



Marketing & Communication

Staff Publication and Media Policy
MBZUAI-SPMP-MARCOMM-POL-1.0

Effective Date 06 July 2023

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1. Document Control Information

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Policy Review

Person responsible	Workflow	Date
Director of Marketing and Communication	Initiate	16 August 2022
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Version History

Version number	Person responsible	Date of change	Comments
V1.0	Director of Marketing and Communication	New	The initial document

2. Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Media	Free or paid services and products which publish news, information, draft documents, or anything that is considered uncontrolled. These services and products include printed publications such as newspapers and magazines; television and radio broadcasting services; and online and digital products and services such as websites, email newsletters (e-newsletters), blogs, webcasts, streaming services, podcasts, online magazines, and e-publications.

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Press release	An official statement issued to newspapers giving information on a particular matter.
Social Media	Websites and applications that enable users to create and share information or ideas with others or to participate in social networking, whether known now or developed in the future.
Press/Media/Journalists	Refers to Media organizations that focus on delivering news to the general public or a target audience. These include print media (newspapers, news magazines), broadcast Outlets (radio and television), and the Internet (online newspapers, news blogs, etc.).
Stakeholders	Refers to regulators, government authorities, partners, customers, media organizations, service providers, the general public, employees and faculty of MBZUAI.

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3. Introduction

This policy was created to support all MBZUAI staff, faculty and researchers, to use good judgement and common sense when exchanging ideas, participating in debates, engaging in social media, promoting the University both nationally and internationally and engaging with students to uphold the reputation of the institution.

4. Objective

This policy aims to:

- Outline the University's expectations of both Academic and Professional staff with respect to media and public comment, including social media, where there is an identifiable connection with the University.
- Diminish reputational damage arising from misuse, abuse, expression of sensitive or confidential information, and expression of personal views.
- To support and encourage employees to use social media appropriately to enhance work, and to protect their well-being and their reputation and the reputation of the University.

5. Scope

This Policy applies to all staff including staff on short- and long-term contracts with MBZUAI or working in the capacity of representing MBZUAI as a third party.

6. Staff Publication and Media Policy

6.1. General Guidelines

- 6.1.1. The University recognizes, values, and protects academic and intellectual freedom. However, all staff have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a professional manner when engaging with all forms of media and public comment and to uphold the good reputation of the University.
- 6.1.2. Staff should assume that their academic life and personal life will merge online with impact flowing both ways regardless of their care and effort in separating them.
- 6.1.3. Even if they use privacy tools (determining who can view their page or profile, for instance), they should assume that everything they write, exchange, or receive on a social media site is public.
- 6.1.4. Staff should be aware that the information that they post or publish online will be permanent.
- 6.1.5. Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of prohibited social media conduct include posting commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, personal attacks, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or that can create a hostile environment. All conduct related to the publication of material should also be in accordance with UAE law.

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- 6.1.6. Direct or indirect negative references to MBZUAI’s internal circumstances, policies, decisions, procedures, or events must not be made. (For example, “There were X weaknesses in this area, which I helped improve”)
- 6.1.7. Staff must not use the State’s official logo or logos of the MBZUAI for any private purposes, through social media, unless officially authorized to do so.
- 6.1.8. Staff should be aware of unintentional/accidental disclosures or the perception of disclosures. They should understand that readers may view their participation in a group as their acceptance of its views; be aware of the common social media indiscretions. For example, inappropriate individual or group pictures get posted unintentionally.
- 6.1.9. Staff should always be fair, respectful, and courteous even if they disagree with an opinion.
- 6.1.10. Social media networks, blogs, and other types of online content sometimes generate press, media, or other third-party inquiries. Staff should be aware that some of these inquiries may have fraudulent motives. Where these may impact MBZUAI, staff should refrain from providing direct responses and should escalate these inquiries in line with the Media Relations guidance below.
- 6.1.11. Staff should be aware that MBZUAI may observe content and information made available by staff through social media.
- 6.1.12. If staff encounter a situation while using social media that may threaten to become antagonistic, staff should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and refer to the Marcoms team if advice impacting MBZUAI’s reputation is required.
- 6.1.13. Staff should be aware that in the UAE, Federal Law No 5 of 2012 on Combating Cyber Crimes has provisions in place that address social media usage. This law, in principle, prohibits photographs without permission, breach of privacy and confidentiality, defamatory statements and activities which are inconsistent with public morals and good conduct. Staff should abide by all UAE laws concerning media and publications.

6.2. Social Media and Digital Platforms Guidelines for MBZUAI Staff

Staff are encouraged to:

- 6.2.1. Share university stories, events, and career openings: share or retweet posts from the MBZUAI’s social media handles to be a vocal advocate for the University. Be sure to use any hashtags suggested by the social media team.
- 6.2.2. Staff using social media as part of their job are representing MBZUAI. You should therefore make it clear that you work for MBZUAI, use your real name and be clear about your role. The lines between public and private, personal, and professional can become blurred in online social networks. If you are identified as a member of MBZUAI, you need to ensure that your content and tone are consistent with your role at work.
- 6.2.3. Use disclaimers when posting personal opinions: any personal opinions you post on topics must explicitly be branded as your own and not that of the university.
- 6.2.4. Employees are also responsible for the content they publish in a personal capacity, whether on a blog, social media platform, or any other form of user-generated media. Be mindful that what you publish will be permanent and it is very difficult and often impossible to remove.

