

LMETB SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

Social Media is a term commonly given to websites and applications that enable users to interact with one another online through the creation and sharing of content. Creating and sharing content allows users to build networks through increased participation and engagement, whilst also playing a vital role in the promotion and operation of an organisation.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safe and responsible use of LMETB social media, as appropriate by staff in any role in LMETB, students and learners. The policy is intended to provide guidance and direction on issues relating to the use of social media, including, but not limited to: Facebook, X, MS Teams, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Instagram, Vimeo, YouTube, WhatsApp, Viber and School/Centre/Campus websites (including blogs, subdomains and sub sites). Electronic communication and Social Media includes software applications including those running on mobile devices, email and websites which enable users to interact, create and exchange information online.

This policy should not be construed as a limitation of the functional use of social media but should provide a framework of good practice and a safeguard for the use of same.

OTHER RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This policy gives due regard to the relevant Department of Education Circular Letters, relevant legislation and the policies and procedures of LMETB which can be accessed at: https://lmetb.sharepoint.com/sites/AllStaff/AS_Policies/SitePages/Home.aspx

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PROFESSIONAL USE

Under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, all staff members of Public Bodies in Ireland have responsibility to promote equality and prevent discrimination in their everyday encounters with colleagues, service users and stakeholders. In operating LMETBs social media platforms, account managers and account coordinators will have regard for the legal obligations to protect the Human Rights of all persons, and those identified under nine (9) grounds where discrimination is likely to occur. These grounds are Gender, Civil Status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Religion, Age, Membership of the Traveller Community, Race and Disability (intellectual, mental and/or physical).

ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

Each Line Manager is ultimately responsible for the Social Media activity related to their School/Centre/Campus. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Develop local guidelines to support the use of Social Media (e.g. Social Media guidelines for students/learners, parents/guardians, and staff) and make reasonable efforts to train staff and students/learners in acceptable use and policies governing online communications.
- Monitor the use of online social media activity pertaining to the respective Social Media Account. This may include real-time monitoring of activity and/or maintaining a log of Internet activity for later review.
- Remove any inappropriate user accounts on the network.
- Amend School/Centre/Campus procedures and rules as required.

A designated staff member **may** be appointed to coordinate and monitor such activity related to their School/Centre/Campus. Those who coordinate and monitor Social Media channels associated with LMETB must ensure that they are in a position to respond to comments and posts made on the site in a timely manner.

In order to ensure a consistent brand voice and standard, it is **good practice** that each School/Centre/Campus maintains one official Social Media profile and ensure the School/Centre/Campus logo and LMETB logo is visible in a prominent place on the profile as required.

Each School/Centre/Campus is responsible for establishing and maintaining a Register of all social networking application domain names in use, the names of all designated staff members of these accounts, as well as the associated user identifications and passwords currently active within their School/Centre/Campus as outlined in Appendix II.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Social media is about having two-way conversations, so engaging with others online is a natural practice. Social Media is Social.

When engaging with members of the public on social media whether in a personal or a professional capacity, please adhere to the following best practice.

- Ensure the person you are engaging with is a real person and not a bot. A bot is an automated account, usually on X, which pushes out hundreds of Tweets without any personal information being shared.
- Always read the biography or 'about' section of a person you are engaging with on social media.
- Review their last 5-10 status updates or Tweets to get a sense of their opinions and views to see if you have shared interests.

- If you are experiencing trolling or offensive, aggressive, or threatening behaviour, simply screenshot the posts as evidence, block the person/s on the social network and report them to the social network.
- If a colleague is subjecting you to cyber bullying, you should report the matter to HR along with screenshots of the offensive posts/comments. (Refer to Appendix IV)

REMEMBER: How to spot a bot

- **Activity:** Does the account Tweet hundreds of times per day or per week?
- **Anonymity:** Does the account lack personal information or any identifying information?
- **Amplification:** Does the account mainly re-share content from other accounts and not original content?

