Social Media
QMUL Digital Communications Strategy
2013, January Edition

**Purpose**
The 2013 Social Media Strategy provides staff with a *framework for using social media*, including establishing, managing, growing and targeting official QMUL profiles.

The strategy will be reviewed in July 2013.

**Social media rationale**
QMUL uses social media to build relationships – and a strong community – through providing truly valuable content and conversation. We showcase thought leadership, inspire conversation, highlight and enhance the student experience, listen and converse, and promote our most relevant events and campaigns.
Use of this document
Use this document to:
- Understand social media and how people at QMUL use it
- Understand the risks of social media
- Promote your subject matter through social media
- Create an official QMUL social media profile – set objectives, understand your audience, create content, manage and maintain, and grow

This document refers to the use and implementation of official QMUL social media profiles. The overarching Digital Communications Strategy informs the rationale of this document.

Conversely, the Digital Content Strategy highlights the way to produce content for digital QMUL profiles and platforms, and for submission to QMUL’s central channels.

QMUL social media channels
The social media channels discussed in the 2013 QMUL Social Media Strategy are:
- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- LinkedIn

This list is not exhaustive, and will evolve with the strategy. Other channels to note are identified in the Appendix.

Check the QMUL Social Media directory for a list of active QMUL profiles. If your profile does not appear, Get in touch, page 19.
What is social media?

Social media broadly refers to instant, interactive, 2-way communication channels facilitated by online technologies. The term encompasses a range of virtual networks and online communities in which people create, share, exchange and comment on content.

It has exploded in popularity because it is accessible, fast and taps straight into our basic desire to communicate.

Social media will evolve into different forms and formats, but it is certainly established as an integrated, inseparable channel for all future marketing and communication efforts.

Social and digital media will be used for everything from customer service and feedback, to sharing and collaborating on big ideas and research findings, to providing real-time updates on events and breaking news.

Social media reach
- Facebook claims 1 billion average unique users per month, of which ~35% fall in the 13-24 age bracket
- Twitter has around 288 million users, with an older demographic than Facebook
- LinkedIn just reached 200 million and has the oldest average age, in the 40’s
- As social media use becomes a habit, niche sites and forums continuously splinter away from the bigger profiles

Why QMUL uses social media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why people use social media</th>
<th>Why QMUL uses social media</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Build relationships</td>
<td>o Listen, monitor and respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Communicate</td>
<td>o Have conversations</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Gather information</td>
<td>o Share ideas and insight</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Give feedback</td>
<td>o Provide customer support</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Share ideas and thoughts</td>
<td>o Showcase thought leadership</td>
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</table>

QMUL uses social media to build relationships – and a strong community – through providing truly valuable content and conversation. We showcase thought leadership, inspire conversation, highlight and enhance the student experience, listen and converse, and promote our most relevant events and campaigns.

Our audience will then share our content, enhancing our reach and building a larger audience for our future communications.

Businesses that go into social media focused on sales, leads, and broadcasting news and promotions misunderstand the relationship aspect, and are unlikely to build lasting success.
Social media challenges and risks

Danger! Risk ahead.
Social media profiles pose a variety of risks to QMUL, your department, and you as an individual.

Information
In all communication, there is a risk that information is transferred in a way detrimental to the sender. Our communication via social media is particularly susceptible, because our channels are widely dispersed. Information risk arises from:
- False or misleading information that infringes copyright, damages the QMUL brand or contains erroneous statements
- Inaccurate or untimely information in response to audience enquiries
- Poorly constructed communications, mixed messages across various profiles, grammatical mistakes, and spelling errors

Overcoming these risks
- Be aware of Copyright laws and how that applies to any content you wish to share
- Be responsible for what you write – remember that you could be legally liable
- Ensure responses to enquiries are accurate and timely
- Double check all posts for grammar, accuracy, and factual basis
- Be aware of other communication being directed at your audience through other QMUL channels. A good starting point is to join the Social Media Working Party. Get in touch to be added to the email list.

Negative comments
This is one of the most daunting aspects of social media. But if you are prepared, negative comments can turn into a source of competitive insight and advantage.

If someone has something bad to say, they will say it to friends, colleagues, relatives and their own social networks. It is better they post their feedback on an official QMUL profile, where we can proactively listen and respond.

