

Considerations for UAL Staff in Use of Web 2.0 Services

Responsible engagement in innovation and dialogue

The vast range and wealth of online social networking platforms are fundamentally changing the way we work collaborate, communicate and engage with each other and the world. UAL is increasingly exploring how online discourse through social networks can empower staff as educators, professionals, innovators and citizens. In this networked communication age there is immense potential for sharing and collaborating and building communities of practice and learning networks. If you are engaging in use of social media as part of your work with UAL, the virtual environment should be considered an extension of your professional practice, and you should follow the same sorts of guidelines and codes of conduct that you would in a real world environment.

Things to consider when engaging with Web 2.0 Services:

Be transparent, honest and professional: Identify yourself to provide authenticity to your online contributions. Be aware of the implications of your association with UAL in online social networks. If you identify yourself as an UAL staff member, consider if your profile, photograph or avatar and any other related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues and peers.

Be accurate: Ensure you have all the facts before you post. Cite and link to your sources whenever possible. If you make an error, correct it quickly, honestly and visibly.

Be clear in what capacity you are writing: What you write is ultimately your responsibility. Whether you publish to a blog or some other form of social media, make it clear that what you say there is representative of your views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of UAL. If you to identify yourself as a University employee or discuss topics related to the institution on any social media channels, many readers will assume you are speaking on behalf of the organization. Use disclaimers and make it clear that the views you are expressing are yours alone and not necessarily those of UAL. Ideally add a note to your 'home' or 'about' page with a variation on this text: "The views expressed on this site are mine alone and do not reflect official University policy."

Be respectful: Carry professional norms of interaction onto the social media platforms. Encourage feedback and two-way communication. Be critical in a constructive and respectful way.

Consider your audiences: Social media blurs traditional boundaries between professional and personal relationships. Use privacy settings to restrict personal information on otherwise public sites, and be careful about providing personal contact details online.

Think before you post: Be aware of and monitor your 'digital footprint' There's no such thing as a 'private' social media site. Search engines can turn up posts years after the publication date, and comments can be forwarded or copied. A sentence from a post can be taken out of context and rapidly disseminated to a large audience, and online archival systems save information for many years even if you delete a post. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, save your thoughts as a draft and delay posting until you are calmer.

Maintain confidentiality: Do not post confidential information about UAL, its students, its alumni or your fellow employees. Use your ethical judgment and follow university policies relating to staff conduct. As a guideline, don't post anything that you would not present at a conference or other public context.

Be generous: The Internet is about connecting with links and citations. The more you link to relevant material, the more contacts you make and the more your own content will be linked to in return. The process of linking and allowing others to contribute content helps generate groups, communities and networks.

Add value: write about your experiences, observations, research and opinions related to topics you are passionate about and understand well; cite your sources and separate opinions from facts.

Aim for quality: Think about what you want to say; understand the context and the rules of engagement, before you post your comments. Make your content rich and interesting for others to read and share.

Respect copyright and fair use laws: For UAL's protection as well as your own, it is vital that you respect the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others. Wherever possible use material sourced under a creative commons licence. Instead of quoting long excerpts of someone else's work provide a link to it so the reader can go directly to the source.