

**Apprenticeships
R US**



Social Media Policy

Purpose

The Social Media Policy outlines protocols for using social media to undertake official business, and provides guidance for employees in their personal use of social media.

The policy aims to inform Apprenticeships Are Us employees how to use social media effectively and appropriately, within Apprenticeships Are Us and its guidelines. It has been developed to assist employees to use social media, so they feel empowered to participate, while being mindful of their responsibilities.

This Policy applies to all Apprenticeships Are Us internal employees, including employees employed through host employers, employees on leave, non-ongoing employees and contractors. Managers should ensure their employees are aware of and understand this policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the code of conduct which set out the rights and expectations of Apprenticeships Are Us when engaging with the public through Apprenticeships Are Us social media accounts and personal accounts.

Scope

All Apprenticeships Are Us staff, apprentices and trainees.

Policy Statement

The Social Media Policy applies to the official use of social media, where employees have been authorised to use social media as a communication tool, to engage with the community, or to distribute content on behalf of Apprenticeships Are Us. This includes posting to an official departmental social media account (e.g. Facebook, Twitter), participating as a third-party site (e.g. external blog, news comment, online forum) or utilising internal online engagement tools and platforms (e.g. blogs). This policy also provides guidance to employees in their personal use of social media. Employees are reminded of their responsibilities under the Code of Conduct which apply when using social media, either professionally or personally.

Principles

Official use of social media

The same high standards of conduct and behaviour generally expected of employees also apply when participating online through social media. Online participation should reflect and uphold the values, integrity and reputation of Apprenticeships Are Us

Apprenticeships Are Us Management manages and authorises the use of all official Apprenticeships Are Us social media accounts. Management are responsible for engaging online with stakeholders and the general public in an official capacity. In some cases, authorised employees from other business areas may be asked to assist with this work, and they will be trained accordingly.

Comments made from Apprenticeships Are Us social media accounts must not:

- endorse or make judgements about specific providers, products or services
- discuss circumstances surrounding Apprenticeships Are Us specific relationship with or management of service partners or providers
- make personal judgements about how providers have implemented program guidelines
- represent or speak on behalf of another Apprenticeships Are Us business area (i.e. don't discuss other business without the prior consent and advice of the relevant business area).

If an online discussion involves specific individual circumstances or personal details, the moderator must 'switch channel' by directing members of the public to an alternative medium (e.g. telephone, direct message, email, letter, face-to-face) as appropriate.

Key principles for official use of social media

All employees who are authorised to use or deploy social media as an official communication tool need to be familiar with, and apply the following key principles:

Approved activity – before commencing a social media initiative, your activity must be supported by a business case, and approved by management.

Risk management – to ensure risk controls are effectively implemented and monitored, a Risk Management Plan must accompany the business case for a social media initiative.

Administration – an official Apprenticeships Are Us social media account must be administered by an authorised manager.

Identity and authenticity – always use an authorised identity (usually the official Apprenticeships Are Us social media account/handle) and not a personal identity when posting to, or responding from Apprenticeships Are Us social media accounts, on behalf of Apprenticeships Are Us

Maintain confidentiality – only post publicly available information. Don't disclose or discuss official or classified information, make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of APPRENTICESHIPS ARE US or its other entity's, unless you are authorised by the appropriate business area to do so.

Protect and respect privacy – check the account privacy settings are appropriate for the scope of engagement you wish to undertake. Protect your own privacy and personal information. Don't share the private details of others. Don't disclose details of private conversations unless you have obtained explicit consent from the relevant parties.

Be impartial – avoid statements that advocate or criticise policies of government or political parties. Avoid conflicts of interest through endorsement or criticism of third-party providers, partners, products or services. Avoid expressions of personal opinion.

Be respectful – be courteous and polite. Be sensitive to diversity. Avoid arguments and don't make personal attacks. Do not post obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful content.

Be accurate – make sure the information you publish is correct and cite sources where appropriate – people may make decisions based on information you post. Only post on your area of expertise and refer to an appropriate business area where necessary.

Consider intellectual property – respect copyright. Always get permission to use words, images or materials online that you do not own. Any use of Apprenticeships Are Us branding and logos must be approved by management.

Make a record - keep records of social media posts you make in an official capacity. Classify and store information as set out in the procedures.

Think first – review your content before you post it. Remember that you are responsible for your actions. You should consider the impact your activities could have on yourself and/or Apprenticeships Are Us. Use your common sense and best judgement. If you're not sure, check with your manager first.

If in doubt, leave it out!

