

Social Media Policy

Policy Code: GOV-005 **Version:** 1.1 **Effective Date:** 8 August 2011

Purpose:

With the wide and rapid dispersion of information generated via social media, it is essential that we participate in online conversations in order to have the opportunity to both respond to critique as well as promote our own activities. Social media will however hold us accountable in the public realm, so it is important that we are proactive, as well as reactive, in our approach.

This document seeks to provide a framework for operating in and around in the social media environment, empowering us all to participate in, and contribute to, this conversation with confidence.

Definition of “College” – *The Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd (ACNM) trades as Endeavour College of Natural Health, College of Natural Beauty, FIAFitnation and Wellnation. For the purpose of this policy, any reference to ‘College’ or ‘the College’ should be considered a reference to each or any of these respective trading names.*

Scope: All staff

Policy Statement:

Use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, wikis, forums and other online social networking tools are now part of everyday life.

Social media, when used appropriately provides new mediums by which to develop relationships with students and the public. With this in mind, the College recognises that social media should not replace core functions of the public website, but rather to develop and nurture relationships with other users, develop loyalty, and provide a real, honest, and united face for the College.

Whilst the College shapes its approach in the social media world, authorisation to represent the company publicly will be restricted to selected staff members in line with this policy. The College encourages all staff to maintain a watchful eye when browsing the internet or social media sites, alerting the Director, Marketing and Admissions of any issues that may need attention to allow the appropriate person internally to be identified and respond.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant and applicable to this rapidly changing domain.

Principles

The College recognises that whilst activities performed by employees and contractors outside of work hours are personal, the lines between work and an employee's personal life may at times become blurred. In these instances, activities undertaken in personal time have the ability to impact an employee's job performance, the performance of others, or pose a risk to the College's business interests.

In an attempt to minimise such instances, the College forbids the use of the College name by employees or contractors to endorse or promote any product, opinion, cause or political party and representation of personal opinions as institutionally endorsed by Endeavour Learning Group and its subsidiaries is strictly prohibited.

This policy does not apply to employees' personal use of social media platforms where the employee makes no reference to work related issues.

Representation

The Director, Admissions and Marketing or their nominee is authorised to represent the College in all branded social media instances.

Even when posting as an individual, readers may perceive the content to be on behalf of the College if it is posted by a known employee of the College. If an individual staff member uses social media it is recommended that they add a disclaimer statement that reads, "The opinions and positions expressed are my own and don't necessarily reflect those of my employer."

Senior managers and academics are likely to be placed under additional scrutiny by students, employees, and public to accurately represent the College. Always disclaim any potential conflict of interest when using social media, as appropriate to the medium.

Share Information Carefully

Once information is in the public sphere, it can be very difficult and often impossible to recall. Take care when posting information, as the content will reflect on the integrity of the individual and the College.

- Ensure only publicly available information is shared, and that any advice, comments or support that offered are within the individual's area of expertise
- Refrain from posting items that could reflect negatively on the College's reputation or otherwise embarrass the organisation including comments or other posts about drug and alcohol abuse, profanity, crude or sexual humour, and other inappropriate conduct. Do not engage in inflammatory conversation, or topics that may be considered objectionable such as politics and religion. Do not post material that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity, including the College, its employees, its contractors, its partners, its competitors and/or other business related individuals or organisations
- Never rush into a response. Take a breath, and think twice about the content of the post
- Be the first to respond to mistakes. If an error is made, be up front about the mistake and correct it quickly, as this can help to restore trust
- Do not disclose other people's personal information in social media venues
- Do not use the College's logo, branded images, graphical elements without authorisation
- Do not disclose any proprietary information, such as current course materials and resources, research, or anticipated new products without authorisation (pre-approved materials, resources, etc will be made clear to those actively engaged in social media)
- Ask permission to share information from internal company meetings and conversations
- Protect the College's clients, business partners and suppliers. These organisations or individuals should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Be thoughtful about the types of information shared, which may inadvertently lead others to deduce which clients, partners and suppliers are

being discussed

- Ensure social networking conduct is consistent with the all policies contained in the College's Employee Handbook, including Privacy, Professionalism
- Use of social media should not interfere with job performance and productivity
- Be respectful of all individuals and communities
- Be polite and respectful of others' opinions, even in times of heated discussion and debate
- Adhere to the Terms Of Use of the particular social media platform, and seek to conform to the cultural and behavioural norms, of the social media platform being used
- Respect copyright, privacy, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms
- Bear in mind the potential audience for comment.

Posting Guidelines

For those staff authorised to post on behalf of College, the following common sense checklist should be considered before posting:

- Is it your place to make this post?
- Have you read the whole conversation before contributing?
- Am I adding value to this conversation? Am I being useful?
- Are you confident the information you're sharing is correct and publicly available?

Moderation of conversations

The College supports and encourages open dialogue on its social networking pages. It is important that group members, followers and contributors feel that they can trust the moderator to allow free and honest conversation, or they will remove the conversation to another location where we do not have moderation control. All content, where it is relevant to the conversation at hand, will be remain in tact regardless of whether the sentiment is positive or negative. However, if the content is offensive, denigrating or completely out of context, then the content may be moderated and removed from the site.

Content Posting Rules (for followers of College branded social media instances)

To ensure the College's social media pages are safe, inclusive and respectful all users are requested to abide by the content rules outlined below

1. Spamming or trolling will be removed and may cause the users to be blocked from the page without notice
2. The posting of external links or promotions does not constitute endorsement by the College or its affiliated organisations. Information viewed as a conflict of interest may be removed from the page without notice
3. Comments and posts containing the following will be removed from the page:
 - Discrimination, obscene or threatening language, or hate speech
 - Personal attacks or name calling
 - Defamatory material or infringements of copyright
 - Comments or posts that suggest or encourage illegal activity
 - Other comments or posts that College management deem to be inappropriate or offensive
4. The page is not to be used as a forum for submitting complaints or grievances. The College offers a formal feedback and grievance policy and process which can be accessed by contacting Student Services at study@endeavour.edu.au. Posts or comments addressing complaints or grievances that include inaccurate statements, confidential information or defamatory opinions will be removed without notice.

Repeat violations of this policy may cause the user to be permanently banned.

Social media is a 24/7 medium however, College moderation capabilities are not and administrators may not see every inappropriate comment right away. Inappropriate material will be removed as soon as possible.

The College makes every effort to attribute images and content posted on this page to a source and has no intention of breaching copyright.

Third Party Hosted Social Media

The College does not endorse or allow social media pages to be set up using the College's name or brand.

Breach of Policy

Disciplinary action may result in instances where employees or contractors breach this policy.

Related Procedures:

Not applicable

Definitions:

Social Media Tools –

Social media tools refer to platforms such as:

1. Social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn.
2. Video and photo sharing websites e.g. Flickr, YouTube
3. Micro-blogging sites e.g. Twitter
4. eblogs, including corporate blogs, personal blogs or blogs hosted by traditional media publications; or news websites that invite the audience to comment (such as TheAge.com.au)
5. Forums and discussion boards such as Whirlpool, Yahoo! Groups or Google Groups
6. Online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia
7. Any other web sites that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools.

Further Information:

Related Policies: Working at Endeavour Handbook

IT Policy

Benchmarking: University of Melbourne Social Media Guidelines

Supporting Research and Analysis: Not applicable

Policy Author:	Director, Admissions and Marketing
Policy Owner:	Director, Admissions and Marketing
Contact:	Director, Admissions and Marketing david.hoey@endeavour.edu.au
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Key Stakeholders:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers • Executive Team • Marketing Community Department
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