Overcoming this risk
- Have a resource available to check your profile daily and respond quickly
- Don’t let it get personal – distance yourself from feedback
- Don’t get into arguments – where appropriate, apologise and offer solutions
- Also refer to ‘Managing your social media profile’, page 15 which outlines handling spam and offensive comments.
Quality
QMUL has a reputation to uphold. Unprofessional, poorly resourced, inactive social media profiles can seriously damage the perception of the QMUL brand.

Every question that remains unanswered reflects poorly on our commitment to customer service, while every slightly different logo, low-res image, mixed-message, disjointed sentence and unfamiliar tone of voice dilutes our ability to reinforce our quality.

Overcoming this risk
- Notify us of any profiles that need to be shut down - Get in touch, page 19
- Assign a resource to answer questions within 24 hours
- Use the appropriate imagery, logos and messaging - Get in touch, page 19

'Too many profiles'
QMUL has a large number of social media profiles for various audiences. Each additional profile could:
- Confuse the audience – ‘Which profile provides relevant information for me?’ ‘Which will answer my questions?’
- Reduce your potential audience, and that of other QMUL profiles – the more profiles at QMUL, the smaller the audience and activity on each page, and the less likely we are to benefit from social scale
- Emphasises information risk – logistics of message coordination become difficult

Overcoming these risks
- Understand your objectives – see Setting your objectives, page 8
- Understand how the audience wants to engage with you, and how you will provide ongoing value – see Channels to reach your audience, page 10
- Promote through other avenues - scan the social media landscape for other QMUL pages, or contact Marketing and Communications
- Explore ways to grow and engage your audience – see Growing your audience, page 18

OK. The elephant in the room has been discussed.
You know the risks and are willing to overcome them. Now, let's make the most of your social media presence.
Establishing a profile
This checklist ensures you have thought about the strategy, structure and success of your QMUL social media profile. Each point is discussed in more detail in further sections of this strategy.

Answering the following questions to establish a social media profile that delivers meaningful results:

- **Who is my audience, and why will they participate?**
  See Channels to reach your audience, page 10
- **What are my objectives?**
  See Setting your objectives, page 8
- **Do we understand how the audience uses this channel?**
  See Channels to reach your audience, page 10
- **How will we craft engaging content for our audience in this context?**
  See Error! Reference source not found., page 13
- **Do we have resources dedicated to maintaining the profile?**
  See Managing your social media profile, page 15
- **Do we have a process for responding to customer enquiries and feedback?**
  See Managing your social media profile, page 15
- **How do we build our audience?**
  See Growing your audience, page 18

Naming your profile
For newly created official QMUL profiles on:

**Facebook Page**
URL www.facebook.com/qmulyourdepartmentname

**Twitter**
URL twitter.co/qmulyourdepartmentname

For questions, or naming on all other channels, Get in touch with us, page 19.

Due to the nature of **YouTube** and **Flickr**, all content should be funneled through the central profiles. Do not create new, official profiles.

**Branding your profile**
Get in touch, page 19, to discuss sourcing appropriate logos and imagery.
Setting your objectives

Most people want to use social media for some combination of the following:

*To reach a larger audience that will build awareness of the department and our events.*

Now, you need to define ‘success’, set specific targets and work towards them. When setting your initial social media objectives, utilise SMART objectives (see SMART objectives).

These objectives ultimately guide the focus of your profile and lower QMUL’s exposure to risk. They will help satisfy the strategic objectives of your department and QMUL.

Using a Facebook profile for illustration, here is how you can craft SMART objectives to satisfy your department and QMUL objectives:

**Part 1 - reach a larger audience**

1. Organically build a Facebook audience of 1,000 followers by June 2013
2. Generate average engagement per post of 5% per month from Feb-June 2013

These two objectives build a substantial, engaged audience so that posts are more likely to be seen and shared. But these alone do not help the organization reach any goals; they simply provide an interested audience through which to communicate.

**Part 2 - build awareness of our department and events**

3. 5,000 unique visits to our website from Facebook by June 2013
4. 100% increase in event registrations from social media activity by June 2013

The increased web traffic continues to build awareness of both the department and events. Increasing registrations builds event awareness and attendance, and also captures lead data.

You now have 4 SMART objectives working together to focus your social media efforts on meaningful results.

