**SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR RCM ACTIVISTS**

There are many RCM members contributing to online spaces such as Facebook, Twitter, social networking sites, forums and photo and video sharing sites.

We (RCM), encourage you to share the insights and expertise gained through your work at the RCM, but we urge you to remember our organisation’s brand, policy and procedures as a professional organisation and trade union.

If you are using or intend to use social networking sites in a professional capacity, you need to ensure you act in a way that is consistent with these guidelines.

# Personal or professional accounts

Defining a personal and professional online account is increasingly difficult. If you are using social networks then we ask you to use separate accounts for your personal and professional use. We do not recommend that you strip out all personal content from your professional streams, but that you think carefully about what personal content would be appropriate.

Please also be aware that even if you make use of privacy settings, anything you post on a social networking site may be made public via search engines.

# Professional account –

* An account is professional if your association with the RCM is explicit: this may, for example, mean you include your RCM Activist role title or you repeatedly mention your branch work in your profile feed/updates.
* If you have identified yourself as an RCM Activist, note that the RCM may have a legal responsibility for what you have written and disseminated.
* Professional accounts are considered as representatives of the RCM. They are, therefore, expected to abide by RCM policies and positions and content must be consistent with the RCM’s guidelines and professional stance.

If you do not want to adhere to the RCM Guidelines, please set up a personal account, excluding all references to the RCM.

# Personal account –

* Defined as having no reference to the RCM, its work, its brand or logo, or any other explicit mention of the RCM.
* If you have a personal account we recommend that you please refrain from commenting directly about the RCM and its activities.

# Confidential Information and sharing

All forms of online social activity are deemed primarily a form of communication and relationship amongst its members.

* Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or casework.
* Ask permission before publishing or reporting on meetings or conversations that are meant to be internal to the RCM.
* Respect copyright, fair use laws.
* Make sure you have permission to post any copyrighted or confidential information (e.g., images) and be careful about posting or linking to items that may contain viruses.
* Don’t use the RCM logo or brand logos, unless specifically authorised to do so.
* Check spelling and grammar. All posts from professional accounts are considered published material and need to maintain a level of professionalism.

# Be Considerate

* Everyone, including your colleagues, members, press and the public may read and search what you publish online.
* Suggestions for the RCM or partners should be funnelled through offline channels.
* Respect your audience. Don't use ethnic slurs, insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in your workplace.

In summary – think before you post!

*Although these guidelines are tailored for social media, all of these guidelines apply to all external communications undertaken on behalf of the RCM.*

**Further training can be found on i-learn in the social media course**