

CHRIST CHURCH
STUDENTS'
UNION



Social Media Guidelines

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This Guide is for

Full Time Elected Officers

Part-Time Elected Officers

Student Reps

Clubs and Societies

Committees and team members

Student Media

Event promoters (student or otherwise)

All CCSU Staff (inc. student staff)

Anyone else wishing to use CCSU online media channels

Introduction

These guidelines are designed to encourage effective and beneficial use of social media by providing support and best practice guidance for those who use, or wish to use, social media within their role at CCSU. This is to create consistency and coherence across our social media activities and to protect the Students' Union, the University and its community.

For the purpose of this document, social media is defined as;

“Any website or medium (including video) that allows for communication in the open, or in the public domain.”

CCSU manages a number of different social media channels, often followed by a variety of people including stakeholders such as the University and City Council, prospective employees as well as students themselves.

The guidance provided below is relevant to all the social media channels as well as social media management systems, such as Hootsuite, that we operate below.

Facebook (social networking sites)

[Christ Church SU](#)
[CCSU The Lounge](#)
[Broadstairs Campus](#)
[Medway Campus](#)

Video & photo sharing

SnapChat
[Pinterest](#)
[Instagram](#)
[YouTube](#)
[Vine](#)

Blogs

[Leadership team](#)
SU President
President (Education & Wellbeing)
President (Sport)
President (Student Activities)

Twitter (micro-blogging)

[Christ Church SU](#)
[Union Council Officer roles](#)
ccBroadstairs
ccDisabilities
ccEnvironment1
ccFundraising1
ccGenderEqual
ccGMSOfficer
ccEUOfficer
ccMedwayOfficer
ccPTOfficer
ccIntOfficer
ccLGBTOfficer
ccLGBTWomens
ccMatureOfficer
ccEduPlacement
ccHealthPlace
ccPGOfficer
ccStudentReps
ccStuTrustees
ccUnionChair
ccWomensOfficer
[Link to Union Council Twitter List](#)
[CCSUTheLounge](#)

CCSU vision and online media

Our social media channels are one of our most exciting and accessible channels. As these channels are constantly evolving, we need to be aware of the implications of our online actions.

We have a duty to run our social media responsibly in accordance with **the CCSU vision**,

“To actively engage with all members of the Union to encourage and enable involvement in student union life where desired. We will provide support wherever it is needed and ensure our services reflect members’ needs as they change during their studies. Above all else we will represent our members in everything we do.”

and **CCSU values**

Inclusive Everything we do requires consideration of the needs of all members wherever possible. Where universal solutions can’t be found we will strive to deliver specific solutions wherever practical to meet the diversity within our membership.

Value-Adding We work to ensure that all ideas, services, products and other activities enhance our members’ experience during their studies and beyond. If they don’t, we won’t implement them.

Accessible to All All of our services and people must be accessible to as many of our members as possible. We will listen to all groups and individuals, changing processes if necessary and ensuring that genuine two-way communication channels exist and can be used by all members.

Working in Partnership We do not stand alone in our communities and to get the best outcomes for our members we will work closely with any relevant or key partners, including the University, Councils and community groups where our campuses are situated.

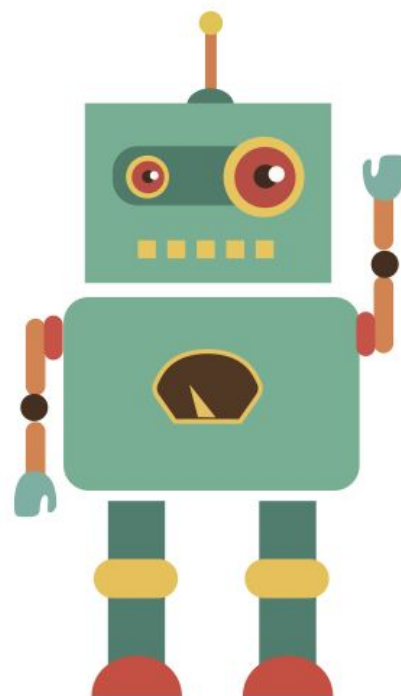
Respect We will respect the differences amongst our members as well as the common ground we share in activities, background, needs and opinions. We will also be respectful of our communities and of the needs of our stakeholders ensuring wherever possible that their needs are met alongside our members’.

Fun and Enjoyment Our members’ experience at Canterbury Christ Church University should be enjoyable, whatever form that may take. We will remain student led and conduct Union business with a smile, always promoting, enhancing and enriching the positive outcomes we aim to provide.

