
Guidance Document

**G1269 Use of Social
media**

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MAYOR OF LONDON



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1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Guidance is to ensure staff understand how to avoid their private use of Social Media affecting their employment.
- 1.2 Use of Social Media is a popular and private activity that is largely unrelated to work. However, it is also a new and rapidly changing area of technology and communication which even when used in a private capacity, can often unintentionally affect people's relationships with both their fellow colleagues and their employer.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This Guidance applies to all grades of LUL staff during working hours **and** in your own time

3 What is Social media?

Web based social media tools that provide ways for users to interact over the internet. Examples include:

- Social networking sites e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and MySpace
- Blogs – diary like sites created by an individual and commented on by a community of followers
- Instant Messaging services such as Office Communicator, MSN and BBM (BlackBerry Messenger)
- Wikis – web pages which allow and encourage users to contribute/modify content such as Wikipedia
- Media sharing sites such as Flickr and YouTube
- Social bookmarking – e.g. storing and categorising bookmarks of web pages on the internet such as StumbleUpon

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

The LUL Code of Conduct states that all staff must not do anything on or off duty which could damage LUL's reputation. Anyone who can be identified with LUL and/or shares their private views about LUL/TfL or anyone associated with it in a public manner should already be aware that inappropriate comments or remarks which breach our policies and procedures may constitute gross misconduct and lead to disciplinary action. The format of Social Media means that without proper care being taken, it is very easy for your personal views and opinions to be made public. Often that is a person's deliberate intention, however, all staff should take great care with comments, pictures etc as:

- A comment/post made in a private capacity could impact on your formal employment relationships if it is likely to cause reputational damage to LUL/TfL or offence to our staff or customers

- When referring or speaking to fellow colleagues, please remember that policies like Harassment and Bullying still apply, even if the incident occurs on a Social Media site or other virtual/online environment
- Inappropriate comments about LUL/TfL's customers or suppliers etc or the disclosure of confidential information/documents belonging to LUL/TfL could 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
- Any comments and posts, particularly on sites such as Facebook and Twitter, can be easily shared or re-tweeted by followers and friends, even if your privacy settings are water-tight

5 Good practice guide for the use of Social Media

- Always assume that comments made by you are publicly available and can be viewed by fellow colleagues and/or customers
- As a general rule, never say anything online that you would not say publicly, in writing or to a person directly. Just because it's online, on a Social Media site or out of working hours it does not mean you are not directly responsible for any consequences, or that you may not have breached important employment policies
- Frequently ensure privacy settings are applied correctly. Websites such as Facebook often revert settings after updates
- 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
- Remember that behaviour can be treated the same whether online or not. Please bear this in mind with messages, comments and pictures which could constitute as bullying or harassment of colleagues or customers (e.g. on the grounds of race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation, nationality and/or age)
- If information about LUL/TfL published on Social Media sites such as Twitter by external parties is incorrect, inflammatory or of a nature that you believe requires a formal LUL/TfL response, please bring this to the attention of a senior manager immediately and do not feel the need to respond personally

Note 1: Users are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the documents in the following section

Note 2: If you are unsure about any aspect of this guidance, please contact a People Management Adviser.

6 References

6.1 Documents

Document number	Document title	Source
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Document number	Document title	Source
	Managers Handbook : Employee code of Conduct	
5-267	Email and Internet Standard	
	LU Code of Conduct	
	Disciplinary Procedure	
	Harassment & Bullying Procedure	
	TfL Information Assurance Quick Guide 6 – Use of social media	

6.2 Subject Matter Expert

Subject Matter Expert
Employee Relations

6.3 Document history

Issue no	Date	Changes	Author
A1	February 2012	Introduction of new guidance on social media in line with DRACCT submission 01182	Natalie Martin