

17 December 2018



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To the Review Secretariat

**Freedom of academic expression - review**

I am writing to acknowledge and thank you for the letter dated 28 November 2018, inviting Swinburne University to contribute to the review.

Swinburne supports the undertaking of an independent review of policies supporting freedom of expression and intellectual enquiry in Australian higher education.

Please find enclosed a summary of resources and relevant links where Swinburne refers to academic freedom of speech.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Kristjanson".

Professor Linda Kristjanson AO, FAICD, FTSE, PhD  
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## Swinburne University of Technology

### Academic Freedom – response to request

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#### Requested:

1. University statutes, regulations, rules or by-laws, not available on the University website, relating to expressive conduct by staff or students or persons visiting the University for the purpose of delivering speeches or lectures or otherwise engaging in public discussion.
2. Administrative codes, policies or principles relating to the above including internal audit and risk policies and practices and standard provisions in academic employment contracts.
3. Any of the above categories which deal with the topic of academic freedom.
4. The reports of relevant non-confidential reviews which your university may have undertaken in relation to its rules, policies and practices in this area.
5. Any observations that you would like to make which you think might be helpful to the Review.

#### Response:

KEY SWINBURNE DOCUMENTS WITH REFERENCE TO ACADEMIC FREEDOM	
People, Culture and Integrity Policy Section 10: Representing Swinburne	Available publicly: <a href="http://www.swinburne.edu.au/about/leadership-governance/policies-regulations/policies/people-culture-integrity/representing-swinburne/">http://www.swinburne.edu.au/about/leadership-governance/policies-regulations/policies/people-culture-integrity/representing-swinburne/</a>
Governance Framework Section 9: Academic Freedom	Available publicly: <a href="https://www.swinburne.edu.au/about/leadership-governance/policies-regulations/governance/">https://www.swinburne.edu.au/about/leadership-governance/policies-regulations/governance/</a>
Social Media Guidelines	Internal document: Attached
OBSERVATIONS	
Swinburne University of Technology has had no substantial matters arise concerning academic freedom.	

# Social media guidelines

## Contents:

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## 1. Purpose

At Swinburne, we want our staff and students to feel confident about what they can and should share on social media. These guidelines are designed to help our staff and students make the most out of social media. We want to empower our students to feel confident sharing their voice online and we also want to support our academics to spread the word about their research.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with Swinburne's [People, Culture and Integrity Policy](#).

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## 2. Scope

These guidelines apply to Swinburne's staff, students, contractors, international agents, and members of university groups and committees:

- when representing the university via social media in a professional capacity and/or,
  - where reference is made to the university on social media or the use of social media may have an impact on or affect the university or members of the university community.
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### 3. Social media at Swinburne

Swinburne has official social media channels it uses for marketing, education, and building communities. These are maintained and managed by Swinburne staff.

We also have academic staff who use social media for work-related purposes, such as sharing latest research or providing expert commentary.

Many classes and lectures integrate social media tools to communicate messages between students and facilitate discussions.

We recognise that students and staff use social media to self-organise into community groups, social and study groups, which are often unofficial spaces, not affiliated with Swinburne.

We also acknowledge that students and staff will use social media in a personal capacity, which, most of the time, does not involve Swinburne. We consider private use to be the responsibility of the individual, but encourage students and staff to be mindful of how their posts may impact the university. In all instances of using social media, whether it be on Swinburne's channels or personal channels, students and staff are expected to abide by our Swinburne's Social Media Guidelines and [People, Culture and Integrity policy](#). Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

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### 4. Social media community guidelines

Find out more and read our dedicated [social media community guidelines](#).

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### 5. Social media use for students

At Swinburne, we believe that dissemination and communication of knowledge is a central part of our mission, we encourage our students to freely express themselves online, but also be mindful of how their posts may impact the university.

Students should take care when posting comments and information to social media to:

- Protect and uphold the reputation and goodwill of the university.
- Be honest and accurate.
- Be respectful.
- Protect confidentiality and privacy.

We acknowledge that social media is actively used on Swinburne campus, for personal use, for socialising with clubs and societies on campus, and for educational use.

In all instances of using social media, whether it be on Swinburne's channels or personal channels, students are expected to abide by our [People, Culture and Integrity policy](#) (including our [Swinburne student charter](#)). Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

## **Unofficial Swinburne social media channels**

When at Swinburne, students may engage in study groups, clubs and societies, which use their own social media channels or online groups, such as Facebook Groups. These are unofficial groups, managed independently from Swinburne's social media team.