**Notes**

The quickest way to reach a large social audience is to use existing QMUL profiles with established audiences. Get in touch with us to request promotion of your message, or find out who administers other pages. Page administrators should know if your content is right for their audience, and how best to craft your message to appeal to them.

You need existing benchmarks when using metrics that require a percentage improvement. The beauty of benchmarks arises from testing and tweaking activities to improve your results.
**Measuring success**

Only through measuring success will you begin to understand what resonates with your audience.

The education sector is becoming globally and technologically competitive, and smart allocation of marketing spend is critical. QMUL cannot afford to establish new channels and allocate spend without tracking results.

If you have a profile and don’t measure anything, start now. All of the objectives described above are either measureable through Google Analytics, or through social media interfaces, so the data is available. Get in touch if you have any questions.

**Beware - vanity metrics**

Don’t only measure ‘likes’, or ‘re-tweets’, or ‘page views’, or ‘impressions’. Measure the impact your growing audience has on driving web traffic, getting more enquiries or increasing event attendance.

**Measure the meaningful**

Focus measurement on metrics that tie to your overall project/department/institution objectives. It will make it easier to sell the importance of your profile internally.

**Sample objectives for QMUL’s central profiles**

Here’s a sample of objectives for the central QMUL social media profiles.

**Facebook**

- Virality of posts to reach 2% by end of July 2013
- Increase organic likes 30% by June 2013
- Increase total reach of content 50% per day by June 2013
- Increase visitors to the web site* by 40% by June 2013

**Twitter**

- Increase organic followers 30% by June 2013
- Increase visitors to the web site* by 40% per month by June 2013
- Benchmark other metrics by June 2013

Review the *Digital objectives for central QMUL channels* document to find out how we aim to meet these objectives.
**Channels to reach your audience**

Here are the common uses of the social channels outlined in this strategy:

- **Facebook**
  The biggest social network now has over 1 billion monthly average users. Facebook is primarily used to communicate and stay connected with friends, share thoughts, images and photos, and keep the world updated with one's life. It remains the social network of choice for the majority of future and current student audiences.

- **Twitter**
  Twitter has always been used for following professionals and celebrities, and now increasingly attracts a young-adult/late-teen demographic and conversation has opened up. It is much more open than Facebook, allowing users to follow profiles outside their normal social group. For that reason, it tends to be less personal in its interactions.

- **LinkedIn**
  LinkedIn is primarily a networking and resume site for professionals and recruiters. Rather than sharing updates on life, users share updates on topics related to their interests or field of work.

- **YouTube**
  Being a hub for video content, audience interaction is primarily through sharing and commenting on videos and by following channels. While it contains the 2nd most used search engine in the world, meaning proper tagging of videos is vital, a key benefit of YouTube is the ease of sharing and embedding content across the web.

See the Appendix for Other channels and usage.
### Choosing a channel
What channel best targets your audience? The QMUL audience lifecycle matrix helps:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Ideal Channels</th>
<th>Managed by</th>
<th>Content types</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Future students** | Facebook Twitter YouTube | Central QMUL profiles | • Event promotions  
• Student life  
• Research and staff stories  
• Global impact  
• Key dates  
• Overall brand personality and strategic priority messaging | Lead future students to the biggest, most active profiles as a starting point. Here they are guaranteed a fast response to all enquiries, get an overall sense of QMUL community and purpose, and can then delve further into faculties and departments when they want to progress their QMUL journey. A key strategy for faculty and school profiles should be to create an active, vibrant student community. As future students discover these profiles, they will want to be a part of them. |
| **Current students** | Facebook Twitter YouTube | Faculty and school profiles, department profiles, services profiles, student groups | • Exam tips, assignment resources and prep  
• Teaching and learning support  
• Research results  
• Student life and on-campus events  
• Key dates/admin | Current students have more specific needs than future students, and already have relationships and associations with the profiles they interact with. The main purpose of using social media to communicate with students should be to complement teaching and learning and enhance and support the student experience. |
| **Staff** | LinkedIn | QMUL main LinkedIn page, Internal Flickr image library | • Staff and community events  
• Internal promotion  
• Key dates  
• Admin matters | Internal social networks can improve productivity, collaboration and teamwork. Get in touch to discuss. When staff are part of the public audience, ensure the messages for the public are the first priority. |
| **Alumni** | Facebook LinkedIn | Central QMUL and QMUL Alumni profiles | • News, updates and research findings  
• Global and industry impact  
• Alumni and community events  
• Promotions  
• Staff and alumni stories | Alumni are generally using QMUL profiles to reinforce their credentials, stay informed with QMUL developments and results, and network with old classmates. They are less engaged than current or future students, because the relationship is now primarily nostalgic; they need only the most interesting, pride-inducing content. |
| **Research** | Facebook Twitter YouTube | Faculty and school profiles, Central profiles, Individual profiles | • Impact of research  
• Details of research findings  
• New developments and events  
• Opinions in the field | The research audience has specific interests, so research based profiles will be quite niche and targeted. Ensure you leverage the central profiles and channels to promote wider interest impact and findings, and reveal niche details on specific pages. |
| **Community** | All | Central profiles, although can permeate through all profiles | • All content types, mainly focused on brand values such as global impact, student experience and teaching | This covers the ‘general public’. The audience types are limitless and their needs are broad. It is why it is imperative to provide broad appeal content through central profiles, and reinforce a consistent brand at all levels. |
QMUL channel matrix
QMUL has a lot of social media profiles spread across multiple channels. When starting a new profile, or improving an existing one, it is necessary to understand how they should fit together.