STAFF CONDUCT – PROFESSIONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

SOCIAL MEDIA ETIQUETTE

- Remember your legal obligation under the Public Service Equality and Human Rights Duty as mentioned above under the heading Social Media for Professional Use.
- Remember to make posts as accessible as possible for all persons with visual and hearing impairments. If loading a video please remember to choose the closed caption (CC) option if available.
- Respect others' views and opinions. It is understandable that you may not always agree with opinions online, however, do not engage in a public disagreement.
- Try to add value to what others are doing and saying with your knowledge and insights. Remember you are not the customer-facing voice of Louth Meath ETB, the relevant LMETB Departments fulfil this role, however, feel free to sign-post to LMETB Departments using the 'Contact Us' webpage here: <https://www.lmetb.ie/what-we-do/contact-us/>
- Act professionally at all times.
- Be quick to correct your own mistakes and admit when you are wrong.
- Do not use ethnic or religious slurs, insults or obscenities.
- Do not engage in conduct that would be viewed as unacceptable online.
- Be considerate of others' privacy and topics that could be considered personal, such as religion or politics.
- Do not engage with trolls whose aim is to engage you in negative conversation.
- Share information that you know to be true, be careful of fake news and sharing misinformation.
- Do not share information about friends or colleagues without their prior consent.
- On personal sites, identify your views as your own, it should be clear that the views expressed are not those of LMETB. It is best practice to place a note on your personal page to state that '*Views and opinions expressed are personal.*'

- Remarks made in the name of the LMETB about individuals, organisations or groups which are of an offensive, derogatory or threatening nature on social media may result in disciplinary, legal or criminal action being taken.
- Speak in the first person, remembering that you are publishing content in your own name and not that of your employer i.e. 'I' not 'we'
- **Confidentiality** – as per the terms and conditions of your employment you shall not discuss or disclose any information of a confidential nature except in the proper course of your employment.

REMEMBER: You are legally liable for anything you publish on your own social networks.

Tik Tok GUIDANCE

The TikTok application or website should not be installed or accessed using any device owned by LMETB, or by any schools or centres under its remit, without prior written authorisation. Where the TikTok application is currently installed, it should be removed immediately unless prior authorisation has been granted and said authorisation was not subsequently revoked. Any personally owned device that accesses or stores LMETB work data, including but not limited to emails, One Drive and MS Teams must not access the TikTok service, or install the TikTok application, without prior written authorisation.

If the user wishes to install or access TikTok on a personally owned device, then the user must ensure that no LMETB data is stored on the device or accessed from the device.

THINK BEFORE YOU POST

PRIVACY DOES NOT EXIST IN THE WORLD OF SOCIAL MEDIA!

Even where social media accounts have been deactivated, copies of user information may still remain online. Users should think carefully about whether they are happy for their information to be made available, not just now, but into the future.

BREACH OF POLICY

Any breach of this policy could result in a staff member or learner losing access to social networking facilities and/or result in disciplinary action.

APPENDIX I - NEW SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS
Request to create a Social Media Account within a School/Centre of Louth Meath ETB

Name of Staff Member responsible for managing the account:	
Name of School/Centre:	
Type of Social Media (e.g., Instagram, X etc.)	
Username:	
Password:	
What is the main purpose of the social media facility?	
How will the social media facility be managed?	
What email address will be used in this account?	

Authorised Permission has been granted to create this Social Media by:	
Signature: (Line Manager)	
Date:	

Authorised Permission can only be signed by Line Manager/Principal/Co Ordinator. No accounts can be opened in the name of Louth Meath ETB or in the name of an individual School/Centre/Campus of Louth Meath ETB without authorised sign off being secured in advance from the **Line Manager/Principal/Co Ordinator**.

APPENDIX II - REGISTER OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Register of Social Media Accounts <enter School/Centre/Campus/Office name>

School/Centre/Campus/Office Name: _____ Register Owner: _____

Name of Social Media Account/Profile	Account Username and Password	Email Address used to open account	Date of Account Setup	Staff Administrator	Other Account Users (if any)	Primary Purpose

APPENDIX III - TALENT RELEASE FORM
Talent Release Form

<to be printed on School/Centre/Campus headed paper>

I authorise Louth Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) and producers working on behalf of LMETB to store and make use of my appearance for LMETB public relations purposes.

Producer: Louth Meath ETB and its agents.

Purpose: Public Relations including the promotion of education and training, courses and services of Louth Meath ETB.

I understand that I am to receive no compensation for this appearance and that LMETB shall have complete ownership of the appearance. I give LMETB the right to use my name, likeness and biographical material to promote education and training and publicise LMETB courses and services.

Louth Meath ETB may:

1. *Photograph / video me and record my voice and likeness for the purposes mentioned above, whether by digital, film, videotape, magnetic tape or otherwise.*
2. *Make copies of the photographs or recordings so made.*
3. *I give LMETB permission to use my appearance including name, image, likeness, voice and biographical details for publication in a variety of formats including in print media such as newsletters, magazines, newspapers, as well as digital media such as websites, Facebook, X or other formats for the named purpose.*

I further understand that the source material remains the property of LMETB and that there will be no restrictions on the number of times that my appearance may be used.

Name (print in Block capitals): _____

Address: _____

Talent Signature: _____

Parent's Signature (if under 18 years): _____

Date: _____

