

# Social media guiding principles of behaviour at GOTAFE

*(adapted with permission from Federation University)*

The following is a set of guiding principles for all users (employees, students and others) to consider when utilising social media in either a personal or official capacity, using either personal or GOTAFE social media channels:

- **Demonstrate Courtesy, Respect and Honesty**

Identify who you are and only comment or post online as yourself. Express opinions and ideas in an appropriate, courteous and considered manner which both contributes to and is relevant to the discussion taking place. Remember to respect the rights of others to have and express an opinion. Where you disagree, do so in a constructive manner. Never post comments or respond to comments about GOTAFE or individuals which could be considered offensive, defamatory, harassing, threatening, discriminatory, intimidating, bullying or otherwise inappropriate.

- **Ensure confidentiality and privacy**

It is important to ensure you do not disclose or comment on any private, confidential or secure information. It is not appropriate to publish contact details or other personal or health information about an individual. It is also not appropriate to disclose commercially sensitive information about GOTAFE or post official GOTAFE documents online. If posting images, video or audio comment where other individuals are identifiable, ensure necessary consents are obtained before posting. Please refer to the end of the Social Media Procedure for links to Marketing Permission Forms.

- **Think before you post and exercise good judgment and prudence**

Always add value and don't blindly pursue your own agenda because this often has unintended consequences. Be ethical and responsible in your use of social media and don't inflame a situation needlessly.

- **Be aware of your personal liability and reputation**

Anything you post online is in the public domain and is difficult (if not impossible) to erase. It can be searched and shared. Consider the impact of a post (including written, photos or videos) if seen by your employer, colleagues, trainers, students or future employers. Remember that you are personally liable for the content of your online posts.

- **Respect GOTAFE time and resources**

Increasingly, trainers and students are able to (and are encouraged to) share ideas and information through blogs and wikis run by the GOTAFE Departments for the purposes of work and learning collaboration. These work spaces have their own set of rules governing behaviour that must be adhered to. However, employees, contractors, learners and visitors should be mindful that GOTAFE computers and networks are to be used for GOTAFE related business and purposes. GOTAFE time and resources should not be used to engage in social media activity for personal or non GOTAFE related purposes.

- **Acknowledge the line between professional and personal life**

Social Media users need to consider the line between their professional and personal life. This can become blurred through the use of social media. Any online social media engagement should not compromise or interfere with your professional relationships. Given the 'balance of power' implications for Teaching staff surrounding interaction with Students generally, GOTAFE is of the view that no Teacher be 'friends' with any Student in a personal

capacity, and should avoid discussing students and work colleagues on personal sites. Further to this, GOTAFE emphasises that Teaching staff do not have 'friends' on social media sites who are GOTAFE students under the age of 18.

If posting in an official capacity, identify who you work for and the capacity in which you are contributing and keep your personal views separate. If posting in a private capacity and your online profile identifies you as a member of GOTAFE community, you must make it clear that the comments are your own and not made on behalf of GOTAFE. For example, use a disclaimer such as "The views expressed in this post are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of GOTAFE".

- **Consider GOTAFE policies and procedures**

Remember that GOTAFE policies and procedures apply to the use of social media in the same way as they apply to other aspects of life at GOTAFE.

- **Copyright and Intellectual Property**

Do not post content that includes work which is not your own or may infringe copyright or the intellectual property of another person. Ensure acknowledgment of and links to sources wherever possible.

- **Personal safety and privacy**

Cyber safety is important. Forms of social media (such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) can allow you to broadcast real-time information about who you are, what you are doing and your exact location. Check your privacy settings and consider your own privacy and safety before you broadcast these details. This is even more important when using social media on a mobile device.

- **Bring issues to the attention of the Marketing and Creative Services Department**

If you find information online that you think GOTAFE should respond to, contact the Marketing and Creative Services Department. They will undertake appropriate actions or arrange an appropriate response on behalf of GOTAFE.