

 <b>BOND UNIVERSITY</b>	<b>SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY</b>
Policy Owner	Vice President Future Students
Contact Officer	Director, Brand and Marketing
Endorsement Authority	Vice President Future Students
Date of Next Review	23 April 2026

### 1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Bond University recognises the value of [social media](#) and [social networking](#) in education; however, use of the technologies can potentially create legal and ethical dilemmas, especially when on-line behaviour is unprofessional (or unlawful). This Policy is intended to inform Bond University staff and students of expected net-etiquette (and consequences of breaches) to protect their personal and professional integrity and Bond's corporate image and reputation.

Bond University is committed to the creation of an environment, online as well as on campus, where everyone is treated fairly and with respect, and free from racism and unlawful discrimination. All staff and students are required to comply with the University's Anti-discrimination Policy.

Bond University recognises the need to have a policy which ensures that staff and students who use social media, either as part of their job, studies or in a personal capacity, have guidance as to the University's expectations where the social media engagement is about Bond University, our services, our people, our students, our competitors and/or other business-related individuals, organisations, or topics.

### 2. AUDIENCE AND APPLICATION

All Bond University students and all Bond University staff

### 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
Staff and Students	Clause 4.1.1 Personally responsible for anything they publish.
	Clause 4.1.2 Must not suggest they speak on behalf of Bond University

### 4. POLICY STATEMENT

#### 4.1. Online Social Media Principles

##### 4.1.1. Personal responsibility

4.1.1.1. Staff and students are personally responsible for anything they publish online. Bond University does not review, edit, censor, or endorse individual posts. Staff members and students of the University must not only consider how their posts reflect on them as an individual, but also about how they reflect on Bond University thus ensuring the University is not brought into disrepute.

4.1.1.2. Bond University encourages participation in the online social media space, but urges staff and students to do so appropriately, exercising sound judgment and common sense. If there is any doubt as to the suitability of a message, it should not be posted. Post sensibly and responsibly in accordance with Bond University's policies and guidelines. Anything posted that can potentially tarnish Bond University's image will ultimately be the responsibility of the individual staff member or student.

4.1.1.3. When utilising social media in the delivery of a subject, a disclaimer should be used to ensure that students understand that Bond University social media is not monitored on a full-time basis. An example of a disclaimer is:

**Monitor and Editorial Control:** Bond University reserves the right, but does not have any obligation, to monitor and/or review any content or materials posted to the Site and is not responsible for any posts/submitted materials. The views expressed on this [blog/website] are my own and do not reflect the views of Bond University. Users of this [blog/website] should be aware that information posted, or discussions are not regularly viewed or monitored.

4.1.1.4. Prospective students may sometimes look to Bond University staff or students for help with general queries. Staff and students should make sure information given is accurate, up-to-date, and suitable for public disclosure (i.e., not confidential).

#### **4.1.2. Be transparent**

- 4.1.2.1. Staff and students must not suggest that they speak on behalf of Bond University on social media or personal webpages if they have not been given that responsibility by the Vice Chancellor, in writing to do so. If referencing Bond University, a staff member or student should include a visible and clear disclaimer that makes it evident that they are sharing personal views and not those of Bond University. To make it clear that they are speaking as an individual, the statement should begin with “in my opinion” or a similar phrase.
- 4.1.2.2. “Bond University” must not be used in personal social media account names and the Bond University logo must not be used on personal social media sites. This potentially creates legal risk for individuals and Bond University.

#### **4.1.3. Protect privacies and copyright**

- 4.1.3.1. Staff and students should protect their own privacy by not divulging personal facts or information that may compromise personal and professional privacy.
- 4.1.3.2. Staff and students should not discuss their clinical/placement/internship activities on-line if it could potentially, directly or indirectly, identify their patients/clients (individual or summative postings).
- 4.1.3.3. Confidential information about a student, or another staff member must not be disclosed.
- 4.1.3.4. Staff and students must respect the intellectual property of other people and not post anything they do not own, or which has not been publicly disclosed or released without explicit permission.
- 4.1.3.5. Students should exercise caution when they create on-line study groups. The material contained within must have proper attribution (to avoid copyright and plagiarism dilemmas). Criticism about lectures, faculty or other students should be of an academic nature, not defamatory.

