



**Young Farmers'
Clubs of Ulster**

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This policy was approved
by the Board of Directors
of the Young Farmers'
Clubs of Ulster

Date: 6 September 2018

Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

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Policy Details

Document Details

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Approval Date

6 September 2018 Management Board Meeting

Accountability

All employees, members and volunteers of the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

Introduction to Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU) was founded in 1929 and is an open, non-political body operating by means of an association of individual clubs throughout Northern Ireland. YFCU is the largest rural youth organisation in Northern Ireland. It provides a support network to young people to the rural community and offers members a range of training opportunities, competitions, travel and exchanges.

YFCU is an organisation for young people run by young people between the ages of 12 and 30 years old. Executive County and Club officials are all elected annually within the membership.

Vision:

The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster's vision is of a robust rural community which recognises and values all young people as key stakeholders.

Mission:

Our mission is to encourage individual development. Creativity, initiative and contribution for the benefit of members, the Association, industry and community.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. Purpose of policy

This policy is intended to help employees of YFCU make appropriate decisions about the use of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+ and LinkedIn. Other social media includes but is not exclusive to blogs, video, picture blogging and audio.

This policy outlines the standards YFCU requires staff to observe when using social media, the circumstances in which YFCU will monitor your use of social media and the action that will be taken in respect of breaches of this policy. The principles of this policy apply to use of social media regardless of the method used to access it - it covers static and mobile IT/computer equipment, as well as work and/or personal smartphones etc.

2. Who is covered by the policy

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers.

3. Why use social media

Social media enables us to recruit new members, promote events or to seek feedback on key services.

4. Responsibility for implementation of the policy

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.

All staff are responsible for their own compliance with this policy and for ensuring that it is consistently applied. All staff should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any breach of this policy should be reported to CEO.

Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to CEO.

5. Using work-related social media

Only the PR, Marketing and Communications Officer or those delegated by her or the CEO are permitted to post material on a social media website in the company's name and behalf. Anyone who breaches this restriction will face the company's disciplinary procedure.

Approved social media websites for YFCU are Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat and Instagram and YFCU official website. This list may be updated by CEO.

Before using work-related social media you must:

- have read and understood this policy and refer to other relevant policies; and
- have sought and gained prior written approval to do so from CEO.

The roles and functions which will be needed moving forward have been identified as follows:

- tweeting corporate news and relevant stories
- advertising promotions on Facebook.
- Brand promotion and competitions through SnapChat and Instagram

6. Personal use of social media

Personal use of social media in the workplace is permitted, subject to certain conditions, as detailed below. It must not be abused or overused and the company reserves the right to withdraw permission at any time.

The following conditions must be met for personal use to continue:

- use must be minimal and take place substantially outside of normal working hours, for example during breaks and lunchtime for members of staff team.
- use must not interfere with business or office commitments
- use must comply with our policies including the relevant policies such as Equal Opportunities Policy, Anti-Harassment Policy, Data Protection Policy and Disciplinary Procedure.

You are also personally responsible for what you communicate on social media sites **outside the workplace**, for example at home, in your own time, using your own equipment. You must always be mindful of your contributions and what you disclose about YFCU. For further details, see Point 7, 'General rules for social media use' below.

7. General rules for social media use

Whenever you are permitted to use social media in accordance with this policy, you must adhere to the following general rules. The same rules would also apply when using social media outside of work:

- Do not post or forward a link to any abusive, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory, defamatory or inappropriate content.
- A member of staff who feels that they have been harassed or bullied, or are offended by material posted by a staff, volunteer or member onto a social media website should inform the CEO.

- A member or volunteer of YFCU who feels that they have been harassed or bullied, or are offended by material posted by a staff, volunteer or member onto a social media website should inform their locally elected club representative.
- Never disclose commercially sensitive, anti-competitive, private or confidential information. If you are unsure whether the information you wish to share falls within one of these categories, you should discuss this with the CEO.
- Do not post material in breach of copyright or other intellectual property rights.
- Be honest and open, but be mindful of the impact your contribution might make to people's perceptions of the company.
- You are personally responsible for content you publish – be aware that it will be public for many years.
- When using social media for personal use, use a disclaimer, for example: 'The views expressed are my own and don't reflect the views of YFCU'. Be aware though that even if you make it clear that your views on such topics do not represent those of the organisation, your comments could still damage our reputation.
- You should avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage our business reputation, even indirectly.
- Do not post anything that your colleagues or members, partners or suppliers would find offensive, insulting, obscene and/or discriminatory.
- If you have disclosed your affiliation as an employee or member of our organisation you must ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to other members, partners or colleagues.

8. Monitoring use of social media

Staff and members should be aware that any use of social media websites (whether or not accessed for work purposes) may be monitored and, where breaches of this policy are found, action may be taken under YFCU Disciplinary Procedure.

YFCU reserves the right to restrict or prevent access to certain social media websites if personal use is considered to be excessive. Monitoring is only carried out to the extent permitted or as required by law and as necessary and justifiable for organisational purposes.

Misuse of social media websites can, in certain circumstances, constitute a criminal offence or otherwise give rise to legal liability against you and the company.

If you notice any use of social media by a member of staff or branch member in breach of this policy please report it to your locally elected representative or the CEO.

Where it is believed that an employee or member has failed to comply with this policy, they will face the organisation's disciplinary procedure. If the employee or member is found to

have breached the policy, they will face a disciplinary penalty ranging from a verbal warning to dismissal as a staff member or the relevant volunteer/member disciplinary action.

The penalty applied will depend on factors such as the seriousness of the breach; the nature of the posting; the impact it has had on the organisation or the individual concerned; whether the comments cause problems given the employee's role; whether the employer can be identified by the postings; other mitigating factors such as the employee's disciplinary record etc. Remember the same test of reasonableness applies when dismissing for improper use of social media as it would for any other misconduct dismissal. These procedures are specific to YFCU. They reflect our normal operational and disciplinary processes for both paid staff, volunteers and members of YFCU. Each individual involved in the organisation will be aware of these procedures in relation to social media from the outset of their involvement with YFCU.

Policy review and update

The CEO has overall responsibility for the review and update of this policy at the beginning of each year or more regularly as required.

9. Agreement

All employees, contractors or temporary staff are required to sign this agreement confirming their understanding and acceptance of this policy. All volunteers and member should be informed of the social media policy and the standards required an expected of all individuals involved and taking an active participatory role in YFCU.