
Guidance Document

G1269

**GUIDELINES FOR
THE USE OF
SOCIAL MEDIA**

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MAYOR OF LONDON



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1 Purpose

- 1.1 The use of Social Media is an increasingly popular activity that plays an important role in many people's lives. However, it can easily blur the lines between the professional and personal. The purpose of this Guideline is to ensure staff understand how they can use social media in a way that respects these boundaries and avoids unintentionally breaching any of LU's existing policies and procedures in a way that could affect their employment

2 Scope

- 2.1 This Guidance applies to all LUL staff who use Social media.

3 What is Social media?

Social media is the broad term given to describe the latest evolution of internet and web based communication platforms which enable users to rapidly connect and interact with each other in a variety of formats. A social media site enables content generated by the users to emerge through the interaction and collaboration of other on-line users and communities.

4 Why does it matter what I say on Social Media sites in my private capacity?

Users of Social Media often post their personal views, opinions and pictures on these sites with the intention of sharing them with a community of other users. However, the nature of social media means that these communications can easily enter the public domain and be viewed by a potentially vast audience, which may not have been the user's original intention.

This is particularly important to remember if you use social media to refer to any issues relating to your employment. If you use social media, please keep the following in mind:-

- a) A comment/post made in a private capacity can still impact on your formal employment relationship. This is particularly the case if the remarks are likely to cause reputational damage to LUL and/or TfL or offence to colleagues, other staff, customers or suppliers;
- b) Disclosing confidential information/documents belonging to LUL/TfL could also have the potential to cause LUL/TfL public embarrassment and as a result could seriously affect your employment relationship with us, which is based on mutual trust;
- c) Our Discipline At Work Procedure and Discipline Standard sets out examples of gross misconduct, which include insulting, violent or threatening behaviour towards colleagues, customers and others with whom staff come into contact. Inappropriate postings on social media sites relating to a person's working life could mean these particular standards of behaviour have been breached and could in turn lead to disciplinary action;
- d) Policies like Harassment and Bullying and our Equality Standard also still apply. Social media posts can still constitute bullying or harassment of colleagues or customers (e.g. if they are likely to offend on the basis of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, nationality and/or age). This can

still constitute gross misconduct, even if the incident occurs out-of-hours and in a private capacity.

Please remember that the LUL Code of Conduct states that staff must not do anything on or off duty which could damage LUL's reputation. Anyone who can be identified with LUL who shares their private views about LUL/TfL or anyone associated with it in a public manner should be aware that inappropriate comments or remarks which breach our above policies and procedures may face serious consequences, which could include gross misconduct.

5 Good practice guide for the use of Social Media

The following is offered as a useful guide to using social media in a way that won't affect your work relationships:-

- a) Always assume that your comments are publicly available and can be viewed by fellow colleagues and/or customers. Please exercise great care if you ever post any details about your job or working life online.
- b) Avoid posting any material on a social media site which could offend colleagues, customers or suppliers. This applies even if it's out of working hours and posted from a private computer. You are still directly responsible for any consequences and may have breached one of our employment policies, as explained above.
- c) Frequently ensure your privacy settings are applied correctly. Websites such as Facebook often revert settings after updates.
- d) Remember that Facebook posts and Tweets can never be truly private and can be easily re-posted or tweeted on.
- e) Data, pictures or any other material owned by LUL/TfL and not in the public domain should not be distributed or reproduced without specific authority from a senior manager.
- f) Check first: If in doubt, do not post. First ask your manager or a PMA, or e mail employee.relations@tube.tfl.gov.uk for advice before acting.

6 References

6.1 Person accountable for the document

Person accountable for the document
Douglas Whitworth

6.2 Document history

Issue no	Date	Changes	Author
A1	November 2012	New guidance document produce as per DRACCT proposal No. 1182.	