

Department Owner:	Corporate Services
Document Title:	Social Media Policy
Document No.	ICT018/SM/ V3/23
Approved By:	Chief Executive LWETB
Date Approved:	02/10/2023
Noted by:	LWETB Board
Date Noted:	14/11/2023

Longford Westmeath Education & Training Board

Social Media Policy

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Scope	3
3. Purpose	3
4. Definitions	4
5. Other Related Policies and Procedures	4
6. Objectives and Aims of Social Media Usage.....	4
7. Account Access	5
8. Account Management	5
9. Guidelines for Use of Social Media.....	5
10. Teaching Staff Must Follow The Guidelines Prescribed By The Following Extract From The Teaching Council Code Of Conduct	7
11. Public Conduct.....	7
12. Acceptable Usage	8
13. Inappropriate/Unacceptable Use of Social Media	9
14. Policy on Responses to Tweets/Posts on Facebook.....	10
14.1. Policy on Retweets and ‘Likes’	10
14.2. Policy on Following/Followers	11
14.3. Promotion of Social Media Platforms	11
15. Personal Profiles/Use of Social Media	11
16. Monitoring and Reporting	12
17. Cyberbullying	12
18. Breaches of this Policy.....	13
19. Legal.....	14
20. Recruitment and Social Media	14
21. Security	14
22. Review And Implementation	14

1. Introduction

Social Media is a term commonly given to websites and applications that enable users to interact with one another online through the creation and sharing of content. Creating and sharing content allows users to build networks through increased participation and engagement.

Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board (LWETB) recognise that the widespread availability and use of social media brings opportunities to engage and communicate with the public in new ways. It is important that we utilise these technologies and services effectively and flexibly, for education and training purposes. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this use with our reputation and the safety of our staff and students/learners. This policy aims to create a balanced approach to support innovation in learning whilst providing a framework of good practice.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff of LWETB in any role in any office/school/centre/service and to official LWETB accounts set up directly by LWETB or any of its offices, schools (including various subject/programme departments), centres, programmes and services. This policy refers to the following elements of Social Media usage:

- Account Access
- Account Management
- Acceptable Usage
- Employee Conduct - Professional Use
- Employee Conduct - Personal Use
- Cyberbullying
- Security
- Data Protection
- Legal
- Public Conduct

3. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline LWETB's policy for the usage of social media and provide all staff with clear guidelines and directions. This policy covers all types of interactions on social media including but not limited to posts/tweets, uploading, or linking to photos and videos, comments, likes / favourites / retweets /shares, friend /contact requests, followers etc.

The policy and guidelines aim to:

- Represent an official and consistent position that governs the use of social media by staff, representatives and third parties acting on behalf of LWETB
- Assist LWETB in adopting a responsible approach to managing the usage of social media platforms for the purpose of conducting LWETB business
- Ensure that LWETB information remains secure and is not compromised through the use of social media
- Provide staff with standards of acceptable use as they engage in conversations or interactions using digital media for official use and personally on behalf of or in relation to LWETB.

4. Definitions

Social media can be defined as: Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content online or to participate in social networking including any online forum, internal or external to the organisation, which is used to publish information that can be accessed by people or organisations internal or external to the organisation.

This information can be in a variety of formats such as documents, photographs, videos, personal observations, live commentaries, blogs, or any other type of digital content.

5. Other Related Policies and Procedures

All LWETB Social Media services are subject to LWETB's Policies and Procedures and relevant Department of Education Circular Letters. Staff should read this Social Media Policy in conjunction with all other related policies and procedures which are available on www.lwetb.ie or on request from the Corporate Service Department.

6. Objectives and Aims of Social Media Usage

Social media enables LWETB to:

- Build the public profile of LWETB and its schools, centres, programmes, and services
- Recognise and celebrate the experiences, learning, achievements and successes of its students, learners, and staff
- Disseminate relevant information in an efficient manner
- Disseminate information about LWETB's services, plans, policies
- Listen to, understand, and interact with our audiences more effectively
- Gauge influence
- The broad objective of the social media output is to promote the work and services of LWETB

It aims to:

- Portray LWETB in a positive light
- Highlight the positive initiatives being taken
- Respond to or to rectify incorrect or misleading information on social media if it refers to LWETB, where possible and appropriate

The primary content/focus of social media posts therefore should be:

- The work of LWETB and the services it provides
- Notifications such as school/centre closures, grant/funding applications, public consultations, awards etc.
- Events like press launches, open days, meetings, seminars, and other similar events in which LWETB is involved
- Recruitment of students/learners
- Circulating a link to a press release or item on our website/s
- Tweeting/posting photographs of events, launches etc.
- Staff achievements (including personal)
- Retweets/sharing or likes for posts from other bodies for example, SOLAS, Teaching Council, government departments, etc. insofar as LWETB is involved

7. Account Access

Collaborative Networking Services will be provided to all LWETB staff and students via emailing and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) facilities.

