

Royal Northern College of Music
Social Media Policy (Staff)
Policy and Procedure
Department: Marketing and Student Recruitment
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RNCM
ROYAL NORTHERN
COLLEGE of MUSIC

1. Scope

Social media consists of digital platforms and applications that allow us to communicate, create, share, and interact with content and each other.

This policy includes, but is not limited to, sites such as: Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, X, WhatsApp, Threads, WeChat, Snapchat, Pinterest, TikTok, Reddit, Discord, and Twitch.

The Marketing and Student Recruitment team manages the RNCM's official social media accounts and uses them to communicate with multiple stakeholders, including prospective and current students, staff, alumni, supporters, professional partners, events audiences, and the wider community.

Staff are encouraged, but not obligated, to interact with these channels via their personal social media accounts to help promote the RNCM brand and the various areas of its work. However, staff are asked to be mindful of their contributions, what they disclose about the College, and to ensure that their social media usage does not damage the RNCM's reputation or interfere with business and/or office commitments.

Staff must use these platforms appropriately and professionally when communicating with or about the RNCM, our students and staff, and wider stakeholder groups.

2. Purpose

The RNCM Social Media Policy exists to help employees make appropriate decisions about their social media usage and outlines the College's official social media guidelines that all staff are expected to follow.

The policy aims to support the use of social media as a strategic communication tool, while ensuring that staff online engagement is safe, responsible, and aligned with the RNCM's brand and core values.

3. Policy

The Marketing and Student Recruitment team encourages staff to engage positively and thoughtfully with RNCM-related content and to use their platform to share good news about the organisation and their wider work across the sector. If possible, staff **should** consider the following when referencing the RNCM:

- Tagging the RNCM's official channels (@ncmlive on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and LinkedIn) where relevant to maximise reach and increase brand awareness;
- Liking, commenting on, and sharing official posts; and
- Using the [Social Media Content Request Form](#) to notify the Marketing and Student Recruitment team in advance of any opportunities to capture, share, and/or collaborate on suitable content.

However, all RNCM employees, both full- and part-time across all departments and schools, **must not**:

- Post derogatory or offensive comments on social media;
- Use the internet, and in particular social media sites, to attack or abuse students, staff, other stakeholders, and/or partners. Please also see the [Dignity at Work Policy](#);
- Use the RNCM's name and/or logo to create an unofficial RNCM social media account; or
- Create a social media account to represent an area of the RNCM without prior consent from the Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment.

Instances where a member of staff's social media use brings the RNCM into disrepute may constitute misconduct and result in disciplinary action being taken.

4. Use of social networking sites

If a member of staff's personal internet presence does not make any reference to the RNCM and its staff and/or students cannot be identified, the content is unlikely to be of interest to the organisation. However, staff should remain mindful that their online activity may still be visible to peers, collaborators, and institutions across the wider Higher Education sector and beyond. As such, it is important to consider how personal content may reflect on professional reputation and the perception of the RNCM externally.

When using social media, the following guidelines below must be followed:

- Staff should be mindful of the information they disclose on social networking sites and the relationships they may develop using such media.
- Staff are free to talk about the RNCM but should be mindful of the impact their contribution might make to people's perceptions of the College and act in a manner that does not bring the organisation into disrepute. Instances where the RNCM is brought into disrepute may constitute misconduct and disciplinary action will be applied.
- Staff should be considerate to their colleagues and students and should not post information, photos, or videos when they have been asked not to. They should also remove information and content as far as possible about a colleague/student if that colleague/student asks them to do so.
- Staff should not post or forward a link to any abusive, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory, defamatory, or inappropriate content.
- Sites should not be used to verbally abuse staff or students. This may amount to cyber-bullying and could be deemed a disciplinary offence. Privacy and the feelings of others should be respected at all times. A member of staff who

feels that they have been harassed or bullied or are offended by material posted by a colleague onto a social media website, should inform the Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment.

- Staff must not post material in breach of copyright or other intellectual property rights. As such, the permission of individuals/institutions should be obtained as appropriate before posting contact details, photographs, videos, and/or recordings.
- If approached by a media contact about content on a site relating to the RNCM, staff should inform their line manager before taking any action. The College's Director and/or Deputy Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment must be consulted in such cases.
- Sites should not be used for accessing or sharing illegal content.
- Staff must not use social media to contact students under the age of 18.
- Staff must not share content on social media in which students and young people under the age of 18 can be identified without prior written consent from a parent or guardian. This includes all material that may also identify the school and/or organisation to which they belong.

Please note: Staff are reminded that freedom of expression is protected under the RNCM's [Code of Practice - Freedom of Expression](#), and social media use should be exercised in line with this guidance.

5. Affiliated accounts

Social media accounts representing any area of the RNCM **must not** be created without submitting an official application to the Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment. If approved, all affiliated accounts must be established and initially owned by the Marketing and Student Recruitment team.

Anyone posting on behalf of the RNCM is required to follow this policy, along with any additional social media guidelines provided. The Marketing and Student Recruitment team reserves the right to remove any account without prior notice if deemed necessary.

6. Confidentiality

When using social media, staff must not disclose any confidential or sensitive information related to the RNCM. This includes, but is not limited to, commercially sensitive data, embargoed announcements, internal discussions, or personal information.

7. Engaging with students

The RNCM values the benefits of an active and engaged community, where positive interactions between staff and students contribute to a vibrant learning environment.

However, it is important to recognise that staff hold a position of authority in relation to students, regardless of the student's age, maturity, or level of study.

Staff should remain mindful of this dynamic when interacting with students via social media. Any communication or content shared should reflect the same level of professionalism expected in formal public settings. Before choosing to engage with students over the age of 18 through social media, staff are advised to carefully consider whether this is the most appropriate channel for communication.

Email remains the preferred method for direct communication with students. That said, the RNCM acknowledges that staff may wish to publicly support and celebrate student achievements online. In such cases, staff may engage with students' professional social media accounts by commenting publicly on relevant posts, ensuring that interactions remain appropriate and respectful.

8. Consequences of non-compliance

The RNCM does not discourage staff from using social networking sites. However, all employees should be aware that the College will take seriously any occasions where the sites are used inappropriately.

If you have disclosed your affiliation as an employee of the RNCM, it is important to ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to colleagues and prospective students.

Any member of staff found to be engaging in any form of online activity that is deemed as cyber bullying, bringing the RNCM's reputation into disrepute, and/or using the internet in any way to attack or abuse students, colleagues, or tutors, may face disciplinary action.

Please reference the College's [Disciplinary Policy](#) for more information.

9. Reporting

Misuse of social media websites can, in certain circumstances, constitute a criminal offence or otherwise give rise to legal liability. If you notice any use of social media by other members of staff in breach of this policy, please report it to the Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

[Code of Practice Freedom of Expression](#)

[Dignity at Work Policy](#)

[IT Policy](#)

[Online Safety Policy](#)

[Photography and Filming Policy](#)

[Relationships Between College Staff and Students](#)