

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Last updated: 4 June 2024

To be effective from: 1 July 2024

Introduction

Social media is one of the main ways in which the College can engage and inform internal and external audiences about its activities, and raise its profile among prospective students, staff and Fellows, donors, partner organisations and the general public. It is important that staff and Fellows required to use the College's official social media accounts are able to fulfil their duties with confidence, while protecting the College and its reputation, and preventing any legal issues.

This policy sets out how social media should be used to support the charitable objectives of St Catharine's, including expected standards for users of the College's official social media and guidance for all students, staff and Fellows who use social media in a personal capacity. Before engaging in work-related social media activity, staff and Fellows must read this policy. It is also important that all students, staff and Fellows refer to our Appropriate Use of IT Policy when using the internet at St Catharine's, including for social media activities.

The Communications Manager at St Catharine's is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of the College's official social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, speak to the Communications Manager. Ordinarily, no-one else posts content directly using the College's official social media accounts and groups, without the agreement of the Communications Manager. Where such an agreement is in place, these other users and the scope of their activity are documented under 'Official social media channels' below.

Official social media channels

St Catharine's actively uses the following official social media channels (in approximate chronological order of set-up):

Channel	Profile name with hyperlink	Purpose	Primary users
X (formerly known as Twitter)	St Catharine's College	To engage and inform the College's internal and external audiences, particularly alumni, Fellows, parents of existing and prospective students, teachers, the general public and prospective and existing partner organisations and donors.	The Communications Manager
Facebook	St Catharine's College Cambridge	To engage and inform the College's internal and external audiences, particularly alumni, students, staff, Fellows and parents of existing and prospective students.	The Alumni & Development Office's Events Officer publishes albums of photographs after relevant events (such as graduation ceremonies and alumni reunions).

Facebook	Alumni of St Catharine's College	To host a private group that will enable alumni and former Fellows to interact and forge connections with others from across the College's global alumni network, and to share current College news, events and opportunities relevant to the alumni community.	The Development Manager is responsible for moderating and publishing content within this group. The Database Manager has oversight of alumni requests to join the group. In addition, the Development Director is an active member and posts directly into the group.
Instagram	St Catharine's College	To engage and inform the College's internal and external audiences, particularly existing and prospective students, staff, Fellows, partners and donors, as well as alumni.	The Communications Manager
Instagram	St Catharine's College Conference & Events	To raise awareness of the College's conference, event and catering services to prospective and existing customers.	The Conference Manager is responsible for the publishing of content.
Instagram	St Catharine's College Bar	To encourage students to use the Bar and raise awareness of new offerings and promotions.	The Bar Manager publishes content once it has been agreed with the Catering & Conference Director.
LinkedIn	St Catharine's College	To engage and inform the College's internal and external audiences, particularly alumni and existing and prospective students, staff and Fellows.	The Communications Manager. In addition the HR Manager is able to post vacancies.
LinkedIn	Alumni of St Catharine's College	To host a private group that will enable alumni and former Fellows to interact and forge connections with others from across the College's global alumni network, and to share current College news, events and opportunities relevant to the alumni community.	The Development Manager is responsible for moderating and publishing content within this group. The Database Manager has oversight of alumni requests to join the group. In addition, the Development Director is an active member, posts directly and will maintain oversight of activity.
YouTube	St Catharine's College, Cambridge	To engage and inform the College's internal and external audiences, particularly alumni, schools, teachers and existing and prospective students, staff and Fellows.	The Communications Manager. The Chaplain and the Music Director also organise regular livestreamed Chapel services and events using YouTube Live. The Development Manager is also able to upload video content to support to the Alumni & Development Office's activities.
TikTok	St Catharine's College	To engage and inform prospective undergraduate students so they can make an informed decision when choosing where to apply.	The Communications Manager

