

A.F. Blakemore & Son Ltd

Social & Digital Media Policy

1. Social Media Definition

For the purpose of this policy, social media is defined as any type of interactive online media that allows people to communicate instantly with each other and/or to share information within a public forum. This includes online social forums, blogs, video and image sharing websites, and other similar platforms.

Wherever and whenever any employee uses social media, they must be aware of the potential impact any communication may have on both themselves and the business, with particular attention paid to any references that may cause the company to be portrayed within a negative light.

All communications about the company must be truthful, fair and accurate. They should never be misleading. They must also be transparent and based on reliable information, as well as consistent with our company policies, culture and values.

2. Who does this apply to?

This policy relates to all employees who create or contribute to blogs, wikis, social networks, forums, virtual worlds, or any other kind of social media. The policy should be applied to the use of any forms of social media, whether for work-related or personal use.

3. Social Media for Business Purposes

Employees are not permitted to set up a group, page, blog, website or network either on behalf of the company or mentioning the company without the prior approval of the Director of Corporate Affairs.

All communications material for the media should be produced to a high professional standard and must be clear, accurate, timely and fairly reflect the relevant facts and the views of the company. Media material must:

- Comply with all codes and laws applicable in any jurisdiction where it is issued;
- Comply with all applicable company policies and procedures, including those relating to intellectual property, brand standards, trading, sales and marketing practices; and
- (Where appropriate) Be reviewed and approved by the Corporate Affairs team prior to release.

When publishing on any business social media site, consideration should be given to the nature of content posted. Whilst it may not cause offense and may be suitable for personal postings, it may not be appropriate within a professional context.

All work-related contacts, networks and social media logins remain the property of the company even when employment ends.

4. Social Media Policy Principles & Advice

- Employees should avoid representing themselves or the company in any false or misleading representation. All statements must be true and not misleading; all claims must be verified.
- Employees should seek guidance before participating in social media when the topic being discussed may be considered sensitive (e.g. a crisis situation, sensitive to other employees, intellectual property, issues which may impact on the company's reputation or may be commercially sensitive).
- Employees are not permitted to participate in any form of personal social media communication during working hours unless on their own personal equipment and during an official authorised break.
- If an employee's use of social media is considered to be derogatory, discriminatory, bullying, threatening, defamatory, offensive, intimidating, harassing, creating legal liability for the company, bringing the company into disrepute or breaching any of the company's policies (this may include comments, shared links or articles, videos, or photographs which have been posted on social media sites about the company, work colleagues or managers) then the company may take disciplinary action which could result in dismissal.
- The company's response to any misuse of social media in a personal capacity will be reasonable and proportionate to the perceived offence, the nature of the postings/comments made and the impact or potential impact on the company.
- It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that privacy settings are understood and are set up appropriately when using any social media networks/platforms, as neglect of this will not be accepted should a breach of this Social Media Policy occur.
- Social networking sites may be referred to when investigating possible misconduct/gross misconduct.
- The company may require employees to remove social media postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of these standards and failure to comply with such a request may, in itself, also result in disciplinary action.
- Employees are encouraged to avoid any social media dialogue that may jeopardise or bring the organisation into disrepute in any way.