CCSU's Voice

- When writing as CCSU, be **informative, friendly, honest** and **helpful**. Go with the conversational grain, keeping it in line with our values.
- It is tempting to be informal or rude on social media but this is only occasionally **appropriate**. Check with someone, such as your manager, before posting anything that may be deemed inappropriate **by another person**.
- To be on the **safe** side, keep it light. The digital footprint we leave is open for all to see and not everyone will find our 'joke' funny.
- We want students to **trust** that when they contact us – no matter how they choose to do this – we will get back to them ASAP.
- Be **regular** and **responsive** – scheduling can be used where appropriate - but don't leave messages unanswered.
- If you can't answer a query yourself, use links, email addresses or **signpost** to policies to answer them as fully and quickly as possible.
- **Credit** the work of others when relevant and remember to watch out for copyrighted material.
- Use disclaimers if you're using a **personal account**, make it clear the views you are expressing are yours and not necessarily **representative** of CCSU.
- Don't get pulled into **arguments** – deal with the matter/complaint **offline** as soon as you are aware of it. (See the later section on Dealing with Complaints on Social Media)
- **Think twice, publish once!**

Most of all, enjoy it and have fun – people like to know you're human!



The Law

Defamation:

“A statement tending to lower someone in the estimation of reasonable thinking people”

The law of defamation applies to social media and we can be sued for it. The key basic of adhering to the law is stating fact not fiction. If you have proof/evidence there's no issue, but if it's fuelling speculation and unfounded, it can be seen as slander or libellous.

Libel:

“A defamatory statement in written or printed words including broadcast.”

It is important to act swiftly if someone posts something potentially defamatory on any of our official CCSU pages.

e.g. ***“My lecturer _____, is an absolute **** and can't teach to save her life!”***

CCSU, as publisher of the comment, can be sued by the lecturer for defamation or libel.

Whilst obviously we encourage feedback via Student Reps – public social media pages are not an appropriate place to discuss issues.

Contact the student and ask them to talk to the President (Education & Wellbeing) or Student Rep about the issue, closing the online discussion.

When hosting a page such a Student Rep or Sports team page, include a 'user guide' at the top which directs students not to be publically abusive and encourages them to discuss issues in a way which does not attack individuals.



Dealing with complaints on social media

We acknowledge that complaints can be received via social media sites, such as the Lounge. In the case of a complaint being received in this way, the following action should be taken;

- 1 Screen capture; this ensures a record is kept should the issue be contested in the future or escalates to a more serious matter.
- 2 Do not delete the comment; this may aggravate the commenter and move the conversation elsewhere. Exceptions to this are comments that are racist, derogatory, pornographic, too off topic or trying to sell a product/service.
- 3 Discuss the complaint with the Marketing Department who will advise on how to respond. Do so as quickly as possible.
- 4 Do not take the comments personally or challenge the individual negatively; do not reply to everything, if the individual is looking to start an argument let it go.
- 5 Encourage the individual to contact the service manager or the Marketing Department directly and provide contact details such as email address to do so. Once the issue is resolved, ensure this is communicated, referencing the original stream where the complaint was written.
- 6 Use a positive, pleasant tone when responding to comments; by doing so, excessively negative comments or attacks will seem out of place. Avoid sounding too authoritative.
- 7 Publicise other options for the individual to speak with you. Should the individual do so, ensure they are followed up and dealt with quickly.

The [Comments and Complaints Procedure](#) should be upheld where possible and the steps of the procedure adhered to when appropriate. Keep the Marketing Department informed at all stages of the process so that matters can be recorded on the Comments and Complaints register.



Let's get social

The more people interact with your posts and comments, the more they will appear on their newsfeed.

Other ways to engage your audience and boost your visibility include:-

- **Questions** - boost engagement with questions and initiate discussions to accompany your posts, this will help increase the visibility of your posts on the newsfeed where most people will see it rather than your wall. So remember there's no point asking your audience to click on the left hand tab or see the update below.
- **Photos and videos trump links!** – Just as links prove more effective for engagement than simple status updates, photos and videos are more successful than links alone. Here it's about personal engagement, think about how often you've clicked through to see full-sized or more pictures. Social media likes clicks, and photos deliver them.
- **Easy actions** – commitment is low, so make your call to action simple in your posts – ask for 'Likes' or quick answers.
- **Emotional responses** – choose topics which your audience has an opinion on right away – and then ask them a simple question.
- **Spark debate** – you've done it right when your comment stream becomes a conversation of its own, and fans engage with one another in the stream on topics you start.
- **Ideal length** – research shows that the short and sweet is best. (Taken from www.thenextweb.com/socialmedia/-ideal-length-everything-internet)