#### **4.1.4. Be respectful**

- 4.1.4.1. Staff and students should be polite and respectful of all individuals, cultures and communities when interacting online. In particular, be sensitive to cultural issues associated with Indigenous and religious groups such as customs related to deceased people. Debate is healthy, but always be sure to do so in a logical and calm manner. Exercise caution on sensitive topics that could cause offence.
- 4.1.4.2. Bond University encourages staff and students to work together to maintain an environment, including the online environment, where all staff, students and visitors can feel safe and free from bullying and harassment. Bond University will not tolerate bullying or harassment between staff, between students or between staff and students.
- 4.1.4.3. Proven instances of bullying and harassment will be deemed as misconduct and disciplinary action may include dismissal or exclusion.
- 4.1.4.4. Students and staff must refrain from posting to social media any language (text or audio) or images which portray or can be interpreted to portray or to promote the following:
  - Illegal activities, intoxication, harassment, profanity, obscenity, pornography, abuse of people or animals, defamatory or libelous matter, threats, infringement of intellectual property rights, invasion of privacy, hate, discrimination on the basis of sex, relationship status, pregnancy, parental status, breast feeding, age, race, impairment, religious belief or religious activity, political belief or activity, trade union activity, lawful sexual activity, gender identity, sexuality, family responsibilities, sexual orientation, intersex status, maliciously causing embarrassment to any person or entity, or matter otherwise injurious or objectionable to Bond University.
- 4.1.4.5. Images of the deceased (e.g., cadaveric specimens, prosected specimens) should not be posted on social media.
- 4.1.4.6. Students should respect their commitment to learning and should not use practical placement time for personal social networking. Such acts of unprofessionalism, if deemed problematic by the University, may result in disciplinary action.
- 4.1.4.7. Staff and students should admit mistakes when they are made and not be drawn into aggressive exchanges. Critical blog posts about competitors and others generate ill will and can even lead to lawsuits, justified or not. If in doubt, don't do it.

#### 4.1.5. Adhere to Bond University values and corporate policies

It is important to adhere to Bond University's values and corporate policies in the online world, the same as in the non-digital world. This Policy does not supersede other existing policies including, but not limited to, the staff [Code of Conduct](#), [Student Charter](#) and [Student Code of Conduct](#), and you should continue to abide by those.

#### 4.1.6. Mixing business and personal lives

4.1.6.1. Online, personal and business personas are likely to intersect. Subject to the Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy, Bond University respects the free speech rights of all of its stakeholders, but staff and students must remember that the community, colleagues and supervisors may have access to the online content they post. Staff and students should keep this in mind when publishing information online as information originally intended just for friends and family can be forwarded on. Under no circumstances should offensive comments be made about Bond University colleagues or students on the internet. This may amount to cyber-bullying and could be deemed a disciplinary offence.

4.1.6.2. Students and staff should be aware that personal networking on social media sites could blur the student-staff relationship. Students and staff are reminded that using mechanisms for electronic communication that use encryption and password protection ensures that their privacy is protected.

4.1.6.3. Students in professional programs where there is a responsibility for patient/client confidentiality should not accept personal networking requests from their patients/clients. Similarly, students should not send personal networking requests to their patients/clients. These types of relationships can blur professional-patient/client boundaries. Students should communicate electronically with their patients/clients through mechanisms that use encryption and password protection to ensure confidentiality.

4.1.6.4. The University recognises that staff and students use social media in the commercial, business and employment milieu. These applications should be used with caution and that use is subject to this Policy where the affiliation with the University is mentioned.

4.1.6.5. The growing practice of using home computers, smartphones, iPads, tablets, and other portable devices for work-related purposes may increase the risk of confidential information being lost, stolen or inadvertently shared. Staff should ensure that work-related content is password protected when using technology devices for both work and personal purposes.

#### 4.1.7. Let official online spokespeople respond to negative posts

If staff or students come across negative or disparaging posts about Bond University or its students, or see third parties trying to spark negative conversations, they should forward them to Bond's official online spokespeople at [socialmedia@bond.edu.au](mailto:socialmedia@bond.edu.au) who are trained to address such comments.

## 4.2. Breach of Policy

4.2.1. Non-compliance with this Policy will constitute misconduct under Bond University's Policies and Procedures which may result in disciplinary action, including a verbal or written warning, or in serious cases, termination of employment or enrolment with Bond University.