If a profile listed in the channel matrix does not exist, don’t create it just to fill a gap and tick a box. Follow this strategy to build an effective presence only if resources permit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central profiles</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>LinkedIn</th>
<th>YouTube</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Official QMUL</td>
<td>QMUL</td>
<td>Company page Official group</td>
<td>QMUL Brand Channel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential secondary profiles</td>
<td>Faculties Schools Departments Facilities Alumni</td>
<td>Faculties Schools Departments Facilities Alumni</td>
<td>Alumni Faculties Schools</td>
<td>Not required – content to be housed on central channel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential niche profiles</td>
<td>Student bodies Research groups Course groups Staff profiles</td>
<td>Student bodies Research groups Course profiles Staff profiles</td>
<td>Research groups Course groups Student profiles</td>
<td>Not required – content to be housed on central channel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Central profiles aim to attract a large audience containing all stakeholder groups. Messaging necessarily serves the widest possible purpose(s).

Secondary profiles serve a more specific audience. Generally, the audience will have some strong connection to the profile, such as students to a faculty or department. Therefore, the profile is more focused on enhancing experience. In doing this, the profiles portray an active community which is a very powerful form of marketing for outsiders who observe it.

Niche profiles are the most focused profiles, as they have a distinct audience with specific interests. These profiles contain more detailed, intricate content, and will generally have smaller audiences, such as individual academics, research topics/groups, and class/lecture groups.
Content for your channel

Content for QMUL social media aims to be:

- Friendly, open and approachable
- Accurate, knowledgeable and authoritative
- Considered – pause before you post, as what you say is permanent, and use common sense and best judgment

These points relate to all content posted on QMUL profiles, including updates, videos, imagery and responses to customer enquiries.

When using personal profiles, clarify that your opinion is your own, and does not represent the views of QMUL (where applicable). Note the staff policies for using social media, IT assets.

The following policies apply to all content published through social media by QMUL staff and stakeholders:

- [HR Code of Practice](#)
- [University Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Intellectual Property Code of Practice](#)

Note: This section highlights the type of content that works best for each platform. For more guidance on processes and technical specifications, particularly for video and image content, see the [Digital Content Strategy](#).

### Facebook content

| Tools | Wall posts, Likes, promoted posts, promoted profiles, images, polls, videos, messages (one-to-one, only between individuals).  
Note on direct messages: turn these off. Encourage conversation on your wall in public view. If people need to divulge personal details, give them official email or phone channels. |
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency</strong></td>
<td>No more than 5-7 posts per week per profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Stimulate organic sharing and liking by posting content interesting to your audience  
- Ask questions within posts  
- Image-based content is generally more engaging, and Facebook is moving towards being a platform to showcase this type of content  
- Respond to positivity - ‘we are glad you enjoyed it. What was the best part?’  
- Ensure fast responses  
- If you have good content, that you know engages the audience, is timely and relevant, consider paying to promote your post. This can be a cost effective way to get more reach  
- There are no guarantees your audience will see your post. Nearly all of those who see it will be through their own Newsfeed. Timing is very important, as is the engagement you generate with your post. The more engaging it is, the more likely Facebook will show it to your audience. This also means they won’t be spending much time on your profile itself, unless they need to ask questions, have specific information to find, or are in the early days of researching the institution. |
| **Promotional** | Create promotional content with sharing and liking in mind. Ensure you reinforce one key benefit for the audience in every promotional post |
| **Teaching and Learning** | Use the commenting and posting functionality to stimulate discussion. If necessary, create closed groups for discussion amongst classmates, but in general, leave it open so external |
people have the chance to find it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal use</th>
<th>Your Facebook friends are unlikely to value QMUL content, unless you are showing general interest findings. Alternatively, send direct messages to people you know will be interested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Want to know more about Facebook? See the Guidelines to Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn

