



**Mangosuthu
University of Technology**

TITLE	SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
POLICY OWNER	MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
APPROVAL AUTHORITY	COUNCIL
OVERSEEING COMMITTEE(S)	EMC → FACULTY BOARDS → SENATE → COUNCIL
POLICY NUMBER	AD002/2018
LATEST APPROVAL DATE	
EFFECTIVE DATE	
REVISION DATE	

POLICY STATEMENT

The Social Media Policy of the Mangosuthu University of Technology encourages the University Community to use social media in ways that demonstrate respect for the dignity of all human beings, and that do not bring the University into disrepute or imply the endorsement of personal views by Mangosuthu University of Technology.

MANAGEMENT CONTROL PAGE

Document management control

1. This document is the property of the Mangosuthu University of Technology. It contains information that is public to the university community and can be used by outside parties so long as they acknowledge their source.
2. This document has gone through the following mandated development and approval process as determined through the operation of the MUT Delegations of Authority Framework.

DEVELOPMENT AND CURRENT APPROVAL PROCESS		
COMMITTEES	COMMENTS	DATE OF RECOMMENDATION/ APPROVAL
REGISTRAR	Not Applicable	
EMC		
FACULTY BOARDS		
SENATE		
COUNCIL COMMITTEES		
COUNCIL		

POLICY HISTORY		
NAME OF THE OLD POLICY	POLICY NUMBER	APPROVAL OR LATEST AMENDMENT DATE

REFERENCES FOR THIS POLICY

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS CITED	
1.	The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
2.	The Government Communications and Information Systems (GCIS) Social Media Guidelines
3.	The Government Communicators' Handbook (2014-2017)
4.	The MUT Code of Conduct for Staff
5.	Social Media Policy Template by Eric Schwartzman, 2010
6.	Rhodes University, Social Media Policy, 18/05/2016
7.	Monash University (SA), Social Media Policy 18/05/2016
8.	Stellenbosch University , Social Media and E-Learning Policy 20/05/2016
9.	Harvard University, Social Media Policy and University Guidelines 23/05/2016
10.	University of Pretoria, Social Media Policy,20/05/2016

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1. RATIONALE

The Mangosuthu University of Technology recognizes that the university community is active on social media. In so much as the university respects the right of its members to use social media in their private capacity, it is paramount to note that each member's actions on social media as a private individual overlap with their role as a member of the university community. The university understands that private use of social media can bring opportunities and reputational risk.

1.1 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

The purpose of the Social Media Policy is to **promote** and encourage responsible use of social media by the University Community. Users of the University's social media channels are required to demonstrate high standards of ethics and conduct and are required to act responsibly when exchanging ideas and information on the University's social media network.

The objectives of the policy are as follows:

- a) to promote and encourage a responsible, positive and constructive use of Social Media for the benefit of the university and individual goals.
- b) to mitigate the risks associated with the University community's use of social media, by protecting the University from any unexpected outcome resulting from social media activities.

2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- 2.1 Social Media: any website or medium that allows for public communication, including but not limited to social and professional networking sites, blogs, micro-blogging sites, video and photo-sharing sites, forums, discussion boards and groups, podcasting sites and instant messaging services (including short messaging services (SMS)).
- 2.2 University: refers to Mangosuthu University of Technology and MUT
- 2.4 Users: students and both full time and part-time employees who are active on social media.
- 2.5 Third party users: these are individuals or companies that are contracted by the university to render various services.
- 2.6 University Community: this refers to Users, third party users and consultants, and extends to the University Council, Trade unions, Student Representative Council, Student Organisations and Societies, Adjuncts/Visiting Academics, Alumni, Graduates, Contractors, or any other persons who participate in social media and who may be identified as having an association with Mangosuthu University of Technology.

2.7. Misconduct: inclusive of, but not limited to, the generation of content that is detrimental to the image or reputation of the University, that is defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing or conduct that may create a hostile work environment.