4.2.2. Students in regulated professions (e.g., medicine, physiotherapy, psychology, law) are not held to any lesser standards of professionalism than registered professionals. In addition to disciplinary action from Bond University, they may face disciplinary action from the professional society (if a member).

## 5. DEFINITIONS, TERMS, ACRONYMS

### Bullying/ Harassment

Behaviour towards an individual or group of individuals that may or may not be based on the [attributes](#) referred to in the *Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act (1991)*. Bullying and/or harassment is defined as the repeated less favourable treatment of a person by another or others in the workplace, which may be considered unreasonable and inappropriate workplace practice. It includes behaviour that intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates in circumstances where a reasonable person would have anticipated the possibility that the other person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated by the conduct.

Bullying/harassment may occur between people of any gender. It can also occur between supervisor and staff, co-workers, students and between students and staff.

Bullying/harassment may be subtle or overt and includes, but is not limited to, the following forms of behaviour:

- Abusive and offensive language or shouting,
- Constant unreasonable criticism about work or academic performance, often about petty or insignificant matters,
- Deliberate exclusion, isolation or alienation of a staff member or student,
- Allocation of humiliating or demeaning tasks, or sabotaging a person's work,
- Setting of impossible deadlines with unrealistic expectations of work,
- Spreading gossip or false and malicious rumours with an intent to cause harm to a person,
- Sarcasm or ridicule,
- Threatening gestures or actual violence,
- Inappropriate comments about personal appearance,
- Electronic harassment such as through email or social media,
- Hazing or bastardisation (such as harmful or humiliating initiation rituals).

Except in the case of [Sexual Harassment](#), a single incident of bullying or harassing type behaviour does not, of itself, constitute workplace bullying or harassment. Nevertheless, such behaviour is unacceptable at Bond University.

A reasonable and lawful direction of a supervisor undertaken in a reasonable way will not constitute bullying/harassment for the purpose of this Policy.

Appropriate provisions of guidance, conducting performance counselling, invoking diminished performance procedures, unsatisfactory performance procedures or misconduct procedures does not constitute harassment. Managers and lecturers are expected to offer constructive and legitimate advice and comment as a legitimate aspect of their role.

**Social Media** Media for social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable communication techniques. Social media uses web-based and mobile technologies to convert communication into interactive dialogue. Examples include Instagram, Snapchat, WeChat, QZone, Tumblr, Twitter, Goggle+, Flickr, Pinterest, LinkedIn and Facebook, blogs, podcasts/audio-files, discussion forums, RSS feeds, YouTube, interactive geolocation, online collaborative information, and publishing systems that are accessible to internal and external audiences (i.e., Wikis), as well as related future technologies.

**Social Networking** The use of dedicated websites and applications to communicate with other users, or to find people with similar interests to one's own. (Oxford Dictionary)

## 6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Any applicable documents which define or outline Professional Behaviour, Personal Behaviour, Ethical Behaviour or Conduct established by Bond or organisations hosting students on placements.

[Student Code of Conduct Policy \(SS 5.2.1\)](#)

[Bond University Student Charter](#)

[Anti-discrimination Policy \(GOV 1.1.6\)](#)

[Student Grievance Management Policy \(SS 5.8.1\)](#)

[Student Wellbeing & Safety Policy \(SS 5.8.4\)](#)

[Code of Conduct Policy \(HR 2.8.4\)](#) (staff)

[Bullying and Harassment Policy \(GOV 1.8.2\)](#) (staff)

[ICT Acceptable Use Policy \(INF 6.1.11\)](#)

[Copyright Compliance Policy \(TL 3.8.1\)](#)

[Intellectual Property Policy \(RES 4.3.1\)](#)

[Media Policy \(INF 6.3.1\)](#)

[Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy \(GOV 1.1.1\)](#)

[Use of University Name or Logo Policy \(INF 6.2.1\)](#)

## 7. MODIFICATION HISTORY

Date	Sections	Source	Details
6 March 2024	1	Provost	V1.4: add anti-discrimination statement
23 April 2023		Company Secretary	V1.3 Minor amendment
24 January 2020			V1.2
2 March 2017			V1.1
4 October 2013			Date First Approved

**APPROVAL AUTHORITY:** Vice Chancellor