**Twitter content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Tweets, promoted tweets, promoted profiles, re-tweets, hash tags, images, direct messages (one-to-one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>3-7 tweets per day, including re-tweets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Engagement | • Send twitter content directly at staff, stakeholders and regular contributors (using the @username functionality) to ask opinions or encourage sharing  
• Re-tweet the good, relevant content of others  
• Seek conversations on your topic, or through other hash tags, and contribute meaningful insight to the conversation  
• If you have good content, that you know engages the audience, is timely and relevant, consider paying to promote your tweet. This can be a cost effective way to get more reach |
| Promotional | Identify the single most engaging, interesting point of an event, news item, etc, and make that the 140-character post. Choosing the most interesting point facilitates more sharing, and if there are a few key points make additional posts. |
| Teaching and Learning | Complement lectures with key points and additional content, post and re-tweet relevant articles and posts, and promote other activities and events within your faculty. Use a hash tag to group all conversation around your topic |
| Personal use | Twitter is slanted more towards business and specific interest, so is a better avenue than Facebook to promote your latest research and findings |

Want to know more about Twitter? See the Guidelines to Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn

**LinkedIn content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Page updates, group updates, group messages, promoted profiles, polls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>No more than 2-3 posts or polls per week. For groups, you are restricted to one group message per week (which goes to all members inbox, unless they’ve altered their personal settings).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Engagement | • Ask questions through the poll functionality  
• Post content that is relevant to a professional, business-minded audience  
• With permission, post stories about other LinkedIn users, like alumni who have moved on to exciting careers |
| Promotional | Ensure content has relevance to a professional audience, and make short, sharp posts. The poll feature can be good with large, engaged profiles. The main reasons people join groups are to extend their network, expand their knowledge of specific topics, or to enhance their LinkedIn profiles, so aim content at these purposes  
If you have an interest in a specific topic, look for groups involved in those discussions, monitor and get involved as yourself. Be careful not to blatantly promote as this often leads to individuals being removed from groups. Instead focus on adding value. If a group doesn’t exist for your area, create one, encourage students, peers and staff to sign up and start sharing ideas and content |
| Teaching and Learning | You can create closed or open groups on LinkedIn if you want to encourage networking |
Learning

amongst your students/alumni/researchers, although you can probably get better results and easier access with Twitter (see table above)

Personal use

LinkedIn is a great tool for building your profile amongst peers, and you will always be associated with QMUL by virtue of your profile association. Where appropriate, add fellow staff, peers and associates across your field to build your own network and by association extend the reach of QMUL.

Want to know more about LinkedIn? See the Guidelines to Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn

### YouTube content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Videos, promoted videos, promoted channels, comments, likes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Upload as much great video content as possible. Promotion of videos will usually be via other social networks and web sites. More detail on the production of QMUL-grade video content for YouTube (and iTunesU) will be in the upcoming Digital Content Strategy, arriving mid 2013.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Engagement | • The most engaging content on YouTube is less than 2 minutes long – ensure you get to the point very quickly and reinforce it  
• Video combines sound and visual, so ensure that your script is interesting and that your visuals are compelling  
• Note - just because it is a video does not mean it is engaging. Boring written or spoken content translated to video becomes boring video content |
| Promotional | Think about capturing stories and capturing passion in your video content. The audience no longer wants to watch a talking heads run through a list of benefits. A person talking about their passion is much more relatable, interesting and engaging |
| Teaching and Learning | Use Q-Review to continue to capture and refine your content for later use, and as the quality improves it could go towards iTunesU and beyond  
Encourage video Q&A sessions with students, or made by students, which can be uploaded to YouTube as a study resource. It then doubles as a promotional resource. Also consider filming difficult or diagrammatic parts of the syllabus in short, sharp videos |
| Personal use | Video is now very easy to capture and upload. If you are interested, set up your own YouTube account and start creating your own videos to experiment with the medium. For any official content you have created, Get in touch to submit it to the central channel. |

Note: For more guidance on processes and technical specifications, particularly for video content, see the Digital Content Strategy.

