



Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) Social Media Policy

Version 3.0

Document Location

Marketing Office

Revision History

Date of this revision: 05/03/2021	Date of next review:
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Version Number/ Revision Number	Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Changes marked
3.0	24/9/2020	Review – Sections 1-6	
3.0	8/10/2020	Review – Sections 7&8	

Consultation History

Version Number/ Revision Number	Consultation Date	Names of Parties in Consultation	Summary of Changes
1	24 th September, 2020	Social Media Policy Working Group	Review and update of content in Sections 1-6
2	8 th October 2020	Social Media Policy Working Group	Added content following a review of Sections 7 & 8, and a review of the Social Media Guidelines document
3	20 th October 2020	GMIT Data Protection Office	Review and update
4	27 th November 2020	Common Partnership Forum	Review and update

Approval

This document requires the following approvals:

Name	Title	Date
Governing Body		25/11/2021

1. INTRODUCTION

GMIT welcomes the benefits and opportunities that social media offers staff, students and stakeholders, and the positive platform it provides for learning, promotion, discovery and engagement.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on what GMIT deems to be acceptable use of social media, while preserving the values of academic freedom and the individual's right to freedom of speech. It should be used in conjunction with the GMIT Social Media Guidelines available on staff.gmit.ie, studenthub.gmit.ie, and gmitsulife.ie. Any previous Social Media Policies are replaced by this Policy.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. **User:** GMIT staff, students and authorised users (i.e. third parties who use the GMIT.ie domain and/or social media sites).
- 3.2. **Social Media:** Any facility for online publication and commentary, including, without limitation internal and external social media sites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and LinkedIn and other online communication, including Microsoft Teams, messaging apps such as WhatsApp and Viber, personal websites, blogs, wikis, discussion boards, and email groups.
- 3.3. **Content:** Text, photographs, images, video and audio files
- 3.4. **Post:** Write, comment, copy, share, like, react, disseminate, publish

4. SCOPE

- 4.1. This policy applies to all users of the official GMIT.ie domain and/or related social media platforms or apps. The remit of this policy also extends to online communication and new emerging web-based technologies yet to be developed.

5. USER RESPONSIBILITY

5.1. General Guidelines

- 5.1.1. Users must at all times use social media sites in a responsible manner, having due regard for the rights and reputation of individuals and the Institute.
- 5.1.2. Users should not use social media so as to contravene or breach the laws of Ireland e.g. privacy rights, data protection law, defamation law (See Section 8. Legal Basis).
- 5.1.3. Users should not use social media in a way that contravenes or breaches GMIT policies e.g. GMIT Dignity at Work Policy, GMIT Student Code of Conduct (See Section 7. Associated Documents).
- 5.1.4. Users should be respectful of the opinions and views of others

- 5.1.5. In the event of a Critical Incident which may result in mis-communication, serious illness, injury or fatalities, users must not post personal or sensitive data on social media

5.2. Personal Vs Professional Profiles

- 5.2.1. On personal accounts, if users state that they are associated with GMIT, they must clearly identify their views as their own by including a statement such as “Views are my own” in their profile.
- 5.2.2. If users are using social media for professional purposes, they should be mindful that they are representing the Institute. They must ensure the correct use of the GMIT brand and ensure that formal responses on behalf of the Institute reflect the official policies and ethos of the Institute.
- 5.2.3. Users must not use the name or brand identity of the Institute to promote their own commercial objectives or activities, or endorse their activity, without prior consent.
- 5.2.4. Users should not use messaging apps like WhatsApp, Viber, etc for Institute business as there are privacy issues associated with them in the context of business use.
- 5.2.5. Any external social-media related employment, self-employment, working partnerships or consultancy work engaged in by staff shall be subject to the External Activity clause in GMIT’s employment contracts. As such, they must have the prior written approval of the President of the Institute.

5.3. Individual Responsibility

- 5.3.1. Users should become familiar with the terms of service, privacy settings, best practice guidelines and data storage locations of networks and sites they participate in.
- 5.3.2. Users should remember that they are personally accountable for all comments that they make and content that they post online.
- 5.3.3. Users should be familiar with the terms of GMIT’s Acceptable Usage Policy which covers the use of GMIT IT Resources, Internet Facilities, Email and Social Media (see Section 7, Associated Documents).

5.4. Unacceptable Use - What not to post

This provision operates in addition to the terms of GMIT’s Acceptable Usage Policy. Non-exhaustive examples of what may constitute unacceptable use in the context of this Policy include:

- 5.4.1. Users must not post content that could be deemed to be discriminatory, threatening, harassing, illegal, obscene, defamatory, slanderous, or hostile towards any individual or entity, or content that is sexually explicit.
- 5.4.2. Users must not post content that is likely to create panic, anxiety or incitement to hatred.

