



BIMM  
INSTITUTE



INSTITUTE FOR  
CONTEMPORARY  
THEATRE

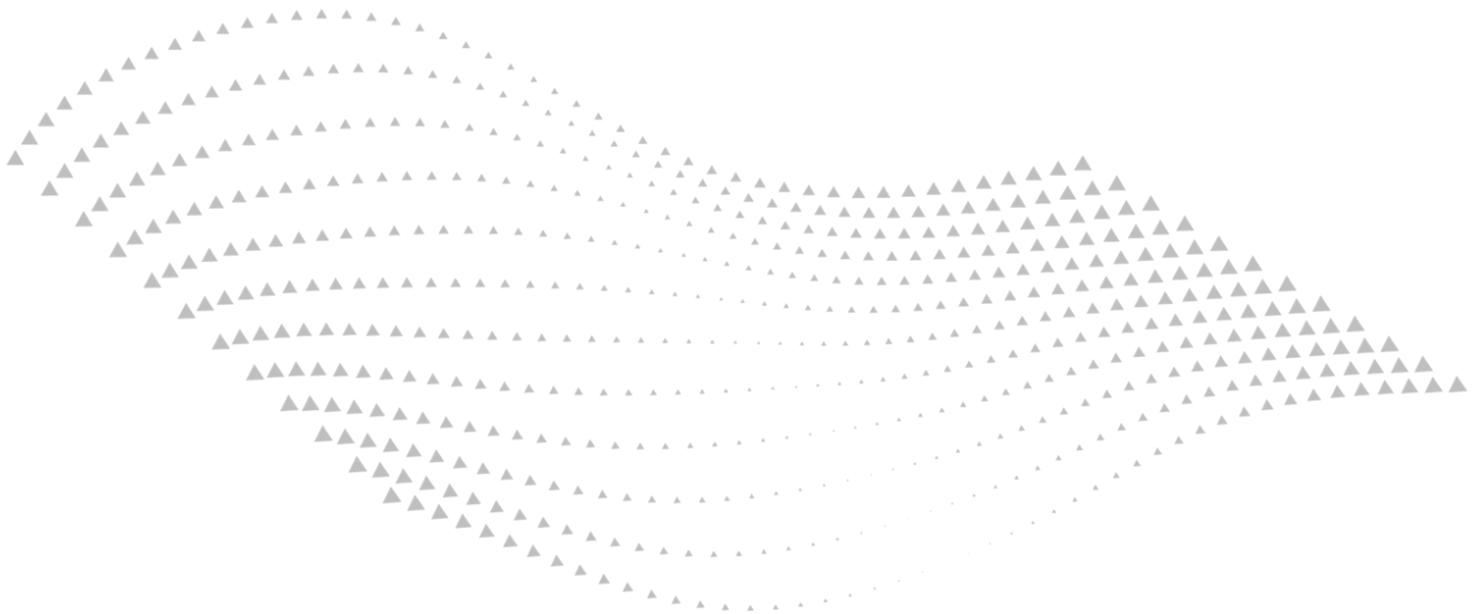


PERFORMERS  
COLLEGE



SCREEN AND  
FILM SCHOOL

# **Student Social Media Policy & Guidelines**



Last approved: September 2021

Approved by: Academic Board

Next review due: September 2025



## Overview

This Student Social Media Policy & Guidelines are designed for all students using social media at BIMM Institute, the Institute of Contemporary Theatre, Performers College or Screen & Film School (collectively referred to as “the Institute”). This document provides guidance on the Policy and usage - how, why and when to use social media - and etiquette and best practice.

The purpose of the Policy & Guidelines is to:

- Encourage effective and beneficial use of social media;
- Protect Students, the Institute and its community;
- Set out how the Institute engages with, and monitors the use, of social media to ensure that it is not used to promote extremist materials or activities, and in England only, comply with the Prevent Duty.

## BIMM’s social media presences:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- SoundCloud
- Spotify
- TikTok
- Twitter
- YouTube

For Institute staff using these channels, there is a separate policy.

## Contact

If students have any questions about the content of the Policy or Guidelines, or would like assistance with setting up effective social media channels, please contact the Institute’s Marketing Team, who manage its social media presence: [bimmsocial@bimm.co.uk](mailto:bimmsocial@bimm.co.uk).

If a student has any concerns that students of the Institute are using social media in an inappropriate way which is in breach of the Student Code of Conduct, they should contact the Marketing Team ([bimmsocial@bimm.co.uk](mailto:bimmsocial@bimm.co.uk)) in the first instance.

## About Social Media

Social media has become a valuable means of communication, and the education sector is making the most of this to engage quickly with key audiences. Many students will use social media in all aspects of their life and, therefore, the Institute has a responsibility to support and advise them of best practice.

## Personal Social Media Usage

Students with a personal social media account that they also use professionally and/or in connection with their role as a student of the Institute (e.g. to promote their work, or to represent their profession or area), are advised to include the following wording or similar in the ‘brief description’/‘about me’ section: *‘The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of BIMM Institute/ICTheatre/Performers College/Screen & Film School.’*



### **Other Relevant Policies:**

- Data Protection Policy
- Bullying & Harassment Policy & Procedure
- Student Code of Conduct

### **Defining social media**

Broadly, social media refers to any form of media that encourages online social interaction between users and content creators. Current leading examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, SoundCloud, LinkedIn, TikTok and YouTube, and tools such as wikis and blogs. However, the social media landscape can and does change rapidly: what is popular today may drop significantly in popularity the following year, and new tools may arise just as quickly.