2.8. Social media use: includes academic, private and official use by members of the University community.

3. SCOPE

3.1 The policy applies to all social media activities by the University community.

4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

4.1 Misconduct comprises social media activity which:

- a) constitutes a breach of any statute, regulation or rules of the University on Social media; or
- b) constitutes conduct that brings the University community and/or the University itself into contempt or disrepute; or
- c) interferes with the dissemination/sharing of information by the university and/or making statements on behalf of the University without authorisation to do so. In the case of emergency or crisis involving the University or members of the University Community in their capacity, all communications will be conducted under the auspices of the Marketing and Communications Division of the University.

4.2 CONSEQUENCES OF BREACH

Breach of the Social Media Policy, will be dealt in accordance with the Mangosuthu University of Technology: Code of Conduct for staff, Rules and Regulations for Student Discipline and other relevant University policies, which may lead to disciplinary action or other relevant sanctions. Where inappropriate use under this policy constitutes a breach of any laws, action may also be taken in accordance with the rules of the University. Third party users will be governed by the laws of the Republic of South Africa.

5. GOVERNANCE, RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

5.1 Marketing and Communications Department

5.1.1 The Marketing and Communications Department (through the Director: Public Relations and Brand Management) are the first point of reference for all enquiries regarding a particular social media post or account. Since the content is generated from multiple sources, the University Community is advised to contact or refer questions to the Department and or the Director: Public Relations and Brand Management.

5.1.2 Should there be a likelihood of reputational or brand risk, users are advised to contact or refer such matter to the attention of the Director: Public Relations and Brand Management and/or Marketing and Communications Department.

5.2 **Academic and research-related issues**

5.2.1 The University Community is encouraged to engage in public debates on Social Media through commentary within their respective areas of expertise, and to liaise with Director: Public Relations and Brand Management to ensure effective coverage and to limit any possible negative publicity.

5.2.1.1. Academic staff will not speak on behalf of the university unless they have been authorised to do so, and they will be explicit in explaining that their views and opinions are not official statements by the university.

5.2.2 **The University community**

Members of the University Community who require social media presence with regards to the MUT or its affiliates are requested to contact Director: Public Relations and Brand Management to assist with best practices and to advise on branding-related issues (e.g. Corporate Identity and Image) and on various channels appropriate to achieve their objectives.

5.3 **RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

5.3.1 The Marketing and Communications Division shall administer and enforce the policy in order to enhance the oversight implementation of the policy by the University community. Marketing and Communications personnel will monitor content across the web and on social media platforms and reserve the right to remove or report posts that violate this policy. Marketing and Communications Division is responsible for building and maintaining the Mangosuthu University of Technology brand and conveying it to the necessary target audiences to promote strength and academic excellence.

The Marketing and Communications Division implements all communications strategies for the University which include but are not limited to:

- a) marketing and advertising efforts
- b) media relations between the University and external sources
- c) creative services for the University divisions, departments, programmes, and services including graphic design, promotional strategy, creative direction, photography, and videography
- d) radio and TV advertising
- e) scheduling for University Spokespersons in line with the Communications Policy (This will need to be developed)
- f) website copy and creative design

In order for the Marketing and Communications Division to accomplish the University's communication efforts, the Division has to establish the Social Media Guide/Procedure as a reference source to assist everyone in maintaining a high-quality brand image and consistent messaging for MUT when engaging in all digital platforms. All divisions, departments, and services should adhere to the standards as stipulated by the policy and the guide/procedure.

5.3.2 Specific responsibilities for social media across the University are as follows:

- a) Reputational risk created by social media – Senior Director: Marketing & Communications
- b) Response to enquiries – Social Media Officer/Media Relations Officer
- c) Marketing opportunities – Director: Public Relations and Brand Management and Social Media Officer/Media Relations Officer
- d) Internet usage monitoring infrastructure – IT&N

6. **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every five years in line with the University Strategy, and when there are changes to the internal or external operating environment, including legislation and other legal prescripts.