

SCLS Use of Social Media Policy **2025/2026**

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Use of Social Media in Sefton Community Learning Service

1. Introduction

Social media can be used as an effective part of the teaching and learning process. Staff and learners need to be careful in their use of sites such as Facebook for learning purposes. We aim to ensure legal, safe, and effective use of social media and other new technologies at Sefton Community Learning Service (SCLS).

2. Scope

These procedures apply to all learners, staff, volunteers, and visitors across all areas of the Services provision. Failure to comply with the policy may lead to disciplinary action. Conduct and actions that may be unlawful could lead to criminal conviction or claim for damages. Learners and staff must be aware that they could face disciplinary action if contravening the Services policies and the police and other law enforcement agencies monitor these websites regularly, as do potential employers as a way of screening applicants.

3. Statement

Our Service accepts that social media will be used by learners and staff and the sections below detail the expected standards of behaviour when using social media and the ways in which social media can be used in a professional capacity within Sefton Community Learning Service.

Please read this document carefully as you will be deemed to be aware of its contents in the event that there is a breach of the Service's guidelines.

4. Procedure

Staff and learners should note that this policy and procedure is an addition to the ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure.

All users of social media should:

- Be polite and use appropriate language, ensure grammar, punctuation, correct spelling etc.

Staff and Learners should not post any comments, information, photographs, which:

- Bully, coerce or harass a learner or member of staff, or other third party associated with the Service.
- Explicitly encourage others to take prohibited substances, radicalise them or encourage others to commit violence.

- Criticise, embarrass, or defame the Service, staff, or other learners, or other associated individuals or organisations.
- Contain any extremist views or views that contravene our commitment to Equality and Diversity
- Create social networking sites, which include reference to Sefton Community Learning Service without gaining authorisation.
- Include personal details or information
- Post photographs of individuals without written permission

Staff should not:

- Exhibit irresponsible behaviour or behaviour that brings into question their appropriateness to work with children and young people/adults and/or brings the Service into disrepute.
- Engage (form online friendships) with learners on personal social networking sites.
- Allow learners to access their personal social networking sites.
- As the effectiveness of 'privacy settings' is affected by the actions of other users they do not always guarantee that content will remain private. Staff should familiarise themselves with GDPR in order to ensure learners' privacy is maintained
- Place themselves in a vulnerable position with a learner. This includes regularly conversing with a learner on the wider internet about matters that were not directly connected with curriculum requirements. Any form of sexual relationship between staff and learners is expressly forbidden. This would include any form of sexualised conversation, including comments with implied meanings, through the medium of the Internet.

Any criticisms of the Service or its community members must be made through Sefton Community Learning Services Complaints Procedure.

5. Safeguarding

- Staff are referred to the Safeguarding Policy
- There are specific safeguarding issues that employees who work closely with vulnerable adults and children need to be aware of.
- Employees with concerns or specific issues on this should raise them with the designated safeguarding officer in the first instance