- post any material critical of the College or colleagues on any social media site. Any criticisms of the College or its community members must be made through SRC's internal procedures;

- post comments that run counter to the College's Equality Opportunities Policy and/or Harassment Policy;

- post comments that recommend, or appear to endorse, law-breaking of any kind;

- post comments that exhibit or appear to endorse behaviour that could be argued to encourage "copycat" behaviour by students. This would include for example, dangerous driving, alcohol or drug abuse;

- communicate with students or parents on the Internet other than by emails sent from an @src.ac.uk address or via an official SRC social media site for College communication purposes;

- invite students to see their own personal social networking sites where permission is required to see those sites;

- If a personal friend or family member becomes a student at the College, you must maintain the same professional relationship with that individual on Social Networking sites as you would within the College;

- look at the individual social networking sites of students.

Staff are also referred to the Safeguarding Policy which reminds staff that they should not abuse the trust relationships they have with young people and vulnerable adults. This would include any form of sexualised or bullying conversation or comment through the medium of the Internet. Staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a student by allowing students to become emotionally dependent on them and not taking action to stop this. This would include conversing with a student on the Internet on any matters other than those that are directly related to College business.

5.1   Disseminating official information

Marketing and other designated offices are responsible for posting and publishing online official information on behalf of the College.

5.2   College-moderated social networking sites

SRC has college-moderated social network sites managed by Marketing staff. These sites can be used by the campus community to disseminate information to various audiences including prospective students, employers and visitors of the College. Individual departments may choose to establish a department-moderated site when these college-moderated sites are not applicable for their needs. Departments are required to contact the Marketing team in order to have approval for such sites.

As part of the social media framework, SRC maintains an official presence on YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. These sites offer content to inform audiences about the mission and activities at the College and are often linked and accessed through our social media sites as well. SRC maintains an institutional presence on these sites with content produced or endorsed by the College. These sites are maintained by the Marketing Department to reach alumni and prospective students.

5.3   If you operate a department-moderated social networking site

Departments shall consider their particular audience, message and goals and have a strategy for keeping information on their social media site up-to-date. The intention and purpose of the department-moderated sites should be specific in order to protect the College's institutional voice. Efforts shall be made to cross link to institution-moderated sites managed by Marketing and/or to College content on www.src.ac.uk when relevant. Use of images, naming conventions, pictures/graphics and posted content must directly relate to the particular department or activity to avoid confusion and institution-moderated sites.

The Directorate may encourage schools and functional areas to use the College presence to offer an integrated user experience and to take advantage of certain additional features available. For example, content from schools and courses could be published within a playlist on one of the College's sites operated by Marketing. In addition, the College sites may offer additional benefits to the schools in terms of content exposure and the size of videos that could be uploaded and the length of time these videos will remain on the site. "Alternate" accounts that appear to represent our official presence on these sites are not permitted

5.4   Administrative access to SRC sponsored social media sites

Prior approval must be obtained from the Marketing Team before any social media sites are setup as a moderated and maintained official presence of the College.

A member of the ICT/Marketing Team shall be included as an administrator on any such social networking site. There are several important reasons for this;

- We are assured that these networks are managed when staff members leave.

- This practice allows us to communicate efficiently during an emergency.

- It allows us to track usage and quickly remove content that violates this policy.

- Site administrators are still responsible for their social media networks and the ICT/Marketing administrator typically serves as a backup.

- On a regular the basis the Marketing Team will audit the additional social media sites which have been created by schools and functional areas. Any sites found to be breaching any of the statements outlined in this policy or those sites which are dormant will be removed immediately.

5.8   Understand how your role may impact how others interpret what you say

If you choose to list your work affiliation on a social network or identify your association with the College then you should regard all communication on that network as you would in a professional network. What you publish online should never be attributed to the College and shall not appear to be endorsed by or originating from the College, unless you are authorised to officially act in this capacity on behalf of the College.

5.9   Respect College time and property:

As stated in the Acceptable User Policy (AUP) SRC computers and your work time are to be used for college-related educational and business purposes. It is appropriate to post at work if your comments are directly related to accomplishing work goals, such as seeking sources for information or working with others to resolve a problem. Limited personal use of computing resources is acceptable as long as it doesn't violate any policies, but for the most part, you should maintain your personal sites on your own time using non-SRC computers.

6. STUDENT RESPONSIBLITIES

Students need to understand that as members of a wider college community they do not have total freedom to express themselves as they wish. The following types of communication are not allowed and will result in the Student Disciplinary Policy being used:

- post any comment that could be viewed as bullying or harassing another member of the College community, student or member of staff. It will be viewed as particularly serious if a student sets up a site or page which has the clear purpose of criticising, bullying or harassing another member of the College community. It will also be viewed as particularly serious if a student makes libellous statements about any other member of the College community;
- post any comment that breaks the terms of the College Equal Opportunities Policy and/or the Harassment Policy;
- post any comment that explicitly encourages other members of the College community to actively break the law. It will be viewed as particularly serious if a student actively encourages others to take prohibited substances or commit violence.

Students are reminded that material posted on the Internet can be very hard to remove. They would always be well-advised not to post photographs of themselves or other members of the community that they might not wish others to see, now or in the future. They would also be well-advised not to make written comments that could be used against them in future.

5. DISTRIBUTION

Policy Centre on SharePoint
All clients
College Website

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Staff Related Policies
Data Protection Policy
Disability Policy - All Staff
Equal Opportunities Policy
Harassment Policy - All Staff
Acceptable Use Policy
SRC Branding Guidelines
Disciplinary Procedure – Support Staff and Lecturing Staff

Student Related Policies
Client Complaints
Safeguarding Policy Vulnerable Adults
Acceptable Use Policy
Student Disciplinary Procedure

7. FLOW CHART
None