



Freelancer and Staff Social Media Policy

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1.0 Introduction

In this policy, EDA will be used to cover the full-time courses, freelancers working for Emil Dale Academy and all staff members at Emil Dale Academy.

1.1 Purpose

EDA recognises and embraces the benefits and opportunities that social media can bring as a tool.

For the purposes of this policy, social media is defined as a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes online social forums, anonymous apps, blogs, video- and image-sharing websites and similar facilities. 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 can impact upon employees, students and the reputation of EDA.

EDA encourages all freelancers and staff members to engage, collaborate and innovate through social media; however, wherever and whenever the person does this, they must be aware of the potential impact on both themselves and EDA.

This policy is intended to minimise the risks of social media which can impact on the wellbeing of the EDA community and the reputation of EDA, so that freelancers and staff can enjoy the benefits of social networking whilst understanding the standards of conduct expected by EDA.

1.2 Location of policy

This policy is available to access on EDA's website.

1.3 To whom and where this policy applies

This policy applied to all freelancers engaging in services at EDA, as well as all staff members of EDA.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Social media

'Social Media' is used to describe virtual channels dedicated to live streamed or scheduled uploads, community-based input, interactions, content sharing and collaboration through the building of virtual networks and communities. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation and wikis are among the different types of social media. It also includes any other means of communicating on the internet where members of the public (including staff or students) may reasonably access the communication. They currently include, but are not limited to, Facebook (and Messenger), Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Allo, TikTok, X (Twitter), LinkedIn, Reddit, YouTube, Flickr, Pinterest, and Google+.

3.0 Policy

3.1 Freelancer and staff principles

Freelancers and staff at EDA:

- a. Should not post as a representative of EDA unless specifically authorised to do so by a member of EDA senior management.
- b. Should not be "friends" or follow students on social media.
 - i. If there is an instance where the freelancer or staff member is aware of a student following them on social media, it is strongly encouraged for them to remove the student as a follower.
- c. Are recommended to have "Private" profiles on social media, if their profile is "Public", always consider the impact of any posts or communications on themselves, students and EDA.
- d. Should never represent themselves or EDA in a false or misleading way. All statements must be true and not misleading; all claims must be substantiated.
- e. Must use common sense and common courtesy. Freelancers and staff should ask permission to publish or report conversations that are meant to be private or internal to EDA. EDA's privacy, confidentiality and legal guidelines for external communication should not be violated by a freelancer or staff member's efforts to be transparent.

- f. Should seek guidance before participating in social media when the topic being discussed may be considered sensitive (e.g., a crisis situation, intellectual property, issues which may impact on EDA's reputation, commercially sensitive material). Social media activity around sensitive topics should be referred to the Business and Strategy Manager, Principal or Deputy Principal.
- g. If a freelancer or staff member's use of social media is considered to be derogatory, discriminatory, bullying, threatening, defamatory, offensive, intimidating, or harassing, therefore breaching policy or procedure, EDA may take action. This can also include comments, videos, or photographs, which have been posted on social media sites about EDA, students, fellow freelancers or staff members, or managers.
- h. Should not engage in illegal activity through social media or engage in any activity that promotes terrorism. The very fact of possessing or disseminating terrorist material may be sufficient to warrant an investigation by the police.
- i. Should be aware of security threats and be on guard for social engineering and phishing attempts. Social networks can also be used to distribute spam and malware. Freelancers and staff members should act in accordance with the BYOD Policy and Acceptable Use (IT) Policy at all times.

3.2 Freelancer and staff social media responsibilities

Freelancers and staff at EDA:

- a. Should be transparent and state that they freelance or work for EDA if they are posting about EDA.
 - i. If you are writing about EDA or a competitor, use your real name, identify that you freelance or work for EDA, and be clear about your role as a freelancer or member of staff. EDA strongly discourages posting online anonymously or using pseudonyms.
- b. Should never impersonate another individual.
- c. Should never post any EDA class/show/general content onto their own social media channels, unless if they are sharing a post that either EDA, The Factory Playhouse, Dale Hammond Associates, or Emil Dale Part-Time have already posted onto their public social media accounts.
- d. Are responsible for their words and actions in an online environment and are therefore advised to consider whether any comment, photograph or video they are about to post on a social networking site, is something that they would want students, colleagues and other employees of EDA, their manager or people outside EDA to read.
- e. Should fully disclose to their Line Manager (if a member of staff) or relevant Head of Department (if a freelancer) should a student message them privately on social media. Neither freelancers or staff members should respond to the student under any circumstances. This also applies for any text messages, WhatsApp messages etc should a student manage to obtain contact details.
- f. Should only contact EDA students through their EDA email addresses or posts on EDA's Microsoft Teams. If a freelancer does not have an EDA email address or an EDA Microsoft Teams account, all communication should go through their relevant Head of Department.

3.3 Results of unacceptable social media conduct

Where freelancers and staff members access social media for work-related purposes or personal use using EDAs IT facilities and equipment, EDA's Acceptable Use (IT) policy will apply.

Where appropriate, EDA reserves the right to monitor use of social media platforms and take appropriate action to protect against any misuse that may be harmful to them, in accordance with the Acceptable Use (IT) Policy where the law permits. EDA's response to any misuse of social media in a personal capacity will be reasonable and proportionate to the perceived offence; the nature of the postings/comments made and the impact or potential impact on EDA. Line managers (for staff

members) or relevant Heads of Department (for freelancers) are responsible for addressing any concerns and/or questions arising out of the use of social media. EDA may require freelancers and staff members to remove social media postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of any of the above principles and responsibilities; failure to comply with such a request may, in itself, result in disciplinary action (if a member of staff) or appropriate sanctions (if a freelancer).

Furthermore, social networking sites and profiles may be referred to for necessary investigatory purposes.

Document Review

Version Number	Date of Issue	Review Date	Author	Changes Made/ detail
01	July 2020	July 2021	-	-
02	12 th November 2021	July 2022	Eden Tinsey	Correction of spelling errors in Section 5
03	2 nd February 2022	February 2023	Eden Tinsey	Adaptations made to Section 5. Additions made to 'Responsibilities'
04	25 th April 2022	April 2023	Eden Tinsey	Additions made to 'Responsibilities' in Section 5
05	25 th July 2022	July 2023	Eden Tinsey	Annual policy review
06	4 th August 2023	July 2024	Eden Tinsey	Annual policy review
07	6 th August 2024	August 2025	Eden Tinsey	1.3 now reads 'This policy applied to all freelancers engaging in services at EDA, as well as all staff members of EDA.' Update of Twitter to X (Twitter) in 2.1