If you are creating an unofficial Swinburne social media channel:

- Please be aware this is not an official channel managed by Swinburne's social media team.
- We request there is a notice on the 'About' section of the social media channel to mention that this group is an unofficial channel, not managed by Swinburne.
- We ask that students do not use the Swinburne name or logo anywhere on their Groups to ensure that official channels can clearly be found by students and to avoid any unintentional copyright violation.
- We encourage you to use creative commons or royalty-free images for your background images and avatars rather than copyrighted images. Pixabay.com is one such site of free, legal-to-use images.
- Please be mindful that while you do not represent the university's views, all content posted does reflect on the university, and must not impact Swinburne in a negative light.
- In all instances of using social media, whether it be on Swinburne's channels or personal channels, students are expected to abide by our [People, Culture and Integrity policy](#).
- We encourage you to use Community Guidelines to manage your community. Feel free to be inspired by the Swinburne Social Media Community Guidelines when creating your own.
- We encourage a team of 2 - 5 administrators to be involved in managing your online community to keep it active and engaged.

Official Swinburne social media channels are channels that identify as Swinburne and are endorsed by the university. They serve a strategic purpose and communicate with key target audiences in order to connect and promote the Swinburne brand.

If you are a student and would like to establish a social media account that identifies as Swinburne, please email Swinburne's social media team at [socialmedia@swin.edu.au](mailto:socialmedia@swin.edu.au) outlining your request. We will then work with you to make sure the channel adheres to the Swinburne Social Media Guidelines.

## Personal use

We recommend our students engage in online behaviour that reflects our values, as inspired by our [Social Media Community Guidelines](#). While you may feel that your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat or other social media accounts are private zones, separate from your place at Swinburne, everything we post or "like" online is to some degree public, and can reflect on the university. In all instances of using social media, whether it be on Swinburne's channels or personal channels, students are expected to abide by our [People, Culture and Integrity policy](#).

## Reporting and escalating issues

When engaging in social media online, we want students to feel safe and understand there are avenues that can be used if students face issues online including discrimination, bullying, harassment, or other negative experiences online.

Swinburne is committed to providing an environment for work and study that is free from discrimination, bullying, violence, and harassment, as described in the [People Culture and Integrity Policy](#).

All students and staff have the right to feel safe at the university. If you are a student and have experienced discrimination, bullying, violence, or harassment, you are encouraged to [submit a complaint](#) so that the matter can be fully investigated.

If you need support, you may wish to contact [Swinburne counselling and psychological services](#).

If you would like further advice relating to these issues, please email Swinburne's [Safer Community](#) team at [safercommunity@swin.edu.au](mailto:safercommunity@swin.edu.au).

While personal use does not fall under the remit of Swinburne responsibility, we want our students to have a positive experience online. In this, some ways to deal with negative online behaviour include:

- If you are in an online space and are experiencing harassment, we would recommend that you block, mute or report users. You do not need to respond to someone harassing you online.

- In the case of activities like cyberstalking, in some cases it is possible to escalate this to the Police. Please review latest [guidelines from the Australian Government](#) on this topic.

We also encourage students to discuss distressing online experiences with a mental health professional, or reach out to free mental health support services like [Lifeline](#).

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## 6. Social media for staff

The dissemination and communication of knowledge is an important part of the university's mission.

All staff should take care when making public comment (which includes comments and information posted online and through social media) to:

- Protect and uphold the reputation and goodwill of the university.
- Be honest and accurate.
- Be respectful.
- Protect confidentiality and privacy.

Staff are responsible for exercising careful and appropriate judgement when posting content onto any social media platform, and are required to:

- Use academic freedom and the other freedoms offered to our staff responsibly, honestly and with respect for the position, rights and freedoms of others.
- Not make comments on behalf of the university except with express authorisation to do so.
- If making comments in a particular capacity (for example as a delegate, representative or member of an organisation) clearly disclose that capacity and distinguish it from the university's position.
- Keep a clear distinction between personal use and professional use.
- If making comments personally, be honest about identity, any personal interests and affiliations and make it clear that views expressed are personal and not those of the university.
- Not use Swinburne's name or logo/imagery in the name of any non-Swinburne official social media account.

### Work use

There are many different ways Swinburne staff might engage in social media. Their role might involve social media marketing, they might be a lecturer who has an online community associated with their coursework, or they might be an academic publicising their research on social media.

## Staff who manage Swinburne social media accounts

For staff who manage official Swinburne social media channels, we expect them to abide by the Staff Social Media Guidelines at all times. Additionally, they need to be acutely aware of our [People, Culture and Integrity Policy](#). As the forefront of most of our communications, it is essential that staff are aware of our internal issue escalation procedures, and create content in line with our [brand tone of voice](#) (staff login required).

