

Social Media Policy

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Responsible Officer:	Director Marketing and Communications	Current Version:	05/04/2024
Authorised Officer:	Chief Executive Officer	Review date:	Bi-annual 05/04/2026

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and clarity to GOTAFE employees, students, Board members and associates of their obligations and the expectations of GOTAFE in the use of social media platforms.

Policy

GOTAFE acknowledges the use of social media by employees, students, Board members and associates and encourages its positive use to provide information about GOTAFE, learning, engaging, connecting, and collaborating. Social media has become a key tool for connecting and engaging GOTAFE's community and stakeholders.

It is the policy of GOTAFE that the use of social media should be managed in both official and personal capacities. Any training, personal or professional use of social media by GOTAFE staff, students, Board members and associates must not:

- i. Bring GOTAFE into disrepute;
- ii. Compromise the effectiveness of the Institute;
- iii. Defame individuals or organisations;
- iv. Imply GOTAFE endorsement of personal views
- v. Disclose, without authorisation, confidential information or divulge intellectual property, or
- vi. Promote inaccurate, false or misleading content.

Definitions

In this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Social media users or Users

Includes employees, students, Board members and all associates including volunteers, committee members, student organisations and societies, adjuncts, honoraries, alumni, graduates or any other person who may be identified as having an association with GOTAFE.

Employees

Applies to all GOTAFE employee types, including permanent, temporary, casual, executive employees and Board members including contractors, and consultants. The term employee is used throughout this policy to represent these groups of employees.

Official use

Using social media tools when acting as an official representative of GOTAFE. Marketing and Communications will be responsible for the access and usage of social media accounts. There is verbal permission obtained for photo and video usage of persons as per Marketing and Advertising Permissions Procedure.

Personal use

Using social media tools in a private capacity.

Social media

Social media refers to any online social network. An online social network is a website or app that allows a user to create and share content online¹.

Social media tools including but not limited to:

- Social networking sites e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+
- Video, audio and photo sharing website e.g. YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest, Snap Chat, TikTok, Vimeo
- ePortfolios e.g. Mahara
- Blogs and blogging platforms, including corporate blogs, personal blogs or blogs hosted by traditional media publications
- Micro-blogging and activity stream sites e.g. X, Threads
- Forums and discussion Boards e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool, Moodle forums, Microsoft Teams
- Online encyclopedia and Wikis e.g. Wikipedia
- Vodcasting and podcasting
- Videoconferencing and webinars
- Instant messaging, Moodle messaging and email
- Virtual communities
- Any other websites that allow individual users or companies to post comments to the web.

Principles

The following six principles apply to the use of social media tools for GOTAFE staff, students, Board members and associates:

1. **Equity and Diversity** - Show respect for human dignity and adhere to GOTAFE's values
2. **Public Trust** - Do not use social media to bring GOTAFE, staff, students or associates into disrepute;
3. **Making Public Comment** - Do not imply GOTAFE endorsement of personal views;
4. **Privacy and Confidentiality** - Ensure confidentiality of information obtained through the Institute is maintained; and
5. **Work Resources** - Do not use social media to the detriment of GOTAFE training and professional activities.
6. **Safety** – Use social media in a way that ensures safety for all stakeholders.

These principles reflect the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees (VPS Code of Conduct) and are informed by sections:

- 2.2 Remaining apolitical,
- 3.2 Using powers at work,

¹

[Office of the Australian Information Commissioner Definition](#)

- 3.4 Official Information,
- 3.5 Public comment,
- 3.9 Public trust,
- 5.3 Work resources,
- 5.4 Open to scrutiny,
- 6.1 Fair and objective treatment,
- 6.2 Privacy and confidentiality,
- 6.3 Maintaining confidentiality, and
- 6.4 Equity and Diversity.

Roles and Responsibilities

This policy applies to the official and personal use of all social media; including use through employment, study, association with GOTAFE, or in a personal capacity.

This policy clarifies existing obligations under the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees and the GOTAFE Employee Code of Conduct and should be read with other GOTAFE policies and procedures.

Official use: GOTAFE employees who use social media for official use must have relevant training and a role in GOTAFE within Marketing and Communications function. Content must be approved by appropriate channels prior to posting.

Personal use: GOTAFE employees, are not to comment and communicate on behalf of GOTAFE and all comments and posts should be expressed as personal opinion. All employees are responsible for familiarising themselves with and adhering to:

- GOTAFE social media policies, procedures, and guidelines;
- applicable laws and regulations;

Further to this, they should:

- exercise good judgement in their online interactions;
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of GOTAFE related information, colleagues, students and stakeholders; and
- maintain a positive and professional online presence that aligns with GOTAFE's values and standards when using social media.

Communication

Changes to the social media policy will be communicated at GOTAFE through the following measures:

- i. Notification via email to all staff (including Board Members and contractors) by the Chief Executive Officer advising of the new Policy and Procedure, and any subsequent updates to them; and
- ii. Notification via email to all students by the Chief Executive Officer advising of the new Policy and Procedure, and any subsequent updates to them; and
- iii. The Policy and Procedures will be made available on the Legal, Policies & Procedures page of the GOTAFE website to alert the GOTAFE community of the approved policy and any updates to the Policy; and

- iv. An awareness campaign with supporting materials (posters, intranet content, flyers etc) which will be displayed and circulated across all GOTAFE campuses

Implementation

The implementation of the social media policy will be supported with the below measures:

- i. Employee and Board member induction training and student induction processes at each year's start.
- ii. Employee professional development and refresher social media training sessions run by the Communication and Engagement Team at least annually.

Compliance

Breach of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the GOTAFE Employee Code of Conduct, Student Code of Conduct and the Student Misconduct Management procedure and, may lead to disciplinary action. Where inappropriate use under this policy constitutes a breach of any law, action may also be taken in accordance with that law by GOTAFE or concerned third parties.

GOTAFE reserves the right to archive, screenshot, preserve, edit, delete, reject or remove content which breaches the policy or impedes on legislation, security, policies or procedures and/or network management reasons.

Documentation and regulation

Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees
Copyright Act 1968 (Cth.)
Copyright Amendment (Digital Agenda) Act 2000 (Cth.)
Guidance for the use of social media in the Victorian public sector
Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth.)
Spam Act 2003 (Cth.)
Social media guiding principles of behaviour at GOTAFE ODMA-06
Student Code of Conduct Procedure E6-P27
Student Misconduct Management Procedure PC030
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
Public Service Act 1999 (Cth.)
Equal Opportunity Act (Vic)
Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees
Guidance for the use of social media in the Victorian public sector
Victorian Child Safety Standards
GOTAFE Employee Code of Conduct POHR14
GOTAFE Social Media Procedure – PRMA-185
Victorian Child Safety Standards