Expected conduct when using St Catharine's official social media channels

1. The Communications Manager is responsible for setting up and managing St Catharine's social media channels, with any exceptions documented above under 'Official social media channels'. Only those authorised to do so by the Communications Manager will have access to these accounts.
2. No other official social media channels should be set up on behalf of St Catharine's College, without the support of the Communications Manager and the agreement of the IT & Management Committee.
3. Content is published as and when required, with the option to use automated scheduling tools so that posts can be published outside working hours or when staff may be offline or on leave.
4. Content published on official social media channels should have a genuine purpose and benefit for St Catharine's, reflect the College's charitable objectives and agreed position, and use a tone of voice that would be recognisable and authentic for anyone visiting us in person.
5. If any staff, Fellows or students require content to be published on the College's official social media, they are encouraged to contact the Communications Manager about this in the first instance to discuss how new ideas can be implemented.
6. Care should be taken with the presentation of content to avoid misunderstandings, typos, misspellings or grammatical errors.
7. Information about St Catharine's activities involving students, staff, Fellows, donors, partners or conference/event customers that is not already in the public domain should only be published with their express permission. Permission can be sought through the Alumni & Development Office for donors, the Conference Manager for any conference/event customers or the relevant lead for partners who have entered into a collaboration with a College department.
8. The Communications Manager will endeavour to respond to comments Monday–Friday 8.15am–5pm UK time, with *ad hoc* monitoring on evenings and weekends (although commenters should not ordinarily expect a response until the next working day).
9. Not all comments on social media require a response. Comments left by users legitimately seeking information should receive a timely, polite and helpful reply. Liking or thanking users who support the content posted by the College can strengthen relationships and can be used by social media algorithms to boost the reach of content.
10. It is essential to present an honest picture of the College's activities and that our social media activities uphold standards of behaviour expected in higher education around plagiarism. Generative AI tools are available to social media users and St Catharine's staff should be wary that content posted by others may not be original or unaltered. Follow the University's guidance on these tools: <https://www.communications.cam.ac.uk/generative-ai-tool-guidelines>.
11. Always check facts. Staff should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics.

12. Staff should refrain from broadcasting their personal opinions or preferences through St Catharine's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by "liking", "sharing" or "reposting", or responding to direct messages in an inappropriate manner. If you are in doubt about the College's position on a particular issue, please speak to the Communications Manager or the Master.
13. St Catharine's is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties.

Safeguarding and safety

14. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a young person under the age of 18 years old, staff must ensure they have the consent (verbally or ideally in writing) from a parent or guardian before using them on social media.
15. If responding to questions from a user who is likely to be a child, young person or vulnerable adult, due care should be given to the College's safeguarding responsibilities and reflect that direct messaging through social media is not generally the most appropriate forum for ongoing one-to-one communication with these groups.
16. For admissions questions from young people, any response from the College on its social media should signpost to colleagues with appropriate training and clearance, e.g. provide a short answer to their immediate question followed by advice that "further questions would be welcome by email to our admissions team (undergraduate.admissions@caths.cam.ac.uk)".
17. The College does not use its official social media accounts to speculatively monitor the activity of the St Catharine's community, except in cases where reports have been received that constitute a risk to individual(s), College property or College reputation. In such cases, the College reserves the right to examine public posts involving St Catharine's members or locations.
18. If users of the College's official social media accounts see any member of the College community post content that raises concerns for their safety, health or wellbeing concerns, staff will refer this information to the College's Health & Wellbeing team.
19. It is vital that St Catharine's does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials (e.g. a video of a stunt or participating in a viral trend that is unsafe).
20. Staff should not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material. Posts should not include photos of pages from newspapers or magazines not produced by the College which may lead to invoices from the UK's Newspaper Licensing Agency.
21. To protect current students who may intermit, admission information (e.g. dates, subjects) are only provided after the names of alumni and Fellows. Student names are followed instead by 'a [year of study] [subject] undergraduate' or 'a [subject] [postgraduate degree type] student'.
22. If users of the College's official social media accounts see any member of the College community post content that raises concerns given our statutory duty to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism, staff will refer this information to the College's Prevent lead (currently the Senior Tutor).

Moderation and freedom of speech

23. The College is strongly committed to the principle of freedom of speech and expression and has a published statement to that effect, which should guide the moderation of posts by other users in reply to our content and within private groups on social media.
24. The College agrees to abide by the Terms and Conditions published by social media platforms, to maintain its official social media presence and requires members of its private groups to do the same. Social media platforms can disable and/or reduce the functionality of accounts or groups judged to have infringed these Terms and Conditions. The College therefore reserves the right to remove content that fails to comply with these Terms and Conditions.
25. The same comment posted repeatedly should be regarded as spam and deleted.
26. Users of the College's official social media accounts will block suspected spam or bot accounts if their posts create a nuisance
27. Users of the College's official social media accounts should not click on links included in suspicious or spam content even if this originates from a user account that was previously known to be legitimate. Instead, we will endeavour to contact the individual in case this is an indication that their account has been hacked (also known as cuckooing).
28. The College reserves the right to hide or delete any comments or posts that contain commercial solicitations, factual errors or unlawful remarks (including libel), or are wildly off-topic or referring to another organisation by a similar name. Before deleting, it may be helpful to screenshot a comment and share this record with colleagues for their information.