### Managing your social media profile

**Resourcing**

Ensure you have resources responsible for:
- Responding to customer service enquiries within 24 hours
- Engaging in conversation
- Creating and scheduling content
- Listening and monitoring topical activity
- Reporting

**Social media management software**
QMUL are not officially using social media management software for our central profiles, but the team has experience with tools including Hootsuite, Sprout Social and Tweet Deck.

If you wish to pursue the use of such software, get in touch with us to discuss. Here are a few keep in mind:

- They can be very useful for monitoring conversation
- They can produce insightful reports
- They are great for managing multiple profiles
- Scheduling content – while they make scheduling future content quicker, ensure you craft unique message for EVERY post, especially across different profiles. Scheduling future content poses a risk should information change, so ensure you regularly check scheduled content for accuracy and relevance.

Administration

- Allocate multiple administrators to a profile, and create a roster, to ensure the page is being monitored daily
- Having multiple administrators will require planning and coordination, especially regarding consistent tone of voice, so regular checks and quality guidelines may be required
- Using student administrators to monitor the page is a great idea, as they are one of our key demographics and will know how to communicate. However, coordination and consistency are paramount, and you will need to monitor quality
- On Facebook, use personal profiles as administration logins. The audience are unable to view administrators, so cannot request friendship. Also, creating multiple individual or fake profiles breaches terms. While unlikely, Facebook can delete them without warning, opening you to unnecessary administrative issues

Offensive comments, negative feedback and spam

Negative comments

- For negative feedback, always respond with a helpful tone, and solve the issue if possible, or pass it to the relevant department as feedback. If someone posts a problem or complaint, we must respond within 24 hours
- Honesty is best policy - admit mistakes, be professional, and avoid debate

Spam

- Any posts promoting a cause unrelated to QMUL’s interests will be removed
- Trolls are people who deliberately make offensive or controversial remarks to get a reaction. Follow the mantra – ‘don’t feed the trolls’ – by avoiding arguments, responding efficiently to complaints, and escalating (see escalation policy below)

Offensive comments

- Any comments deemed offensive should be hidden/removed from our profiles.
  - Consider a disclaimer on your page, stipulating the profile rules and defining what constitutes offensive
- Students and staff need to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct and HR Code of Practice respectively
- Do not confuse offensive comments and spam with genuine complaints
• **Escalation policy** for offensive comments:
  1. ‘Hide post’ from page, or take a screen shot if not on Facebook, so there is record of the activity
  2. If posts persist, contact the QMUL Social Media Contacts to discuss your options, and use the safeguards of that channel to block/ban/report the user
  3. If the comments are serious enough (i.e. students threatening other students or the institution) raise with legal team and/or student services

Social media can be **self-regulating**, with other users combating negative comments. Contentious posts can be resolved by the audience, which has far more impact than responses from an official profile.
**Growing your audience**

What if the strategy, structure and profile are ready, but no one joins up?

This is where your commitment to social media is revealed. Ensure your profile doesn’t end up on the social media scrapheap by building and nurturing an interested audience.

1. Provide your audience with content they value
   *This is the number one consideration for growing and engaging your audience – give them something they value. It stimulates organic sharing*

2. Pay to promote your best content
   *In Facebook, this is through Promoted Posts. On Twitter you can Promote Tweets. On YouTube turn your flagship video into a Sponsored Video. If you know the content works and have spare budget, give it a go and measure your results*

3. Pay to promote your profile
   *Rather than promoting your best content, pay to promote your profile through Facebook or Twitter Ads*

4. Measure results and leverage content that works
   *Understand what your audience reacts to – measure clicks, web traffic, shares, likes, re-tweets, views – for each piece of content, and provide more of the popular content*

5. Leverage your other communications
   *Use your regular emails, course documentation, web sites, brochures, outdoor ads, letters, and other communication channels to link to your profile and cross-promote*

6. Leverage your own networks
   *Post your works through your own networks, both online and offline, and direct people back to your social profile*

