

## Section 23: BIMM Institute Social Media Policy

### Overview

The BIMM Social Media Policy (students) and Guidelines are designed for students using social media at BIMM. These pages provide guidance on the BIMM's Social Media Policy and usage; how, why and when to use social media; and etiquette and best practice.

The purpose of the Policy and Guidelines is to:

- Encourage effective and beneficial use of social media;
- Protect Students, BIMM and its community;
- Set out how BIMM engages with, and monitors the use, of social media to ensure that it is not used to promote extremist materials or activities, and in England only, comply with the Prevent Statutory Duty.

### BIMM's social media presences:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Google+
- SoundCloud
- LinkedIn

For BIMM staff using these channels there is a separate policy.

### Contact

If you have any questions about the content of the Policy or Guidelines, or would like assistance with setting up effective social media channels, please contact **BIMM Marketing**, who manage BIMM's social media presence: [marketing@bimm.co.uk](mailto:marketing@bimm.co.uk).

If you have any concerns that BIMM or other students are using social media in an inappropriate way which is in breach of the BIMM Student Code of Conduct please contact BIMM Marketing ([marketing@bimm.co.uk](mailto:marketing@bimm.co.uk)) in the first instance.

### About Social Media

Social media has become a valuable means of communication. The education sector is making the most of this to engage quickly with key audiences. Many students will use social media in all aspects of their life. BIMM therefore has a responsibility to support and advise them of best practice.

### Personal Social Media Usage

If you are a student with a personal social media account that you also use professionally and/or in connection with your role as a student at BIMM (e.g. to promote your work, or to represent your profession or area), the following wording or similar should be included in the brief description/'about me' section:

*'The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of BIMM.'*

### Other Relevant Policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Student Code of Conduct

### Defining social media

Broadly, social media refers to any form of media that encourages online social interaction between users and content creators. Current leading examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, SoundCloud, LinkedIn, Flickr and YouTube, and tools such as wikis and blogs. However, the social media landscape can and does change rapidly: what is popular today may drop significantly in popularity the following year, and new tools may arise just as quickly.

### How BIMM is using social media

BIMM has embraced the use of social media as an important and valuable part of its **communications and marketing activities**. Not only does social media allow us to share our news, events, activities and important information with our immediate audiences and with the wider world, but it also allows us to listen, respond and build relationships with our community.

The **social, conversational** element is central to our use of social media, and our approach favours genuine and informal communications and relationship-building over overt marketing methods. In addition, social media helps us to understand what students are saying about us. **Word of mouth** is a key decision maker for prospective students and, through social media, we can find out how we are perceived. This can help BIMM in its other marketing and communications activities.

### BIMM's Primary Social media channels:

- **Facebook:** BIMMBrighton/ BIMMBristol/ BIMMManchester/ BIMMLondon/ BIMMDublin/BimmBerlin
- **Twitter:** @BIMMBristol @BIMMBrighton @BIMMManchester @BIMMDublin @BIMMLondon @BIMMBerlin
- **YouTube:** /bimmtv

Each of the BIMM's primary channels prominently show the BIMM logo, as well as other forms of BIMM branding, to communicate to our audiences that content found in these areas is official BIMM information.

### Alumni relations

Social media is useful for keeping in contact and developing relationships with graduates. If you wish to be included in the alumni scheme please contact the BIMM's Alumni Officer, who is responsible for these activities: Rachel Mosleh (e-mail: [rachelmosleh@bimm.co.uk](mailto:rachelmosleh@bimm.co.uk) tel: 08442 646666)

### Should you use social media?

The growth of social media over the last few years has created many new and powerful opportunities for communication. But before you decide whether to set up a presence on social media, or if you have recently established your social media presence, you need to carefully consider your purpose and resource, and develop an appropriate strategy to match your goals.

### **How does BIMM monitor the use of social media?**

BIMM has a duty of care to its students and staff to ensure that no-one is exposed to inappropriate, abusive or defamatory comments or materials which breach the Student Code of Conduct. In England, BIMM also has a statutory obligation under the Prevent Duty to ensure that social media is not used to promote extremist material or activities which may place people at risk of being drawn into terrorism. BIMM therefore regularly monitors its social media channels and action will be taken to address any misuse of social media which is in breach of this policy and/or the BIMM Student Code of Conduct.

### **Best practice and etiquette:**

#### **Be respectful**

Anything you post on your site/group reflects directly on both the institution and yourself. Be professional and respectful at all times.

#### **Listen**

Being a *consumer* of social media content is essential to your ability to be a successful *producer* of social media content. 'Listen' to online conversations on your preferred tools – such as blogs, Twitter or Facebook – to maintain a clear and current understanding of what is relevant and of interest to the community, as well as to pick up tips and ideas for content from other people on social media.

#### **Your content will live forever**

Think before you post and remember that anything you share on social media is not private. It can be shared, stored and spread globally. Don't post anything online that could reflect negatively on yourself or that you wouldn't feel comfortable seeing on the front page of a newspaper or the BBC website.

#### **Don't let social media absorb all of your time**

A lot of time can be spent on social media without any gain. Limit the amount of time you spend attending to your site/group to just what is needed to post and respond to content, evaluate traffic data, review related sites, and monitor comments.

Social Media tools such as Hootsuite and Tweetdeck can be used to 'schedule' posts and updates throughout a time period, which can be useful if you have limited time to make updates.

#### **Getting your audience's attention**

Your posts are potentially competing for attention alongside hundreds of other posts, so you need to put some thought into what you post if you want to get the reader's attention.

Consider the **words** you use and the order you use them. For example, if you just repeat a headline from a news story you want to link to you will most likely find that few of your followers will bother to click through to the actual story. Instead, pull out an interesting detail from the story to entice them to click on your link, front-load your post with the most important/interesting information, or draw out whatever is likely to be of most interest to your audience. (See *Setting up a Twitter feed for example.*)

**Posing a question** is often an effective way of piquing a reader's interest. Humour is also acceptable, but avoid saying anything that might be construed as sarcastic or risks offence.

**Photos and video** are a very effective means of capturing attention and generating conversation, as well as encouraging people to share your content. This type of content should either be relevant to your audience's interests, visually interesting or conveys something important about your area. Please note, however, that particular care should be taken when posting photographs and videos to ensure

that consent has been attained, as the immediacy of media such as Facebook and Twitter can make it easy to forget these processes.

In addition, it is not appropriate to make exaggerated claims or excessively use **capital letters** or **exclamation marks** to draw the reader's attention. The latter two can be overbearing and irritating if used too often.

**Don't spam your followers**

Keep an eye on the frequency of your posts. Too few and your site/group won't be effective, but post too many and you risk annoying your followers.

**Followers: it's about quality, not quantity**

Rather than focus on getting as many followers as possible onto your social media sites, it is better to first focus on increased engagement with the followers you do have.