Complaints and crises

29. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. If a complaint is raised on St Catharine's social media channels, this should be referred to the Communications Manager. If they are not available, then staff should speak to the Bursar before responding.
30. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to a charity's reputation. Users of the College's official social media should refer any relevant mentions of St Catharine's to the Communications Manager so we can catch any issues or problems early.
31. Relevant Trustees will discuss and agree an appropriate response to an issue or crisis with the Communications Manager, in line with the College's Rapid Response Process. These discussions will consider if the College is required to report a [serious incident](#) to the Charity Commission or make reports to the police or other regulators. In addition, it may be necessary to pause the publication of any further content on the College's social media to avoid appearing out-of-touch or uncaring about the crisis. Agreed responses will be reported to the College's Strategic Planning Committee.

Training

32. The Communications Manager and any authorised users should complete any training mandated by the College before accessing official social media accounts. They are also able to participate in professional development and training opportunities provided by the College and the wider Collegiate University. Additional training needs to ensure the effectiveness of these official social media accounts should be referred to the HR Manager.

Editing and correcting content

33. While the utmost care should be taken, social media platforms provide users with functions to edit and/or delete content after it has been published. Errors in posts and our replies to comments should be addressed by using these tools in a timely manner, with consideration given to the importance of maintaining trust with our audiences. If an edit or correction is needed, the table below is provided to guide decisions. Any users who are unclear about how to proceed can contact the Communications Manager to discuss further.

Correction/edit type	Recommended approach
Image quality/shape issues	Consider if this issue is a barrier to audiences' understanding and engaging with the post: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If no, leave the original post uncorrected. • If yes, replace as soon as possible. Since X does not allow editing, instead delete the original post and replace with a duplicate post with the issue corrected.
Another user edits or deletes their original comment or post, so the College's replies no longer stand or make sense.	Consider if this issue has a significant bearing on audiences' engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If no, leave the reply. If yes, consider value to other users of either editing the reply or deleting completely.
Notable misspelling or typo	Edit as soon as possible. Since X does not allow editing, instead delete the original post and replace with a duplicate post with the issue corrected. If the issue is identified by another user, thank them and advise them that the original post has now been corrected.
Minor typo (e.g. missing space, double space)	Edit if possible but do not delete any original posts. If the issue is identified by another user, thank them and advise them that the original post has now been corrected/will be corrected next time.
Incomplete content (e.g. extra hashtags needed, missing tags for individuals/ organisations, missing photo credit)	Edit if possible but do not delete any original posts. If the issue is identified by another user, apologise and advise them that the original post has now been corrected/will be corrected next time.
New information is suddenly available (i.e. the original post is almost immediately out of date)	Edit as soon as possible by adding the additional information towards the end of the post with a new section starting 'UPDATE:'. Since X does not allow editing, instead reply to the original post with information starting 'UPDATE:'. Send a brief report to relevant Senior College Officers so there is transparency in case individuals raise the issue with them. If the issue is identified by another user, thank them and advise them that the original post has now been corrected.
Major error (e.g. draft post sent before fully written, or a full post is sent when not appropriate for publication)	Delete as soon as possible, noting number of views/engagements. Send a brief report to relevant Senior College Officers so there is transparency in case individuals raise the error with them. If the issue is identified by another user, thank them and advise them that the original post has now been corrected.