Staff will be issued with an email account on commencement of employment for the duration of their contract. Students, where relevant, will be issued with an email account for the duration of their studies with LWETB.

In order to create new Social Media accounts that pertain to LWETB or an individual School/Centre/Office of LWETB, written consent must be secured in advance from Senior Management, School Principal, Centre/Senior Manager, see form in Appendix I. LWETB Corporate Service Department must be notified of all new accounts and active passwords by completing and submitting the form in Appendix II.

8. Account Management

Each LWETB School Principal and Centre/Senior Manager is ultimately responsible for the Social Media activity related to their School/Centre/Office and therefore reserves the right to modify Social Media activity based on best practice and standards.

This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Providing guidelines (e.g., Social Media guidelines for students, parents, and staff) and making reasonable efforts to train staff and students in acceptable use and policies governing online communications
- Monitoring online activities. This may include real-time monitoring of network activity and/or maintaining a log of Internet activity for later review
- Removing any inappropriate user accounts
- Amending local procedures and rules as required

An LWETB staff member within the school/centre/office may be appointed to coordinate and monitor such activity. Those who coordinate and monitor Social Media channels associated with LWETB must ensure that they are in a position to respond to comments and posts made on the site in a timely manner, within standard working hours. They should also be tasked with the moderation of comments from third parties to ensure that posts do not violate any of the standards set out in this policy, particularly in respect of the standards for acceptable usage set out below. In order to ensure a consistent brand and standard it is best practice that each school/centre/office maintains one public facing Social Media profile and ensures the School and LWETB logo are visible in a prominent place on the profile as per LWETB Branding Guidelines.

Each School Principal/Centre Manager/Office Manager is responsible for establishing and maintaining a register of all social networking application domain names in use, the names of all Staff Administrators of these accounts, as well as the associated user identifications and passwords currently active within their School/Centre/Office.

9. Guidelines for Use of Social Media

Social Media Account Set-Up

- Any new social media accounts in the name of LWETB or in the name of an individual school/centre/service cannot be opened without written prior approval/sign off from senior management via the head of Corporate Services
- Each school/centre/service should maintain a secure record of usernames and passwords for their social media accounts, whether at LWETB's Administrative Office or school/centre level. The log should also include a list of approved administrators for the page. At least two members of staff should have administrator rights to each official

LWETB page/identity to allow for situations where an employee may be absent on leave etc

- In setting up new accounts LWETB email addresses only should be used
- Staff who are responsible for maintaining these accounts, monitoring, answering queries, etc. must use the approved administrator identities and should be clearly identifiable as acting on behalf of the organisation
- Where a social media platform allows content for schools/centres/services should only be set up as organisation/business page not a personal page i.e., pages that a Facebook user 'likes' rather than 'adds as a friend'
- Under no circumstances should a fake profile that impersonates another member of a LWETB school/centre/programme/service be created
- In line with recommended guidance issued by the National Cyber Security Centre, the social media platform, TikTok, under no circumstances should be used in an official capacity by any staff member of LWETB.

The following conditions must be adhered to at all times when utilising social media:

Branding on social media platforms or sites should incorporate LWETB branding, i.e. correct use of the LWETB logo alongside the school/centre/offices logo and/or stating in Twitter, Facebook and other profiles that the school/centre/programme/service is part of Longford and Westmeath ETB/@Longford and Westmeath ETB in the case of Twitter.

Staff are expected to exercise sound judgement and maintain the highest professional standards while using social media within LWETB:

Staff must:

- Only comment on matters for which they have appropriate expertise. If there is any doubt about content/comments to be contributed, the employee's line managers should be consulted before any changes/comments are made
- Be polite and respectful at all times to every category of recipient
- Be aware of the digital footprint and remember that comments, posts and/or images may remain permanently online and available for others to see, even if 'deleted'

Staff must never:

- Post or send defamatory, foul, sarcastic or offensive comments or photographs, videos or other digital material which could be considered in breach of this Policy and Guidelines and/or which may compromise a member of staff, students/learners or impact negatively on LWETB
- Forward, share or like content that is likely to cause offence or hurt to a third party
- Disclose or publish confidential or personal information of LWETB staff, students/learners etc. online unless it is in line with the policies of the school/centre/programme/service and Longford and Westmeath ETB
- Discuss or share LWETB policies and practices
- Use social media so as to contravene Irish, European or international law. Staff should pay strict attention to licensing agreements, intellectual property rights and copyright laws and abide by same at all times
- Add references of private social media details to a/their LWETB email signature and vice versa

10. Teaching Staff Must Follow The Guidelines Prescribed By The Following Extract From The Teaching Council Code Of Conduct

“Teachers shall...