Personal use of social media

Apprenticeships Are Us employees should be aware that content published on social media is, or may become publicly available, even from personal social media accounts. Employees must ensure they:

- are mindful that their behaviour is bound by the Apprenticeships Are Us Code of Conduct – even outside work hours and when material is posted anonymously or using an alias or pseudonym
- make clear that any views expressed are their own, and not those of APPRENTICESHIPS ARE US
- don't use a work email address to register personal social media accounts
- don't make comments that are obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to, or about work, colleagues, peers or the APS
- don't post comments or images that are, or could be perceived to be:
 - made on behalf of Apprenticeships Are Us
 - so harsh or extreme in criticism that they raise questions about the capacity to work professionally or impartially as an employee (such comments would not have to relate directly to their area of work)
 - compromising the capacity to fulfil duties as an employee in an impartial and unbiased manner. This applies particularly where comment is made about Apprenticeships Are Us policies and programs
 - so strong in criticism of Apprenticeships Are Us administration that it could seriously disrupt the workplace. (Employees are encouraged to resolve concerns in discussion with a manager or via internal dispute resolution mechanisms)
 - unreasonable criticism of Apprenticeships Are Us clients or other stakeholders
 - compromising public confidence in Apprenticeships Are Us.

When considering making personal comments, employees should reflect on the following questions:

- could my comments cause Apprenticeships Are Us clients or other stakeholders to lose confidence in my ability to work in an impartial and professional manner?
- are my comments consistent with how the community expects the public service to operate and behave?
- could my comments lower or undermine the reputation of Apprenticeships Are Us?
- are my comments lawful? For example, do they comply with anti-discrimination legislation and laws relating to defamation?
- would I be comfortable if my manager read my comments?

The Internet is forever

What you publish on the internet can remain public for a long time. Content can also be replicated and shared beyond the original intended audience and sent to recipients who were never expected to see it, or who may view it out of context. You should be aware that according to the terms and conditions of

some third-party sites, the content you create is the property of the site where it is posted and so may be re-used in ways which you had not intended.

Before you post to a social media site you should understand the tool/platform you are using. It is recommended that you read the terms of service and user guides and look through existing content to get an idea of the posting etiquette and any cultural and behavioural norms associated with the social media platform you intend to engage with.

You should not rely on a social media site's security settings as a guarantee of privacy. You should also adjust your privacy settings according to your own needs. Bear in mind, even if you do not identify yourself online as an Apprenticeships Are Us employee, you could nonetheless be recognised as such.

Access to social media at work

Access to social media sites (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) or Apprenticeships Are Us resources is provided to employees so long as they abide by the Apprenticeships Are Us Code of Conduct. Personal use is accepted by Apprenticeships Are Us, however use of Apprenticeships Are Us resources for private purposes must be undertaken within the constraints outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Bullying and harassment

Apprenticeships Are Us is committed to achieving a workplace free of bullying and harassment. For more information, refer to the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

There *is* guidance on cyber bullying and online harassment of employees by clients or members of the public, which may be experienced through the increased use of social media and other online networking tools. The guidance ensures a consistent approach to managing instances of cyber bullying and to support employees who may become targets of online abuse in the course of their work.

Accessibility

Apprenticeships Are Us is committed to social inclusion and provides support for people with disabilities. Where possible, content on Apprenticeships Are Us social media accounts should also be made available in an alternative accessible format. This alternative may be represented on Apprenticeships Are Us internet sites, however given the online interaction inherent in social media, it may also be appropriate to refer individuals to telephone or face-to-face channels.

Recordkeeping

Information that provides evidence of business activity or decision is a public record. All Apprenticeships Are Us employees have an obligation to ensure that key decisions and events are recorded in a way that captures the important features of a discussion or decision, presents a faithful and accurate account and can be easily retrieved when needed.

Social media platforms are often provided by third-party providers and are not official recordkeeping systems. By managing content in Apprenticeships Are Us social media accounts, you accept responsibility for recordkeeping in accordance with the Recordkeeping Policy, ensuring appropriate records are created and captured for all the business functions, activities and transactions.

Apprenticeships Are Us employees are required to appropriately classify and store information as set out in the Apprenticeships Are Us Recordkeeping Procedures.

Privacy

Personal details cannot be provided to third-parties without the explicit consent of the owner. The email addresses of your colleagues and other identifiable information must be treated with discretion and care. Apprenticeships Are Us employees are reminded not to upload contacts from (Outlook) contacts when using, or prompted by external social networking sites.

Sanctions for non-compliance

As an employee of Apprenticeships Are Us your behaviour, both in and out of the workplace, must be consistent with the Code of Conduct.

A failure to comply with this Policy may constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct. Examples of failure to adhere to the Code of Conduct in a social media setting include:

- making derogatory or obscene posts about a manager on a social networking site
- posting derogatory comments or images about welfare recipients from a personal account
- disclosing non-publicly available information about income payments in a blog post.

If an employee is found to have breached the Code of Conduct, the manager may determine that it is appropriate to impose the following sanctions:

- termination of employment
- reduction in classification
- reassignment of duties
- reduction in salary
- deductions from salary, by way of fine
- reprimand.

What is Social Media?

Social Media are online services and tools used for publishing, sharing and discussing information. These can include:

- social networking – e.g. Facebook
- video and photo sharing – e.g. Flickr, YouTube
- blogs – e.g. corporate blogs, personal blogs or media blogs
- micro blogs – e.g. Twitter
- forums and discussion boards – e.g. Reddit, Yahoo! Groups
- online encyclopaedias – e.g. Wikipedia, wiki.

If you require assistance in interpreting any part of this policy or report someone breaching this policy, please contact management on info@apprus.com.au

Philip Perdikaris

Chief Executive Officer