

Policy for the Use of Social Media in the Name of Umeå University

This document describes how social media should be used at Umeå University (UmU) when the media channel has been established in the name of UmU. With 'social media', we hereby refer to digital means of communication beside from email and web pages lacking the possibility for readers to leave comments.

The Use and Set-up of Social Media Channels

University staff should strive to use the channel of communication best suited to the specific situation and purpose. Social media should, therefore, be used when it is relevant for the university to do so and suitable depending on the circumstances. When social media channels are used at UmU, it is important to be explicit about who is responsible for the media – firstly, to avoid the university breaking any laws, and secondly, as we have an interest in keeping an eye on our channels of communication.

If the channel is set up in a service or platform not controlled by UmU, the user terms and conditions need to be read and confirmed that they are not in conflict with any part of this policy. Head of department or equivalent must approve of the start-up of a new media channel and appoint a person responsible for it. Thereafter, the appointed person must be responsible for following the legal framework and current legislation. Before starting a new social media channel, the aim and routines involved should be established – as well as all other tasks, this takes time and requires personal resources. It is also important to decide how the channel should be closed down in the event of if it cannot be maintained in a satisfying manner or does not fulfil its purpose.

See **Appendix 1** for a checklist at the start-up of new channels of communication in social media.

Sender

UmU staff should of course always follow all laws and regulations related to the employment – also as an Internet user. It is also important to remember that employees can be considered to represent UmU even outside of their appointment. Therefore, it is vital that there are no doubts about in which form an UmU employee is communicating. It must be clear if the university is responsible or not for the channel or submitted content, and if the person communicating does so as a representative of the University. At the start-up of a channel by UmU, it should be made explicit that UmU is in charge of the channel.

Private use of a channel where the university might appear as sender should be avoided and to circumvent misunderstandings it should be clear whether it is a matter of private use or use in the name of the university. For instance, this can be portrayed through information in the channel profile or in the choice of name. The guidelines in this policy document concern the use of social media in the line of duty and with UmU as sender.

On Aurora, you can read more about our official, digital channels.¹

General Guidelines

Social media can be an efficient channel for service and information. Case management and exercise of official authority should, however, be avoided in public channels. Be especially restrictive when the communication contains sensitive or classified data, or other personal information. If providing such

¹ Available on the intranet Aurora under Service and support, Social media

data is necessary, please use another means of communication, for instance using encrypted email, phone or regular mail.

Material conflicting with or counteracting the university business, or risks damaging its reputation should not exist in channels where UmU can be regarded as sender. In such channels, you as an employee, have the right to express yourself regarding your research or speciality, but in questions you do not have responsibility for or knowledge about, you are generally not speaking as representative of the university but should clarify that you are expressing yourself privately.

Please read more in the **Guidelines for contacts with the press**².

Information for users of the university's social media

If the university opens a communication channel, we have an obligation to receive information coming our way using that channel and an obligation to act in a suitable way depending on the circumstances. There are, however, no limitations to the continued communication being performed in another way, i.e. via phone call or email. To aid the individual seeking to contact the university in finding the right channels and understand the information provided, we should therefore inform about the intended use of the specific social media channel. In order for visitors/users of UmU's social media to know the conditions of their use, there must be a policy informing them of the prerequisites. The person responsible for the channel is also responsible for the policy to be clearly communicated in the social media or for it to be provided upon request.

A template for the policy is available in **appendix 2**.

Requirements for the university's social media

The university should handle social media in accordance with the rules and regulations applicable also to other means of communication, i.e. when it comes to exercise of public authority, public records, archiving, public information and confidentiality, discrimination as well as the handling of personal data.

Supervision

Information and entries in social media are normally accessible to the public or a certain limited group of people. Since the university should continuously answer questions received and are responsible for moving unsuitable material from publicly accessible channels, we need to survey our social media channels. How often the person responsible should undertake such surveillance depends on the use of the medium and on its users. If several violating and offensive comments have occurred, or if there is a risk of sensitive information to be published, the supervision needs to happen more frequently. Normally, the supervision is expected to be performed daily. The responsibility of the surveillance lies with the person who has been appointed responsible for the channel.

Moderating and sorting

Due to laws and regulations, some information is not legal in social media. If such information should be published, it needs to be removed or hidden from the social media channel promptly, regardless of it being a fault of the university or if someone else has published it. What measure is suitable – to reply, to archive, to hide or to remove – depends on the circumstances in the specific case. The person in charge of a channel is responsible for removing unlawful, illegal or irrelevant content.

The following material must immediately be hidden or removed from social media:

² Available on the intranet Aurora under Rules and regulations

- **offensive or sensitive personal data** (as long as the person affected by it did not publish the information him or herself) regarding health, political standpoint, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation or gender.
- information that can result in **incitement, incitement to racial hatred, child pornography offences or unlawful depiction**
- **information about a third party** that is evidently unsuitable
- **information that is confidential** according to the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act
- information resulting in **copyright infringement** according to the Copyright Act

Keep in mind that the entry is an official record – or “evidence” in a potential legal process – and must be transferred to another form to aid in an extraction. (This does not apply to entries that are out of date.) Please note that no consideration for if the entry is positive or negative should be made: entries that comply with current laws, regulations and guidelines, and are relevant in the context, should be approved.

Public access and archiving

The university is an authority covered by the Principle of public access to official records. Entries into social media channels that UmU is in charge of therefore become publicly accessible, this applies to entries made by external users and those added by the university. We are responsible for handling authority affairs even though they are submitted through our social media. These affairs should, however, not be handled within the social media, but be extracted and handled as usual, and possibly be registered.

In addition, the following applies:

- public documents should, in general, be registered in the register, or if the document does not contain confidential information, it can be ordered in some other way
- the university has an obligation to answer questions promptly
- archiving of the channel (i.e. using screen shots) should be performed at least twice per year as well as in conjunction with larger changes and liquidation, these archive data should be handled according to the UmU’s document management plan.

Other requirements

Other conditions that the university needs to abide by in the use of social media are:

- the university is responsible for correctly handling personal data regardless of who writes or submits them
- if cookies are used, we are obliged to inform the user of their existence, the reason for why they are used and how they can be prevented
- the language used should be easy to understand
- potential inaccuracies in the data that is released should be corrected promptly as UmU can be liable to pay damages for incorrect data or incorrect advice.



This document is a translation of “Policy för användning av sociala medier med Umeå universitet som avsändare” from June 2015.