3.3.6 Communicate effectively with students, colleagues, parents, school management and others in a manner that is professional, collaborative, and supportive, and based on trust and respect.

3.3.7 Ensure that any communication with students, colleagues, parents, school management and others is appropriate, including communication via electronic media, such as e-mail, texting and social networking sites.

3.3.8 Ensure that they do not access, download or otherwise have in their possession while engaged in school activities, inappropriate materials/images in electronic or other format.

3.3.9 Ensure that they do not access, download or otherwise have in their possession, at any time or in any place, illegal materials/images in electronic or other format.

The Teaching/Tutoring Staff of a School/Centre have an important role to play in educating students in the safe and responsible use of Social Media.

The School/Centre Social Media Policy should be developed/amended to reflect local operational needs while adhering to the principles of this policy.

11. Public Conduct

Users and visitors to LWETB Social Media pages shall be notified that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a mechanism for communication between the School/Centre/Offices and members of the public.

LWETB Social Media site articles and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed:

- Comments not topically related to the particular social medium article being commented upon
- Comments in support of, or in opposition to, political campaigns or ballot measures
- Profane language or content
- Sexual content or links to sexual content
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination in violation of the Equal Status Act 2000-2011 and the Employment Equality Act 1998-2011 in the following domains:
 - Gender
 - Marital status
 - Family status
 - Sexual orientation
 - Religion
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Race
 - Membership of the Traveller Community

These guidelines must be displayed to users. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.

12. Acceptable Usage

In availing of Social Media Services approved by LWETB, with the large potential audience that comes with it, staff agree to adhere to the following standards:

- Staff should never post or send abusive, defamatory, or distasteful messages or post photographs, videos or other media which could be considered in breach of LWETB policies and procedures
- The posting use of indecent, obscene, harassing or other inappropriate, offensive or lewd comment or any such content likely to cause offence, whether in written form, cartoon form or otherwise will not be tolerated and will be subject to the appropriate sanction as set out in the relevant policy and procedure
- Posts must not contain matters which may discriminate on grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or membership of the Traveller community
- Staff should not publish personal identifiable information of LWETB staff unless it relates to the performance of their duties or is otherwise in keeping with the policies of the school/centre/service and LWETB
- Staff should not publish personal identifiable information of LWETB students unless this is in line with the policies of the school/centre/service and LWETB
- Staff should not post to students from their personal Social Media accounts or reply to posts sent by students from their personal Social Media accounts.
- Staff should note that student names will not be recorded in the website photographs, unless it is an officially sanctioned photograph by the School Principal or Centre/Service Manager and consent for such publication – both for the photograph and the name – has been secured from the student. In the event that the student is a minor, Parent/Guardian consent is required.
- Staff should never post a comment about LWETB that purports to represent the views of LWETB or an individual School/Centre/Service unless approved by the School Principal/Centre/Office or Service Manager, or the Chief Executive
- Social media platform account should ensure sites followed by the organisation/business page are appropriate

Acceptable Use of Social Media & Ways of Enhancing Social Media Presence/Interaction

There are a number of simple and effective ways in which LWETB can use its social media platforms to promote our work and engage in a meaningful way with its audiences. Examples include:

- For various schools/centres/services, an effort should be made to tag @Longford and Westmeath ETB on a tweet
- When possible, generate a hashtag or even simply using #LWETB in tweets which can create further interaction and engagement
- Use of appropriate emojis may enhance posts
- For schools/centres/services which do not have their own social media account(s), if there is any item, link or photograph that they wish to have posted, this can be done by sending same to the Corporate Services
- For programmes which have their own (county-based) accounts all posts relating to such programmes will be migrating the central accounts
- Multi-programme centres must ensure a balanced representation of all programmes in the centre i.e. a mix of posts from each programme, not two, three or more posts in a row from the one programme. This will require the account administrator(s) to seek out posts/news items to ensure balance is maintained in order to showcase the range of activities taking place in these centres through these central accounts

