



# Social Media Use Policy (staff, students & volunteers)

## VISION STATEMENT

GERALDTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL WILL PROVIDE OUTSTANDING EDUCATION AND A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY, CULTIVATING PEOPLE OF INTEGRITY, INDEPENDENCE OF MIND AND A LOVE OF LEARNING.

<b>Introduction</b>	This statement outlines the Geraldton Grammar School policy on use of Social Media by staff, students and volunteers within the school
<b>Scope and application</b>	Policy applies to all staff, students and volunteers (including the Board of Governors) of Geraldton Grammar School
<b>Related legislation and guidelines may include but not limited to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006</li><li>• Copyright Act, 1968</li><li>• Copyright Amendment (Digital Agenda) Act 2000</li><li>• Copyright Amendment (Moral Rights) Act 2000</li><li>• Fair Work Act 2009</li><li>• Privacy Act 1988</li><li>• School Education Act 1999</li><li>• School Education Regulations 2000</li><li>• Teacher Registration Act 2012</li><li>• Teacher Registration (General) Regulations 2012</li><li>• Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979</li><li>• Telecommunications Act 1997</li></ul>
<b>Related Policies</b>	Privacy Policy, Data Breach Policy, Code of Conduct Policy, Managing Unsatisfactory Performance Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy, Communications Policy, Complaints Policy, Conflict of Interest Policy
<b>Evaluation</b>	

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b> (issue, reissue, amendment, replacement of pages, etc)	<b>Initials</b>
04/06/20	Complete rewrite of policy	MNN
13/08/20	Final amendments	MNN/DLE/NFT

## **1. Purpose of policy**

- 1.1 Geraldton Grammar School (GGS) encourages the use of social media channels by staff, students and volunteers including the Board of Governors, to connect with each other and the broader community, alumni, supporters and colleagues as an important tool of academic, community, and business engagement, research and learning.
- 1.2 With the rapid growth and application of social media, GGS recognises the need to provide clear guidance about the Schools expectations when social media is used as part of employment, study or in association with the School. In particular, this policy emphasises the expectations of a safe, inclusive, diverse and supportive learning environment as set out in the School's policies – students, staff and volunteers of the School can expect to be treated with courtesy and respect, regardless of the communication channel.

## **2. Policy scope and application**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all use of social media (except for non-identifiable private use of social media, as defined below) by all staff, students and volunteers of GGS, as well as any other members of the Schools community to whom the GGS Staff Code of Conduct Policy or Student Code of Conduct Policy applies.
- 2.2 For information about how official GGS social media platforms are managed, staff are directed to consult the Social Media Communications and Marketing Guidelines (staff only access via SEQTA).
- 2.3 This policy covers future social media systems, and access to social media by any means regardless of ownership, including via computer, tablet, mobile phone, handheld or wearable device.
- 2.4 This policy applies to all social media. Without limiting the scope of its application, social media is described under Definitions below.

## **3. Definitions**

Official GGS social media refers to any public social media account, group or site that seeks to represent GGS for communication or marketing purposes. Official GGS social media is managed by, or in consultation with, the School's Community Development Officer and the Principal.

Identifiable private use of social media is use of social media in a way that may associate the user with GGS and/or may have an impact on the School or on members of the GGS community.

Non-identifiable private use of social media is use of social media by a member of the School community in a way that does not associate the user with the School; and does not impact on the School or a member of the GGS community in ways that could be reasonably considered to be inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct Policy or the Student Conduct Policy.

Social media are interactive forms of electronic communication that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking or activities. Social media also includes all other emerging electronic/digital communication applications

Without limiting the use of the term, examples of social media include:

- social and professional networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Bebo, Yammer), including official and unofficial pages on social and professional networking sites that are set up by individuals or groups .
- geo-spatial tagging sites (e.g. FourSquare)

- blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs
- micro-blogging sites (e.g. Twitter)
- news services and aggregators, including feedback and commentary discussion forums
- video and photo sharing sites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube, Instagram, Tik Tok)
- wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)
- forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool, Reddit)
- vodcasting and podcasting sites
- online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second Life, Discord, Twitch)
- sharing economy websites, such as Gumtree and Uber
- instant messaging (including SMS)