7. Direct people to your social profile within campaigns
   *Use it as a feature channel for a campaign. You could host guest Q&A sessions, run competitions or upload exclusive photos, videos, interviews, findings, etc*

8. Embed a feed on your website
   *Draw attention to the conversation happening around your product or industry by embedding a social media feed onto your website. When doing this, ensure the social media content adds value and showcases relevant conversation, rather than simply repeating or referencing content already on your web site.*

9. Promote through other QMUL social networks
   *If the audiences align, ask administrators of existing QMUL social profiles to promote your profile through their page.*

   *Conversely, **DO NOT post links to your new profile on other QMUL profiles.** This clutters the other page, and has very little impact. You will get more exposure if the administrator agrees to post a link to your profile through their news feed.*
Get in touch
As social media rapidly evolves, this document is necessarily fluid and responsive. It will be updated on a 6 monthly basis, so be sure to contribute your feedback and check it regularly.

Social media working party
The social media working party meets to share experiences, discuss strategy and improve the user experience of all QMUL official social media profiles. It is for the QMUL staff and student community who use (or want to use) social media in an official QMUL capacity.

Training
Members of the Marketing & Communications team can be available on request to provide informal group sessions on social media use, management and strategy.

Support
Contact us, or join the social media email list to ask questions, generate discussion, get social media help and more.

QMUL Social Media Contacts
Marketing & Communications, Queen’s Building, Mile End Campus

- Email – socialmedia@qmul.ac.uk
- Glenn Hamblen – Digital Communications Manager
  g.hamblen@qmul.ac.uk, 020 7882 7703
- Emma Lowry – Head of PR
  e.lowry@qmul.ac.uk, 020 7882 5378

Get your profile added to the Social Media Directory
Want your profile on the Social Media directory?

Go to the Social Media section of the Intranet to submit your profile.
Appendix

SMART objectives
For the purposes of this strategy, we will set social media objectives using the SMART methodology.

Whenever you set goals, you run the risk of reducing your focus on other areas, which may be equally or more important to the overall success of your department. Ensure you allow for flexibility in your goals; make them short term (no more than 6 months), and measure results and reassess at regular intervals (ideally monthly).

Follow the SMART objectives rationale. Social media objectives must be:
- Specific – must be clear and concise
- Measureable – must have a way to gauge results
- Attainable – must be realistically achievable, yet have an element of stretch
- Relevant – must be meaningful to the department and QMUL
- Timely – must specify when it will be achieved

Other channels and usage
This section outlines the way our audience uses some of the social media channels not covered by this QMUL 2013 Social Media Strategy.

**Blogging** allows users to comment on and share content, which is created across a range of platforms like WordPress, Tumblr and more. The audience activity around blogs is mainly reading and subscribing, with sharing and commenting forming the social element of blogs.

**Flickr**, like YouTube, is primarily a hub for images rather than a social destination. People upload and store their images. We currently have a few internal channels and a public showcase, but don’t expect a big audience of active users on the site, but will derive most benefit from sharing and embedding these assets internally and across our online channels.

In **Pinterest** the users organize and share engaging content. It again is growing, although that growth is slowing, and generates the best results for businesses that have highly visual, creative outputs, like fashion, design and decorating.

**Internationally**, niche sites will continue to spring up and may be worth exploring if your audience is there. Weibo and QQ are the Facebook and Twitter equivalent in China.

**Google+** has a very significant audience thanks to gmail and Google account holders, but it still lags Facebook and Twitter in terms of popularity and activity, although has some unique search benefits for content creators, which may become relevant during blogging.

**Academic social networks** continue to grow in popularity, and could provide valuable collaboration, networking and research opportunities for academics. Again, ensure you protect yourself from possible action by abiding by any relevant laws and staff policies that dictate what information is appropriate to share with external parties.
External social networks are also a great source of competitive information, and if used appropriately can be a place to deliver exceptional customer value. Keep an eye on:

- **The Student Room** for student discussions and forums on all things related to school, study and educational life
- **Uni Stats web site** for official statistics on UK Universities
- **Compare the Uni** for reviewing our standing against other institutions, and student led discussion and feedback

Do you know other channels that might work for your audience? Do you use other channels that are helping you meet your objectives? Let us know about your experience.

**Guidelines to Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn**

This will simply link to the existing guidelines on the wiki.