

Social Media Policy for Students

1. Introduction

The University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) aims to offer a safe and secure environment for students, staff, and guests visiting its physical and online facilities and services without causing any harm or interference to the safety, freedom, and dignity of others. This pledge will be applicable to all platforms, including social media.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are as follows:

- To provide advice and guidance to ULAB students who are currently using or considering to use social media in the future
- To help students understand the implications of engaging in online communications from a reputational, legal, and ethical standpoint
- To understand the consequences of misusing social media
- To safeguard students' wellbeing, personal security, current/future career prospects and the reputation of ULAB.

3. Scope of the Policy

As far as this policy is concerned, the term 'Social Media' is used to describe interactions through dynamic and socially interactive platforms, networked information, and communication. Some examples of sites include, but are not limited to:

- Multimedia and social networking sites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube
- Internal or external blogs and micro-blogs including Twitter
- Community discussion forums such as Yahoo! Groups and Google Groups
- Review or ratings forums such as TripAdvisor, BBC Have Your Say and MoneySavingExpert
- Wikis, such as Wikipedia
- Any sites where you can post text, photos and video, such as Pinterest, Flickr, Google+, Tumblr

ULAB maintains a number of official accounts on sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube, where the opinions expressed and information shared reflect the views of the university. Any student (either on an individual basis or as a group) seeking to set up a formal ULAB socialmedia account must seek prior permission from the Communication Office.

4. Policy Guidelines

4.1 General responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of students to:
 - read and act in accordance with these guidelines, and any additional guidelines published by your School/Department
 - read and act in accordance with the rules and guidelines set out by individual

- Social Media, Social Networking and Website Hosting companies and providers
- Consult with your School/Department and where relevant seek ethical approval before posting, as part of your studies / research, pictures, videos or comments through social media that could be viewed as offensive or as bringing the University into disrepute.
- It is the responsibility of the University to:
 - ensure these guidelines are highlighted to students during Online Enrolment
 - ensure these guidelines are highlighted at student induction sessions
 - ensure these guidelines are published on the University website
 - monitor ULAB social networking sites and remove inappropriate content

4.2 Responsibilities of students in official University online/social media presence

- Remember that you are representing the University at all times when posting comments or responding to those made by others.
- Social media sites should not be used for raising and escalating concerns relating to your course, the University or any members of the University. Seek advice from your School/Department if you have any concerns.
- Ensure that you do not reveal confidential information about the University or its staff, students, partner organizations or clients.
- Comply with relevant professional codes when using social media as part a research study or project.
- Ensure you do not use your site or pages in any way that may compromise your current or future fitness to practice or employability.
- Obtain permission from the ULAB Communication Office before using the University's brand.
- Consult the ULAB Communication Office if there is any media interest resulting from your online activity.

4.3 Responsibilities of students in personal online/social media presence

- Be aware that third parties including the media, employers and Police can access profiles and view personal information. This includes pictures, videos, comments and posters. Inappropriate material found by third parties affects the perception of the student and the University and can have a negative impact on a student's future prospects.
- Communications made in a personal capacity through social media must not:
 - be unlawful – i.e. breach any Bangladeshi criminal and/or civil legislation,
 - include anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual. This includes:
 - making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age
 - using social media to bully another individual or
 - posting images that are discriminatory/offensive or links to such content
 - include defamatory comments about individuals or other groups
 - bring disrepute upon the University e.g. posting images or links to content likely to bring the University into disrepute. This includes:
 - Pictures, videos or comments that are of a sexual nature including links to websites of a pornographic nature and other inappropriate material

- Pictures, videos or comments that promote or encourage drunkenness or drug-related activity. This includes but is not limited to images that portray the personal use of drugs and drug paraphernalia.
- Pictures, videos or comments that depict or encourage unacceptable, violent, illegal or dangerous activities e.g. sexual harassment or assault, fighting, vandalism, academic dishonesty, drunkenness, drug use etc
- breach copyright e.g. using someone else's images or content without permission; failing to give acknowledgment where permission has been given to reproduce something;
- breach confidentiality, e.g., revealing confidential information owned by the University; giving away confidential information about an individual or organization.
- use the University's logo on personal social media sites

You also need to be aware of a number of other relevant policies and guidelines:

- [Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures for Students](#)
- [ULAB Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy](#)

5. Misuse of Social Media

- The University has the right to request the removal of content from an official social media account and from a personal account if it is deemed that the account or its submissions pose a risk to the reputation of the University or to that of one of its members.
- Students who post views, opinions or images online in breach of these Guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action. Your actions may also be subjected to prosecution under Bangladesh criminal and civil legislation
- Prospective employers may trawl social media sites as part of their selection process and the social media posts that you make could undermine your future employment prospects.

6. Staying Safe Online

- Only post what you would be happy for your parents, lecturers and prospective employers to see/read
- Remember that everything you post online is public, even with the strictest privacy settings. Once something is posted online, it can be copied and redistributed, and it is easy to lose control of it. Presume that everything posted online will be permanent and will be shared
- Think before you send. Avoid posting anything when you are feeling angry – you may regret it the next day but it could be viral by then
- Remember that what is a 'joke' to one person may feel like bullying and harassment to someone else. ULAB doesn't tolerate bullying and harassment. If you feel bullied on-line, seek advice from a Proctor's Office.
- Be aware that posting 'jokes' has led some people to be prosecuted and even imprisoned. Don't post things that may be considered offensive or make 'joke' threats.
- Ensure that you protect your personal information and that of others that could be misused (e.g. home address, telephone number, date of birth)
- Think about who you want to be able to see your information and set privacy settings accordingly. Remember that even with strict privacy settings, others can share your posts so you have no control over who sees them
- Don't say or write anything that could have a negative impact on the reputation of

anyone or any company. Any statement which could have a negative impact on a person (or business') reputation could lead to accusations of libel / defamation and lawsuits

- Be very cautious about arranging to meet someone you only know on-line. They may not be who they say they are. Arrange to meet during the day in a public place and take a friend or tell friends where you are going

7. Avoid being Addicted

Did you know?.....

- Negative mood, depression, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, as well as social isolation, low self-esteem and psychosis are all associated with internet addiction
- Smartphone users check their phones 150 times a day on average
- Phone addicts are often easily distracted, suffer disrupted sleep and are tempted to lie about their phone use
- Overuse of a smartphone can lead to a range of physical and psychological disorders

So what can you do?.....

- Schedule your internet time and keep parts of the day 'internet free'
- Don't use the internet in bed just before you sleep or during meals
- Go for walks and don't take your phone – if you want to take photos, take a camera
- When you're relaxing, read a book rather than surfing the internet
- Spend face to face time with friends and switch your phone off so you can give them your full attention
- Join clubs and societies so you can get out and be active
- Accept that you don't have to answer every email/text message immediately
- Disable unnecessary notifications
- Take regular breaks
- Make the internet work for you, don't become a slave to it

8. Further Information

The following links have useful information on keeping safe and other issues:

- [The Information Commissioner's Office's social networking guidance](#)
- [The National Cyber Security Alliance's Stay Safe Online website](#)
- [Get Safe Online](#)
- [Wikipedia's cyberstalking page](#)
- [Twitter users: A guide to the law](#)

9. Relevant External Legislation

- The Cyber Security Act 2023 (previously known as The Digital Security Act 2018)