
SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

PURPOSE

To establish guidelines on the network access, and outside work usage, of online social networking with the aim of preventing misrepresentation of MRAEL and its stakeholders.

To ensure all users of MRAEL's Information Systems are aware of their personal accountabilities and the consequences of misusing online social networking.

To prevent the image and people of MRAEL and its stakeholders, being negatively impacted by online social networking activities.

SCOPE

All users of MRAEL's Information Systems, MRAEL employees, students, apprentices, trainees and other users. All contracted service providers with access to MRAEL's Information Systems.

POLICY

SOCIAL NETWORKING MEDIA

Social networking media refers to any online tools or functions that allow people to communicate via the internet. This includes, but is not limited to, applications such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, Bebo, Tagged, myYearbook and all forums and Blogs.

Good judgement and common sense must be used to ensure that the reputation of MRAEL, its employees and stakeholders is not harmed during the use of social networking media. Once something is placed online, it spreads quickly and cannot be retracted. While MRAEL does not wish to control personal private information released outside of work hours, any image, comment or status distributed by an employee or MRAEL network user that damages the reputation of MRAEL, its employees and other stakeholders, will be treated as a serious breach of employment or business relationship, and dealt with according to the severity of such actions. Remember, what may start as communication to one person has the potential to be seen by a much larger audience.

REGULATIONS

When using social networking media, the below regulations are firmly enforced by MRAEL and must be adhered to at all times:

- Whilst operating MRAEL computers or using an MRAEL login, under no circumstances are social networking websites to be accessed.
- Offensive comments are not to be made about fellow employees online. This will be viewed as cyber bullying. Even if comments are not made directly, they may still be viewed indirectly by multiple people.

- MRAEL is not to be mentioned in online posts and statuses. This will be the best way to ensure that the company's reputation is safeguarded. If it is necessary for an employee to speak about their place of employment online, they are to refer to 'work' and not to 'MRAEL,' unless it is necessary to do so for professional reasons, has been approved by the Manager, and is executed in a way that will not damage the reputation of MRAEL and/or connections to MRAEL. This includes captions for photos, names of photo albums and references in posts and statuses.
- If there is a legitimate reason that has been approved by the Manager to participate in online blogs, forums or discussion groups as a representative of MRAEL, the following must accompany all comments made: 'These are my personal views and not those of MRAEL.' Unless approval has been given to do otherwise, ensure that you are not representing MRAEL and cannot be associated with MRAEL in any way while participating in online blogs, forums or discussions.
- Work-related problems, tasks and ventures should not be discussed online. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times.
- MRAEL asks that photos of employees in uniforms are not placed online if they are of an unprofessional nature.
- If anything is posted online by others which may harm the reputation of MRAEL or its employees, and you have the capacity to delete such information, MRAEL asks that you do so immediately.

If something potentially damaging to the image or people of MRAEL is found online, bring this to the attention of a Manager. This should be done immediately and the information should not be shared with others.

Employees who have already posted information on the internet which may have potential to violate the above policy should take appropriate action to ensure compliance with the policy, or discuss this with their Manager if in doubt. Similarly, employees or other network users who have any concerns regarding information they plan to release on the internet in the future, should consult their Manager for clarification before doing so.

Any information or pictures placed on the internet by employees or other network users which disrespects or misrepresents MRAEL, or breaches corporate confidentiality, will be treated as a serious breach of employment or business relationship. Individuals who violate this policy will face disciplinary action and in the case of an employee, this will be up to and including termination of employment.

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS

Employees are discouraged from forming friendships with apprentices, trainees, MRAEL clients or Partner Organisations online, unless an existing relationship with the person(s) existed previously and outside the work environment.

The Information Communication and Technology Policy provides additional information on appropriate internet usage.