

Social Networking Policy

Exppanse Learning Group

Oct 2023

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Version 4

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1. Scope

- This policy applies to all staff at Expanse Learning
- For the purposes of this policy, social networking is defined as the use of any website where information can be shared publicly with any number of others. Examples of such sites include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn.
- This policy applies irrespective of how the social networking site is accessed including, but not limited to, access via Expanse Learning or personal PCs, iPads or mobile phones.
- Forms of information covered by this policy include anything posted which may be viewed by others and may include, but is not limited to, instant messaging, blogging, photographs or video footage.

2. Introduction

Social networking sites are now commonly used as a communications and marketing channel, both for personal and business purposes. They provide an opportunity for people to interact socially (e.g., posting comments, instant messaging, emailing, sharing media like photos and video). They also provide a fast, modern way for organisations to communicate and engage with others. This Policy sets out guidelines about the use of social networking sites, for business and for personal use.

3. Terms of Use

Business Use

- Use of social networking for business purposes must be undertaken in accordance with the Expanse Learning's ICT Acceptable Use Policy.
- Employees should ensure that they are familiar with these standards and guidance before using social networking sites.
- The reputation and / or business of Expanse Learning, service users, partners or others connected with the Expanse Learning must not be brought into disrepute through use of social networking sites.
- Confidentiality of matters relating to Expanse Learning or others connected to Expanse Learning must be preserved, so that Expanse Learning is not exposed to legal risks covered by copyright, data protection, libel and Freedom of Information legislation.
- Use of social networking sites must at all times be consistent with Expanse Learning's duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults, in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Sites must not be used for purposes which constitute bullying or harassment or for uploading information which may be interpreted as discriminatory or of an otherwise offensive nature.
- During the course of their work, individuals using social networking sites for business purposes must maintain political neutrality and not indicate individual political opinions, in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Staff and, where applicable, the political restrictions applying to their post.

Personal Use

- When using social networking sites for personal use, the principles outlined above and contained in other corporate guidance should still apply, particularly where it may be possible to identify an individual as an employee of Expanse Learning
- It is an individual's responsibility to read the Terms of Service of any social networking site accessed and to ensure that any confidentiality / privacy settings outlining to whom information posted will be available are understood.
- In accordance with Expanse Learning Email Policy, the individual's company email address must not be used when posting comments on social networking sites where this is unrelated to work.
- The same applies to the use of any logo owned by or associated with Expanse Learning on a personal site.
- Where it may be possible to identify an individual as an employee of Expanse Learning, it should be clear that information contained is the individual's personal opinion.
- When using social networking sites, the right of freedom of expression applies only to lawful conduct. Expanse Learning expects that employees will exercise consideration for the rights of others and for the reputation of Expanse Learning
- Personal use of social networking sites should not be undertaken during working time.

General

- Use of social networking sites which is not in accordance with this policy or other Expanse Learning policies may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- In accordance with this policy the request for or acceptance of friend requests between students and employees of Expanse Learning is expressly forbidden. Failure to comply may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

- Where appropriate, use of social networking sites which constitutes bullying or harassment may be dealt with under the Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.

4. Related Documentation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policy and guidance documents:

- Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy
- Where use of social networking sites can be interpreted to constitute a form of bullying or harassment of another member of staff this may be dealt with under the Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy in the first instance.
- Email Policy

5. Equal Opportunity

The Policy will at all times be applied in accordance with Expanse Learning Equal Opportunity, which states:

- The Expanse Learning do not discriminate against staff on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months but can be revised as needed.

Impact of non-compliance

Staff:	Disciplinary action
Student:	Suspension, Temporary Exclusion, Permanent Exclusion
Legislation/organisational:	Reputational damage, statutory and non-regulated compliance.
Compliance lead:	Shared Services
Policy Reference:	ELWS-ISTM-POL-0003
Version:	3
Agreed policy location:	PeopleHR, Company Intranet and Webpage
Does the policy require Governor approval?	No

Approval

Prepared by Scott Roberts (Assoc. CIPD) 20/10/2023  Head of Shared Services	Approved by Tony Brown 20/11/2023  CEO	Counter Signatory Richard King 20/10/2023  Director of Schools, Pre 16 Education
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Version Control

Version	Date	Revision	Review Date
1	01/03/2021	First Issue	28/02/2022
2	01/03/2022	Policy Reviewed	28/02/2023
3	20/10/2023	Policy Reviewed	20/10/2024
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