

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

FOR EMPLOYEES



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GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES AT RUHR-UNIVERSITÄT BOCHUM

Liking the post of a political party on Facebook, sharing a picture from your office on Instagram or tweeting the scientific opinion on a current topic: no matter whether it's for business or pleasure – as soon as you are recognisable as an RUB employee in social networks, you will be perceived as an ambassador of the university in the public eye. Take advantage of this fact for yourself and for Ruhr-Universität and do your bit to communicate a consistent image of the university! These guidelines have been compiled to help you avoid unintentional law violations and to avoid misunderstandings between you and your employer.

This is why we supply these social media guidelines with recommendations and internal university guidelines, indicating the most relevant laws.

If you are considering joining a social media platform with your institute, project, department or faculty, please also read the "Social Media Guidelines for Institutions". And if you would like to manage a professional social media account as an individual, you too will find helpful advice and important regulations there.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Communication by RUB employees in social media is governed by the rules of conduct below. They are based on the university guidelines and applicable law (see appendix).

- Our tone is objective, polite and respectful.
- We never communicate in a discriminatory, unconstitutional, demagogic, illegal, pornographic, extremist, racist, vulgar, disparaging or otherwise inappropriate manner.
- We adhere to the general standards and terms of use of the respective social media platform.
- We comply with data protection policies: confidential contents such as addresses, telephone numbers, student registration numbers are never published or requested in social networks.
- As RUB employees, we provide information via social media to the best of our knowledge and belief, but they aren't legally binding.
- As employees of our university, we are loyal to our employer in social media. When publishing images and texts in social media, we observe copyright laws and personal rights regarding one's own image. And we expect the same from other users.

ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

If you have any questions or if you, as an RUB institution, would like to become active in social media, please contact the RUB social media team. We are also happy to provide advice and assistance for existing social media sites at any time:

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RUB on Facebook:

→ www.facebook.com/ruhrunibochem

RUB on Instagram:

→ www.instagram.com/ruhrunibochem

RUB on Twitter:

→ twitter.com/ruhrunibochem

RUB on YouTube:

→ www.youtube.com/ruhruniversitaet

ANNEX

UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES

We wish to promote a consistent image of Ruhr-Universität Bochum. We also want to avoid conflicts regarding content or strategy between employees within RUB. This is why we require you to adhere to the following university guidelines.

- Central social media presence is managed by the social media team at the Corporate Communications Department. Here, information is published on behalf of the university management. The topics are selected by the editorial staff at the Corporate Communications Department.
- The decentralised institutions are responsible for the management of decentralised social media content.
- Here, information is not published on behalf of the university management, but on behalf of the decentralised institution, that manages the respective account.
- Corporate design elements and trademarked terms such as the RUB logo may not be used for personal social media appearances without permission from the corporate advertising of the RUB.
- Using social media for official purposes during working hours
 - ▶ is approved by the university management as a general rule, but must also be approved by the respective employee's superior,
 - ▶ is voluntary, unless social media management is explicitly part of the job description

APPLICABLE LAW IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is not a lawless space. You should familiarise yourself with the relevant legal regulations with regard to photos and videos as well as for dealing with other users' content on your social media platform.

This list includes the most important laws as well as helpful advice and examples. Please note that we can only provide an overview at this point. Like many areas of the digital space, the legal system is also subject to constant change and is constantly becoming more and more complex.

Still, if you are aware of the existence of the following legal framework and keep it in mind, you will be well equipped to navigate social networks safely.

LAW: The speech law regulates the admissibility of (public) statements. A lot falls under freedom of speech from Article 5 Basic Law (GG). However, untrue factual statements, insults and so-called abusive criticism are prohibited.

EXAMPLE: A user writes in a comment under a post about a researcher: "This smart-arse steals from others, like all humanities scholars. Frauds, the lot of them." This comment contains both elements of untrue factual allegations and insults. It should therefore be hidden, and the user should be informed about the violation and the site's netiquette.

LAW: The State Data Protection Act (LDSG) contains regulations for the collection, storage and processing of personal data.

EXAMPLE: Social media plugins on websites are small buttons with the symbols of the respective platforms, including Facebook and Twitter. If you click on them, you can share the link of the website in the respective network, for example. However, simply by embedding the plugins on a website, the respective platform can track who is browsing the website, even if the person does not click on the plugin. Therefore, the use of plugins is not recommended.

LAW: The Art Copyright Act (Kunsturhebergesetz, KunstUrhG) governs the right to one's own image. Apart from a few specific exceptions (pictures of public meetings, public figures or pictures in which people are not in the focus), the consent of the individual is required prior to publication.

TIP: Have the people you photograph for social media sign a consent form. You can ask the RUB photo department (www.rub.de/bilder) for a template.

LAW: The Copyright Act (UrhG) regulates the protection of texts, images, audio and video content (so-called works). In most cases, the publication or distribution of such works is only permitted with the consent of the respective copyright holder.

TIP: Ask the creator of each work whether you may use it on social media. In any case, you must include the full name of the author directly at the work. It is not necessary to use the © symbol. For Creative Commons licenses, you can read up on the definition of the licenses here: <https://de.creativecommons.org/index.php/was-ist-cc>.

LAW: The Trademark Act (MarkenG) contains regulations for the protection of names and logos.

EXAMPLE: Nobody may claim to belong to Ruhr-Universität Bochum or use it for advertising purposes unless they are actually a RUB member. The use of the RUB logo is not permitted without restriction, either. (See university guidelines)

LAW: An individual's employment status also determines which legal regulations apply. This applies in particular to confidentiality / official secrecy.

TIP: It is prohibited to discuss sensitive topics like an institute's research projects or the finances of your own department in social media in any way, let alone communicate them in public.

LAW: Please always observe the general terms and conditions, terms of use and guidelines issued by the hosts of the respective social media platform. Most common elements include:

1. Provisions on limitations of liability of the portal and the liability of the user.

EXAMPLE: Anyone who sets up a fan page on Facebook can be held liable for the content on the page. Comments or posts that violate applicable law and are reported to the page must therefore be deleted by the owner of the Facebook page.

2. The host has licenses granted for user-generated content; as a result, the user may have no influence whatsoever on the use of the data provided and the profile data generated through usage.

EXAMPLE: Content such as photos and videos can be shared and downloaded by social network users at their own discretion. We therefore recommend to consistently state the copyrights of the respective contents in order to indicate authorship in case of doubt.

3. In their terms of use, many hosts list specific requirements for competitions or contests on the respective portal. These must be observed in order to avoid problems with the host (caution or even blocking of the social media account).

TIP: Conditions of participation are an indispensable element in competitions. We are happy to help you set them up or create templates on request.

4. The host is not obliged to maintain their service permanently.

TIP: As Facebook, Twitter and Co. may delete themselves at any time or become temporarily unavailable, your communication should never be conducted exclusively via these channels.

5. The host determines law and jurisdiction; these may be outside the German legal domain.

EXAMPLE: Most social networks such as Facebook (which includes Instagram), Twitter and YouTube have their headquarters in the USA and can therefore invoke local law in certain cases, such as the storage and disclosure of data.