

Social Media Guidance

1. Social media can bring enormous benefits and opportunities to individuals and to an academic community, including by enabling global communication and collaboration and promoting healthy and lively academic debate.
2. There is, however, an inherent risk involved in using social media, in that it is an instantaneous and far reaching form of communication and inappropriate use has the potential to cause serious, and sometimes unexpected and long-term, consequences.
3. Pembroke College encourages you to engage, collaborate and innovate through social media; however, wherever and however you do this, you must be aware of the potential impact on you and other users.

Do's and Don'ts

- Only post publicly what you would be happy for journalists, tutors, your family and prospective employers to see
- Don't post anything anonymously that you wouldn't be happy to post under your name.
- Be careful with privacy settings, but remember that everything you post online is public, even with the strictest privacy settings. Once something is posted online, it can be copied and redistributed, and it is easy to lose control of it. Presume that everything posted online will be permanent and will be shared
- Always think before you send. Avoid posting anything when you have been drinking or are feeling angry or emotional – you may regret it the next day but it could be viral by then
- Don't respond to pressure (or pressurize anyone) to share sexual or intimate images. Remember again that these may become public and that images can also be manipulated.
- Remember that what is a 'joke' to one person may feel like bullying and harassment to someone else. Be aware that posting 'jokes', such as joke threats, has led people to be prosecuted and even imprisoned.
- The College doesn't tolerate bullying, harassment or discrimination. If you feel bullied or harassed online, seek advice from the college's Harassment Advisers

- If you see or receive material that you are uncomfortable with, please report it. In some cases, simply being in possession of particular kinds of material, even if it was unsolicited, can lead to legal consequences. In a college context, this should be reported to the Dean in the first instance
- Ensure that you protect your personal information and that of others and be cautious about potential fraud or misrepresentation. Don't post any confidential information about others (and be cautious about sharing any of your own)
- Be very careful before writing anything that could have a negative impact on the reputation of anyone or any company. Any statement which could have a negative impact on a person (or business's) reputation could lead to accusations of libel / defamation and lawsuits
- Don't infringe copyright, for example by sharing files such as films or games.
- Be very cautious about arranging to meet someone you only know online. They may not be who they say they are. Arrange to meet during the day in a public place and take a friend or tell friends where you are going

Don't become a social media addict. Negative mood, depression, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, as well as social isolation, low self-esteem and psychosis are all associated with internet addiction

So what can you do?

- Schedule your internet time and keep parts of the day 'internet free'
- Don't use the internet in bed just before you sleep or during meals
- Accept that you don't have to answer every message immediately
- Disable unnecessary notifications
- Make the internet work for you, don't become dependent on it for your peace of mind

Last Updated: August 2021