5.4.3. Users must not share confidential, personal or commercially sensitive information.

5.4.4. Users must not create content which would identify a third party (e.g commentary, photographs, video content) without the express consent of the third party concerned. This consent can be withdrawn at any time.

5.5. Copyright and Intellectual Property Laws

5.5.1. Users should ensure that copyright and fair use laws are respected. This includes using images from the Internet. It is important to credit content from a third party. Users should not post any proprietary content on social media channels without the express consent of the recorders/owner.

5.6. Management of GMIT social media accounts

5.6.1. All new social media accounts must be registered by the user with the GMIT Marketing Office. Upon opening the account, the user should inform the Marketing Office of the type of account, the name of the account, the target audience, and the address of the account.

5.6.2. The user must follow best practice when naming the account, using brand assets and imagery, and setting passwords for the account. See GMIT Social Media Guidelines for details.

5.6.3. All users creating a GMIT social media account must complete an acknowledgment that they will comply with GMIT protocols and policies. These acknowledgments will be retained by the GMIT Marketing Office.

5.6.4. The user of the social media account must monitor the account regularly.

5.6.5. The user of the social media account is responsible for the deactivation of the account and must provide inform the Marketing Office prior to the deletion of the account.

5.7. Moderation Policy

5.7.1. GMIT reserves the right to moderate and remove content it believes to be inappropriate (such as commercial solicitations), or content which contravenes GMIT's Social Media Policy.

5.8. Privacy Statement

5.8.1. Any email addresses, names, or contact information received through GMIT social media platforms will not be shared or sold to anyone, unless required by law enforcement investigation

6. POLICY VIOLATIONS

Users are encouraged to be vigilant and to report suspected policy violations in the first instance to the administrator of the social media account.

User may also report suspected policy violations to GMIT Line Management who will initiate the appropriate action. This could be informal or formal, using existing grievance and/or disciplinary procedures. Any breach of this policy could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

In the case of a Critical Incident, GMIT reserves the right to ban users or temporarily disable the social media platform if appropriate. In the case of a Critical Incident, the user should report the policy violation immediately to the Marketing Office and/or the GMIT President.

7. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Any user who posts information onto a GMIT related/associated social networking site must adhere to the Institutes policies in force at the time, with particular attention being paid to the following:

- GMIT Social Media Guidelines
- GMIT Dignity at Work Policy
- GMIT Code of Student Conduct
- GMIT Plagiarism Policy
- GMIT Data Protection Policy
- GMIT Acceptable Usage Policy
- GMIT Staff Code of Conduct
- GMIT Disciplinary Procedure
- GMIT Procedure for the Resolution of Grievances/Disputes
- GMIT COVID-19 Response Plan
- GMIT Safety Statement
- GMIT Critical Incident Plan
- GMIT Digital Learning Charter
- GMIT Employment Contracts

8. LEGAL BASIS

Any user who posts information to a GMIT related/associated social networking site must adhere to legislation in force at the time, with particular attention being paid to the following:

- Copyright and Related Rights Acts 2000, 2004 and 2007 and related copyright statutes
- Trade Mark Act 1996
- Data Protection Acts 1988-2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Criminal Damage Act 1991 (S 5 in particular)
- Safety Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005
- The Child Trafficking and Pornography Acts 1998 and 2004
- Defamation Act 2009
- Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989
- Broadcasting Act 2009
- Equality Act 2004
- Freedom of Information Act 2014
- National Intellectual Property Protocol 2016 (which articulates the Irish Trademarks Act 1996; Patents Act 1992; and, Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000)
- S.I. No. 121/2020 - Health Act 1947 (Section 31A -Temporary Restrictions) (Covid-19) Regulations 2020



GMIT

INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA NA GAILLIMHE-MAIGH EO
GALWAY - MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

GMIT Galway Campus
Dublin Road, Galway City, Ireland
Tel: +353 91 753 161

GMIT Mayo Campus
Westport Road, Castlebar,
Co. Mayo, Ireland.
Tel: +353 94 902 5700

GMIT Letterfrack Campus
National Centre for Excellence in
Furniture Design and Technology,
School of Design and Creative Arts,
Letterfrack, Co. Galway, Ireland.
Tel: +353 91 742653/742650

GMIT Centre for Creative Arts
and Media (CCAM)
Cluain Mhuire Campus,
Wellpark Road, Galway, Ireland.
Tel: +353 91 770 661

GMIT Mountbellew Campus
Mountbellew Agricultural
College, Mountbellew,
Co. Galway, Ireland.
Tel: +353 9096 79205

www.gmit.ie