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- 6.2.5. Be honest and authentic. Always provide correct information and cite sources when possible. Always act responsibly and understand that you are responsible for the content including text, images, and videos that are posted/published. Staff are strongly encouraged to exercise their judgment when doing so.
- 6.2.6. Always remain professional and transparent even though social media or/and digital platforms are a casual means of communication.
- 6.2.7. Respect copyright laws.
- 6.2.8. Fully respect the local culture.
- 6.2.9. Ensure that all information, prior to sharing on social media, is appropriate especially in relation to government entities, by verifying whether such information is allowed to be posted and ensuring that it is not incorrect, misleading, unconfirmed, unsubstantiated, or unsupported, with the source of the information being verified as well.

Staff Should Not:

- 6.2.10. Post anything confidential, sensitive, personal, or any proprietary information about the University, including financial, operational, stakeholder information, its employees, faculty members, or any of the university’s existing or potential customers or stakeholders.
- 6.2.11. Publish personal blogs or produce podcasts without clarifying to readers or listeners that their blogs and the views expressed are personal and are in no way the views of the University.
- 6.2.12. Respond to competitors’ overtures: do not respond to competitors’ requests for likes or shares or news about people and businesses.
- 6.2.13. Use MBZUAI’s logos or any other image or iconography on personal social media sites. Use the MBZUAI name to promote a product or cause.
- 6.2.14. Present false information or aggressive/controversial opinions. If the staff member makes a mistake, accept it, apologize, and do not delete the original post, just update it with correct information.
- 6.2.15. Attempt to speak on behalf of MBZUAI and its departments or brands, especially in cases where you may be making a statement, promise, or commitment.
- 6.2.16. Promote the University’s business on personal media accounts without prior authorization from the Marketing and Communications Department.
- 6.2.17. Under any circumstances, create MBZUAI / subsidiaries/brand/business-related accounts on any social media channels or talk on their behalf.
- 6.2.18. Use defamatory, offensive, inappropriate, or foul language. If you disagree with an opinion or statement, present your counterargument in a calm and professional manner. Comments that are derogatory towards MBZUAI, your colleagues, your position within the University, or any of our partners/stakeholders may lead to formal disciplinary action which may lead to dismissal.
- 6.2.19. Engage with any form of media on behalf of MBZUAI, its subsidiaries, and/or brands. Direct all queries to the Marketing and Communications Department.
- 6.2.20. Use the method of irritation, inflation, and sharp criticism when sharing content with others. Staff must uphold a high level of responsibility, accountability, and professionalism.
- 6.2.21. Share or post any information that is not in line with MBZUAI or as per the guidelines adopted by the UAE Government in general.
- 6.2.22. Participate or publish any information incompatible with MBZUAI Policies, or in line with the directions of the government of UAE in general.
- 6.2.23. Use the official emblem of the country and other emblems of government entities at all levels and for any private purposes via social media except if official approval is received.

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- 6.2.24. Use the identity of any government entity or the identity of any government employee, or any government entities' initiative via social media for any reason without receipt of an official approval.
- 6.2.25. Use social media to comment on cases brought to courts or to influence the investigation procedure and the decisions and judgments issued by the competent judiciary systems.
- 6.2.26. Use social media to express their discontent about work or their work colleagues. This is not an appropriate or constructive route to resolve such dissatisfaction. If you have an issue concerning your work or work colleagues, you are encouraged to discuss this with your line manager or HR.

6.3. Media Relations

- 6.3.1. Refer all media enquiries directly to the **Marketing and Communications Department**. Do not interact with media, reply to emails, or make any statements without receiving explicit approval from the Marketing and Communications Department.
- 6.3.2. Do not speak to the media about MBZUI either proactively or reactively without the approval of the Marketing and Communications Department.
- 6.3.3. All staff are forbidden from sharing any information about MBZUI, including financials, HR matters, commercially sensitive information, or any information contained in work emails or on the university's intranet with any journalist or media entity. Breaching confidentiality, privacy and discussing sensitive information could result in serious disciplinary action.
- 6.3.4. Do not send any external collateral, including invitations, statements, articles, or any sensitive MBZUI information to any journalist without prior approval from the Marketing and Communications Department.
- 6.3.5. Seek counsel from the Marketing and Communications Department even if an MBZUI staff plans to engage with media as a private citizen on a matter unrelated to their study at MBZUI.
- 6.3.6. In the case of an impending issue or crisis, always contact the Marketing and Communications Department so they can prepare reactionary statements and materials in the likelihood that the media contacts the organization.
- 6.3.7. Issues that should not be discussed with reporters include legal issues, personnel issues, questions that involve topics touching upon political situations, culture, heritage and religious beliefs, ethics or issues that may result in harm to others, or a crisis or emergency. All such inquiries are to be forwarded to the Marketing and Communications Department.
- 6.3.8. All press releases, interviews, and other media relations/press coverage must be managed and overseen by **the Marketing and Communications Department**.
- 6.3.9. If staff are requested to participate in interviews by the Marketing and Communications Department, Marketing and Communications has a responsibility to ensure the staff receives a briefing prior to partaking.

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7. Related Documents

Section	Related Document(s)
Not Applicable	

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V1.0	Director of Marketing and Communication	New policy	First approved version

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