Security and continuity

33. Treat social media interactions with the same critical approach as you would for emails and be cautious about any links. Consult the College's IT team if you are unsure how to proceed. The National Cyber Security Centre also publishes helpful advice [on using social media safely](#).
34. Only use authorised devices to access and manage the College's official social media accounts and associated tools. College-owned devices are maintained by our IT team, who keep software and security systems up-to-date. The TikTok app should not be added to any College-owned devices except the standalone device provided to the Communications Manager to manage the College's account.
35. Social media accounts should be accessed using passwords that are not predictable or common, at least eight characters and complex (e.g. combining words, special characters, upper case and/or lower case letters). If available from the IT team, a password manager tool should be used to store log-in details on a secure encrypted database.
36. Never share password information with any unauthorised users or third parties, and do not participate in online challenges and quizzes which are a common method used to gather password information or gain personal details that are often used as forgotten password clues.
37. Two-factor authentication is not fool-proof, but it does provide a powerful extra layer of security for social media accounts. This should be activated (if the option is available) on all College social media accounts and the tools that are used to manage our social media. If a choice is available, the Microsoft Authenticator app or College email addresses should be given as the destination for passcodes (rather than CRSIDs or mobile phone numbers).
38. To ensure continuity across social media activities in the event of sudden illness or changes in personal circumstances:
 - The Communications Manager will ensure the Bursar and at least one representative from the Alumni & Development Office also has access to the social media log-in details, passwords and, where relevant, two-factor authentication back-up codes.
 - Other users will ensure the Communications Manager also has access to the social media log-in details, passwords and, where relevant, two-factor authentication back-up codes; and
 - There will be no fewer than two staff assigned administrative privileges on any platform that requires designated named administrators (e.g. Facebook and LinkedIn).
39. Conversely, where named user accounts are required to access an official College account (e.g. on LinkedIn and Facebook), these user account details should not be shared with others.
40. Take care when switching between the College's official account and a personal account on the same social media platform. Check before posting content so you can be sure it will be published by the correct account.
41. The Communications Manager will notify Senior College Officers in advance to explain how social media will be managed during periods of leave. Other staff involved in the management of social media will notify the Communications Manager and their relevant Senior College Officer in advance to explain how social media will be managed during periods of leave.

Expected conduct by the St Catharine's community when using personal social media

Guidance is available from the College's website for:

- [St Catharine's students](#)
- [St Catharine's Fellows and staff](#)

Expected conduct by St Catharine's students when using unofficial social media channels

The Junior Combination Room (JCR), Middle Combination Room (MCR), student societies and student clubs of St Catharine's may have good cause to establish their own social media accounts to support communications with their members. For the purposes of this policy, these are considered personal social media as they have no official status and no oversight by the College apart from its general policies on student behaviour.

Presidents and captains should ensure that any social media accounts include in their profile information: For official information [abbreviated to info if required] about St Catharine's, visit [the appropriate link or handle for the official College account].

Accessibility

In order that social media content can be understood by all users, posts should:

- Avoid or define any jargon that prospective students and others may not be familiar with;
- Define any abbreviations in full; and
- Accompany images with alt text (alternative text, which briefly describes the content of images so it can be understood by users with visual impairments).

If an automated scheduling tool does not enable alt text for specific platforms (e.g. Hootsuite does not provide alt text for Instagram images published through its app), users should ensure any information contained in the image is replicated in the post text, i.e. there is no disadvantage to users with visual impairments.

Archiving

In the event that an official social media account ceases to be useful, the Communications Manager (working with other staff involved) will recommend an approach to the IT & Management Committee for agreement. In most instances, this approach will likely entail publishing a notice to signpost users to another official account or platform that is still in use and leaving the historical content visible as a helpful resource to other users.

An official social media account should never be deleted without consulting the Communications Manager and the Librarian. The historical content published by the College is likely to have archival value and this should be stored offline before deletion.

Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether staff are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring St Catharine's into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

Copyright law

It is critical that all staff abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

Discrimination and harassment

Users of the College's official social media accounts must not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or links to such content

Use of social media in the recruitment process

Any advertising of vacancies should be done through the HR Manager. Vacancies are shared routinely on LinkedIn and, where a wider reach is needed, other social media channels as agreed between the Communications Manager and HR Manager.

The College does not ordinarily use its official social media accounts for any systematic or routine checking of candidates' online social media activities during the recruitment process, as conducting these searches might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics, such as religious beliefs or sexual orientation, played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with the College's Equal Opportunities Policy Statement.

Compliance and complaints

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Breaches of policy may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue. Please refer to our disciplinary procedures. Anyone who is unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy should seek advice from the Communications Manager.

Complaints about the use of the College's official social media accounts should be submitted to the Communications Manager in the first instance.