### **How the Institute is using social media**

The Institute has embraced the use of social media as an important and valuable part of its communications and marketing activities. Not only does social media allow us to share our news, events, activities and important information with our immediate audiences and with the wider world, but it also allows us to listen, respond and build relationships with our community.

The social, conversational element is central to our use of social media, and our approach favours genuine and informal communications and relationship-building over overt marketing methods. In addition, social media helps us to understand what students are saying about us. Word of mouth is a key decision maker for prospective students and, through social media, we can find out how we are perceived. This can help the Institute in its other marketing and communications activities.

### **The Institute's Primary Social media channels:**

Each of the Institute's primary channels prominently shows our logo(s), as well as other forms of branding, to communicate to our audiences that content found in these areas is official information.

### **Alumni relations**

Social media is useful for keeping in contact and developing relationships with graduates. Graduates who wish to be included in the alumni scheme should contact the Institute's Connect Community and Alumni Services, who are responsible for managing these activities ([alumni@bimm.co.uk](mailto:alumni@bimm.co.uk)).

### **Should students use social media?**

The growth of social media over the last few years has created many new and powerful opportunities for communication, but before students decide whether to set up a presence on social media, or if they have recently established a social media presence, they should carefully consider the purpose and resource, and develop an appropriate strategy to match their goals.

### **How does the Institute monitor the use of social media?**

The Institute has a duty of care to its students and staff to ensure that no-one is exposed to inappropriate, abusive or defamatory comments or materials which breach the Student Code of Conduct. In England, the Institute also has a statutory obligation under the Prevent Duty to ensure that social media is not used to promote extremist material or activities which may place people at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Therefore, the Institute regularly monitors its social media channels and takes action to address any misuse of social media which is in breach of this Policy and/or the Student Code of Conduct.



## **Use of College Logos**

College logos are the property of the Institute and decisions regarding how they are to be used rest with the Director of Marketing Services. Unauthorised use of college logos is not permitted.

The name and logo are vital parts of a College's brand and image. Consistency in their usage helps to develop and maintain the brand and lends credibility to College achievements. As such, the name and logo may not be redrawn, reconstructed, or modified in any way.

College names and logos cannot be used by students or student groups in connection with a public performance, publication or social media account, except when used by the BIMM Student Association, at an event organised in conjunction with the Institute, or when authorised by the Director of Marketing Services.

Use of a College name or logo in conjunction with advertisement of any alcoholic beverage is expressly forbidden.

## **Individual Logos**

Individual College logos have been established by the Group Marketing Department for:

- BIMM Institute
- Institute for Contemporary Theatre
- Performers College
- Screen & Film School

New or redesigned logos must be submitted to [bimmsocial@bimm.co.uk](mailto:bimmsocial@bimm.co.uk) for approval by the Director of Marketing Services, along with an explanation of the need for the logo and how it will be used.

## **Best Practice & Etiquette:**

### **Be respectful**

Anything you post on your site/group reflects directly on both the institution and yourself. Be professional and respectful at all times.

### **Listen**

Being a *consumer* of social media content is essential to your ability to be a successful *producer* of social media content. 'Listen' to online conversations on your preferred tools – such as blogs, Twitter\_or Facebook – to maintain a clear and current understanding of what is relevant and of interest to the community, as well as to pick up tips and ideas for content from other people on social media.

### **Your content will live forever**

Think before you post and remember that anything you share on social media is not private. It can be shared, stored and spread globally. Don't post anything online that could reflect negatively on yourself or that you wouldn't feel comfortable seeing on the front page of a newspaper or the BBC website.

### **Don't let social media absorb all of your time**

A lot of time can be spent on social media without any gain. Limit the amount of time you spend attending to your site/group to just what is needed to post and respond to content, evaluate traffic data, review related sites, and monitor comments. Social Media tools such as Hootsuite and Tweetdeck can be used to 'schedule' posts and updates throughout a time period, which can be useful if you have limited time to make updates.



### **Getting your audience's attention**

Your posts are potentially competing for attention alongside hundreds of other posts, so you need to put some thought into what you post if you want to get the reader's attention. Consider the words you use and the order you use them. For example, if you just repeat a headline from a news story you want to link to you will most likely find that few of your followers will bother to click through to the actual story. Instead, pull out an interesting detail from the story to entice them to click on your link, front-load your post with the most important/interesting information, or draw out whatever is likely to be of most interest to your audience.

**Posing a question** is often an effective way of piquing a reader's interest. Humour is also acceptable, but avoid saying anything that might be construed as sarcastic or risks offence.

**Photos and video** are a very effective means of capturing attention and generating conversation, as well as encouraging people to share your content. This type of content should either be relevant to your audience's interests, visually interesting or conveys something important about your area. Please note, however, that particular care should be taken when posting photographs and videos to ensure that consent has been attained, as the immediacy of media such as Facebook and Twitter can make it easy to forget these processes. In addition, it is not appropriate to make exaggerated claims or excessively use capital letters or exclamation marks to draw the reader's attention. The latter two can be overbearing and irritating if used too often.

### **Don't spam your followers**

Keep an eye on the frequency of your posts. Too few and your site/group won't be effective, but post too many and you risk annoying your followers.

### **Followers: it's about quality, not quantity**

Rather than focus on getting as many followers as possible onto your social media sites, it is better to first focus on increased engagement with the followers you do have.