#### **4. Use of social media**

##### **4.1 Conditions of use**

- 4.1.1 Given the public and pervasive nature of social media, it is important staff, students and volunteers are aware that the standards of behaviours that apply in 'real life' for interacting with others within and outside the GGS community also apply to online interactions. The same respect, courtesy and professionalism expected in real life interactions should be displayed online. Likewise, the consequences that apply for breaching Schools policies and procedures including the Staff Code of Conduct Policy and the Student Conduct Policy apply to breaches of conduct in an online environment.
- 4.1.2 To avoid potentially breaching this policy and exceeding the accepted bounds of a teacher/student relationship that may leave the employee open to allegations of improper conduct, employees may not use of social media or involve connections with the following persons on social media forums (for example, being "friends" on Facebook) unless for education or teaching purposes:
- Current students of the School
  - recent former students (i.e. enrolled at the School within a two-year period before connecting/and only if they have no other siblings currently enrolled at the School); or
  - parents of current students; unless special circumstances exist (eg. a parent is a personal friend or former student is a relative)
- 4.1.3 Understand the impacts and recognise the public visibility of your conduct and communications online, including what you 'like', share, comment on, 'follow' or 'join' on a social media platform.
- 4.1.4 The School provides students, staff and bona fide members of the GGS community with access to Schools Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities, including connections to internet networks. All use of ICT facilities and connections, including use of social media, is subject to the Acceptable Use of Network and BYOD Policy, as well as relevant School policies and procedures relating to conduct.
- 4.1.5 Where a person uses social media services not provided by the School, they are expected to abide by the relevant School policies and procedures when undertaking any activity as a student, staff member or GGS volunteer, or while engaged in any activity which may identify the School or impact on the School or on members of the GGS community.
- 4.1.6 Requests for staff to act as spokespersons on behalf of the School through social media must be referred to the Principal.

4.1.7 GGS, as an institution, has an obligation to use social media in a way that complies with various regulatory requirements of public sector organisations, including appropriate recordkeeping, Privacy Laws and Right to Information.

#### **4.2 Social media for School promotion**

4.2.1 The School uses various social media services provided by external providers (for example Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) as key marketing channels to promote the School. Such activity occurs through official GGS social media accounts and is also subject to the conditions outlined in the Social Media Communications and Marketing Guidelines (available for staff access on SEQTA).

4.2.2 Reputation is crucial to GGS's future as it affects the School's ability to recruit students and staff, and to attract funding. Reputation is influenced by people's contact with GGS, by what others say about GGS, and by what they see and hear about GGS in various media, including social media.

4.2.3 As custodian of the GGS brand and the School's corporate identity, the Principal must approve any social media account or site that seeks to represent GGS as a whole or in part. This includes any account or site that is established for promotional purposes. In addition, the Principal, at their discretion, may require the deactivation of any non-official social media account that seeks to represent GGS as a whole or in part.

#### **4.3 Use of social media for teaching and learning**

4.3.1 Staff and students may wish to use social media for teaching and learning, to conduct research or for other purposes which relate to the academic activities of the School. This reflects the School's encouragement of the use of new technology as a learning tool.

4.3.2 Staff responsible for managing the use of social media for academic purposes should make users aware of their responsibilities and the expectations set out in this policy.

4.3.3 Where possible, the use of social media for teaching and learning purposes should occur in private (closed or unlisted) groups or settings, and be limited to the duration of the academic activity. This requirement is not designed to restrict teaching and learning practice, but to protect the School, its staff and students from unexpected or unintended risks and consequences that can arise from public use of social media.

4.3.4 Social media created for teaching and learning purposes must not seek to represent GGS. Such accounts must not use the GGS logo or branding, or GGS promotional images or assets. Staff responsible for managing the use of social media for academic purposes must include a disclaimer that the account is not an official GGS communication channel, and that any content or information posted by or within the account does not represent the School or its views.

#### **4.4 Identifiable private use of social media**

4.4.1 Staff, students and volunteers who engage in "identifiable private use" on any social media are required to comply with the School's policies and procedures. That is, any staff member, student or volunteer who identify themselves as being a staff member, student or volunteer of Geraldton Grammar School anywhere within their personal social media profiles.

4.4.2 When engaging in "identifiable private use", do not post any material that contains:

- hate speech
- profanity, obscenity or vulgarity
- comments that could be considered prejudicial, racist or inflammatory

- nudity or offensive imagery (including, but not limited to, in profile pictures)
- defamation to a person or people
- name calling and/or personal attacks
- comments that infringe on copyright or another person's intellectual property
- personal information about an individual (including identifying information, email addresses, phone numbers or private addresses)

4.4.3 Staff must not release any School information unless it is classified as 'public' information, and should avoid any perception of promotion of private business interests while interacting on social media as a staff member. Refer to the Staff Code of Conduct Policy and the Conflict of Interest Policy.

4.4.4 Where a student, staff member or volunteer makes identifiable private use of social media that is suspected of breaching the School's policy, or has the potential to impact on the School's reputation, or could reasonably be considered to be inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct Policy or the Student Conduct Policy, the School will act in accordance with the relevant policy.

## **5. Responding to breaches**

5.1 Any person concerned that the conduct of a student, staff or volunteer of the School using social media contravenes this or other School policies and procedures may report their concerns to the School.

5.2 Staff, students or volunteers who believe they are being bullied, harassed or discriminated against via social media may address their concerns with the Principal.

5.3 Where required by the School, a user is expected to remove, and cooperate with all attempts to remove, any comment, post or other online content where the School forms the view that it is in breach of the School's expectations of staff, students or volunteers.

5.4 Staff, students and volunteers must be aware that Geraldton Grammar School may apply sanctions if this policy is breached. Depending on the nature of the breach, various sanctions may be applied, including but not limited to:

- Counselling;
- Formal warning;
- Suspension;
- Termination