## Staff who use social media in the classroom

Staff may use social media or an online discussion tool in their classroom. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that students (and staff if posting) abide by the Social Media Community Guidelines on this platform. This can be achieved by creating an environment that is supportive but has clear boundaries.

## Staff with a public profile

Some of our staff have a public profile, whether as a board position, or as an academic or lecturer publicising their work. This line between public and private can be more complex, but our guidelines are:

- Any content that directly mentions, or alludes to Swinburne falls under [Representing Swinburne](#) in our [People, Culture and Integrity Policy](#).
- All other content falls under private use. However, we ask staff to be mindful that all content they post online may reflect on the reputation of Swinburne.
- We encourage staff to publicise their work and successes. Get to know your industry hashtags and use them when discussing your work to increase its reach. Feel free to tag the official Swinburne accounts @swinburne so we have the opportunity to share your content. You can also put @swinburne in your bio.
- We recommend adding a disclaimer to your public social media account such as 'All opinions / views are my own'.

## Personal use

While personal use does not fall under the remit of the university's responsibility, we want our staff to have a positive experience online. In this, some ways to deal with negative online behaviour includes:

- If you are in an online space and are experiencing harassment, we would recommend that you block, mute or report users. You do not need to respond to someone harassing you online.
- In the instance of activities like cyberstalking, in some cases it is possible to escalate this to the Police. Please review [latest guidelines from the Australian Government](#).



- We also encourage staff to discuss distressing online experiences with a mental health professional, or reach out to free mental health support services like [Lifeline](#).
- Regularly check your social media privacy settings should they have changed (e.g., settings which might have once been private are not now public).
- Consider whether being Facebook friends with students might cause problematic situations around duty-of-care and the need to maintain professional boundaries.

## **Reporting and escalating issues**

When engaging in social media online, we want staff to feel safe and understand there are avenues that can be used if staff face issues online including discrimination, bullying, harassment, or other negative experiences online.

Swinburne is committed to providing an environment for work and study that is free from discrimination, bullying, violence, and harassment, as described in the [People Culture and Integrity Policy](#).

If you have concerns regarding discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, victimisation, or vilification, there are several options to deal with your concerns. [The People, Culture and Integrity policy](#) identifies behaviours considered unacceptable and steps for resolution are outlined in the [People and Culture Manual \(staff login required\)](#). Before you decide how you would like to manage your concern, it can be helpful to access the following people and resources:

### **Your manager**

Where appropriate, you may like to speak with your manager. Your manager will have received training on workplace issues such as discrimination, bullying and harassment and the university's complaint resolution procedures.

### **People and Culture**

Staff and managers can seek assistance from People & Culture via email or [peopleassist@swin.edu.au](mailto:peopleassist@swin.edu.au) phone +61 3 9214 8600.

### **Employee Assistance Program**

The Employee Assistance Program is a free, professional, confidential counselling service for you, your immediate family, and members of your household paid for by the university. To contact the EAP, phone [1300 361 008](#).

### **Community watch**

Staff may notice issues online that relate to the university on social media but are unsure of how to escalate it. Our social media team is trained to analyse online

risks and liaise with all key departments when a risk occurs. If you spot an issue online that you believe the university may not yet be aware of, please email the Swinburne social media team at [socialmedia@swin.edu.au](mailto:socialmedia@swin.edu.au) or send a private message via our official social networks @swinburne.

The kinds of issues you can escalate to them include:

- legal issues, such as copyright or trademark infringement (for example, a fake Facebook page using the Swinburne name posting spam);
- virtual threats (such as someone threatening to release a virus into the university system); and,
- security or health issues (such as someone threatening to harm a staff member or student, whether it's on university grounds or not).

When escalating issues, it is recommended to please also send a screenshot and link to the material online so the full context of the situation can be analysed by our team.

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## 7. Official Swinburne social media accounts

Official Swinburne social media channels are channels that identify as Swinburne and are endorsed by the university. They serve a strategic purpose and communicate with key target audiences in order to connect and promote the Swinburne brand.

The [social media team](#) hold the responsibility for the development and management of official university social media channels.

If you are a staff member and would like to establish a social media account that identifies as Swinburne, please view our [Swinburne Social Media Channel Application \(staff login required\)](#).

If you are a student and would like to establish a social media account that identifies as Swinburne, please [email the social media team](#) outlining your request.

Any accounts or pages existing without prior authorisation as required above will be subject to review when discovered and may be amended or removed.

The university reserves the right to restrict or to request the removal of any social media account or content that is deemed in violation of these guidelines.