Tweet – 100 characters

Facebook – 40 characters, 80 characters or less receive 66% higher engagement

Headline – 6 words

Blog post – 7 minutes, 1600 words

Email subject line – 28-39 characters

Paragraph width – 40-55 characters

- **Links** – as well as encouraging users to read your posts and expand on the points you've made, it is also a useful way to drive traffic to the CCSU website, where the Marketing Department can publish full articles, stories and event details.
- **Stalking** – in the best sense of the word, the more people that stalk your page, the more often it will appear on everyone's newsfeeds. So get your friends to check it daily.
- **Timing** – timing is everything when it comes to announcements, early evening gives more exposure than morning updates, it's when our audience is mostly online.

How can CCSU help?

Due to the number of students who require help with event postings and other social media ventures, it is difficult to decide what should be posted and when.

Whilst it's important to help our students out, it's also important not to spam them.

It may be tempting to bombard social media channels with posts if an event is not selling well, however this is more likely to annoy people than to get them buying tickets.

The following lists a few guidelines on what we can offer to our students.

Facebook and Twitter

We can post about Lounge events on the CCSU website and on the Lounge Facebook and Twitter accounts twice before an event, once to announce the event and once nearer the time for another push.

Other events can be posted on CCSU Facebook and Twitter pages, with each event allowed one posting. We cannot support more than this due to the demand for event postings.

We must spread out event postings. For example, if one student has a cake sale and we post about it, we should not post about another cake sale until the next day.

Snap Chat, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, Vine

CCSU have Instagram and Pinterest accounts, which can be used to upload student photos of their events, to reach a wider audience.

YouTube, Vine, and Snap Chat can be used to promote events in connection with CCSU i.e. The Lounge events or events that promote CCSU services.



PLEASE LISTEN TO ME!

Dos and Don'ts

Social Media is to be explored, enjoyed and used effectively. It is an incredibly powerful tool that connects us with our members, using the most contemporary forms of communication. So here are a few short dos and don'ts to sum it all up.

- Do use social media to **promote exciting** new events, news and projects.
- **Don't spam** your users by promoting one event too much or posting too often.
- Do remember that whilst you reserve the right to free speech, social media is like any other channel that is **exposed to scrutiny and laws** and comments must 'within the law'. Check out CCSU's [Freedom of Speech Policy](#).
- **Don't assume** that because your account is private this protects you completely.
- **Do respond** to every request or message quickly and effectively.
- Don't take offence to **public criticism** and reply negatively to any feedback.
- Do use a **friendly** and **informative** tone online.
- Don't be tempted to be funny or **rude** in the name of being 'cool'.
- Do not post or repost comments that contain swearing, are derogatory or pornographic, they are **not appropriate at any time**.

Online Privacy

Social media is only as private as a screen shot. If you can see other people's tweets, posts and photos then they can see yours!

Even if you share something as 'private' with your close friends and family – just one share in the wrong place and that is no longer as private as you thought.

Revealing other people's personal information, such as personal phone numbers, is against the Data Protection Act, make yourself familiar with it.

You are potentially broadcasting to the entire world, press, future employers, your Nan – are you happy for the world to see that? What would your Nan say?!

Personal Accounts

If you have a personal account that links you to CCSU social media, whilst you have the right to privacy and the right to freedom of speech, this can and does cause conflicts.

From a professional and moral stance, you should be aware that if your publicly aired views are incompatible with CCSU's values, difficulties may arise!

e.g. 'Had a **** day today, I hate students sometimes'

This statement is entirely incompatible with CCSU's vision and values, and even though it may have been a personal account, it has still been broadcasted.

Bringing the University or Students' Union into disrepute could lead to a disciplinary.

Students can be disciplined under the [CCCU Social Media Policy for Students](#)

Staff can be disciplined under the University [CCCU Social Media Policy](#)

CCSU Social Media Links and Profiles








CHRIST CHURCH
**STUDENTS'
UNION**



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	Facebook	ChristChurchSU
	Twitter	@ChristChurchSU
	YouTube	ChristChurchSUMedia
	SnapChat	ChristChurchSU
	Instagram	ChristChurchSU
	Pinterest	ChristChurchSU
	Vine	ChristChurchSU

If you would like more marketing information or resources please get in touch.