- The use of photographs and video can greatly enhance the number of hits/retweets/likes and is encouraged as much as possible. For example, if hosting a launch or event, an effort should be made to take photos and short videos and tweet/post them as the event is underway. All students/learners must have provided signed permission to say:
 - (a) they have agreed to participate in ETB promotion of the course/programme/school/centre/event they are attending, including photos/videos of themselves on ETB (including related) social media accounts and
 - (b) that they have agreed to be included in any promotion carried out by external contractors/trainers on their social media accounts.
 If the photograph or video is of people attending the event, permission, where applicable must be sought from those in the photograph before posting images on social media.
- Guidelines will be provided for all external/contracted trainers to adhere to re their social media accounts e.g. they are required to have written consent that the students/learners or in the case of a minor the Parent/Guardian consent, have agreed to be in a photo that they will post from their own accounts, ensure correct language is used (e.g. learner not trainee re FET; student re schools/music, LWETB is mentioned/tagged in posts etc
- Creation of promotional videos require permission from LWETB in advance. All videos made in relation to LWETB, its work and the work of its schools/centres/programmes/services may only be uploaded to LWETB's YouTube accounts and not to any other account unless it has been set up specifically for a particular school/centre or service. All videos must acknowledge LWETB, including its logo in the credits
- An effort should be made to live tweet or live message events such as a policy launch, public occasion or other ETB events e.g. the launch of plans or policies, open days, awards etc. Use of images along with text can be effective.
- Re-tweet/like/share, as appropriate, messages/posts from events /awards /projects /initiatives which are supported financially or otherwise by LWETB
- Tweets should not be linked to Facebook accounts as this assumes users of Twitter are also Facebook users which is not always the case, neither should a tweet consist of a photo only with no text; tweets should be able to stand out on their own as a coherent message
- Regular updates e.g. in relation to a major event, for example should be posted as often as possible and not just when such a process begins e.g. 'Just a week to go to our open day ...'
- Once information is published online, it is essentially part of a permanent record, even if removed/deleted later. The aim should be to think before head of Corporate Services if there any concerns
- Content should be creative, consistent and most importantly, relevant

13. Inappropriate/Unacceptable Use of Social Media

It is inappropriate for the school/centre/service/staff to like, share, post, tweet, retweet, quote posts/tweets that contain:

- News stories/items which have no particular relevance to the work of LWETB or the particular school/centre/service account being used
- Sharing posts from objectionable websites/Facebook pages e.g. Sarcastic Facebook page
- Comments not specifically related to the particular social media article being commented upon
- Content that violates LWETB's (and those of school/centres/services) Policy and Procedure for the Protection and Safeguarding of Children

- Inappropriate language or content that promotes, fosters, disseminates or perpetuates discrimination in violation of the Equal Status Act 2000-2015 and the Employment Equality Act 1998-2015 in the areas of gender, Marital/civil Status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller Community
- Misuse, abuse or inappropriate use or any form of harassment/sexual harassment or bullying via social media will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action including suspension and dismissal as provided for in the LWETB Disciplinary policy and/or relevant Circular Letters
- Negative language or name-calling e.g. 'losers' or anything which refers in a negative or derogatory way to LWETB, LWETB management, LWETB staff or LWETB learners and to public representatives and Board members
- Profane language or content/language which seeks to promote a particular religious viewpoint
- Sexual content or links to sexual content
- Content/comments that expresses political bias or support/oppose political campaigns or ballot processes
- Personal data as defined under the Data Protection Acts
- Information about staff (e.g. sick leave, performance etc), citizens or identifiable groups
- Financial information (e.g. salaries, fees paid, contract details)
- Sensitive commercial information submitted as part of tender processes
- Intellectual property such as drawings, designs, maps of infrastructure, music or images without proper consent
- Discussion on any aspect of ETB business or activity particularly issues subject to administrative, legal, financial or regulatory processes
- Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party
- Posts of a commercial/business nature or those that are simply advertising a private business or commercial endeavour
- Content relating to the conduct or encouragement of illegal activity

14. Policy on Responses to Tweets/Posts on Facebook

LWETB and its constituent parts frequently receives tweets or messages on Facebook, which, for the most part are perfectly relevant to what we do e.g. somebody asking about the availability of a particular course.

Our policy is to respond to same, where relevant, not only as a matter of courtesy but also to engage with the public and deal with any issues which may arise. Sometimes a simple acknowledgement of a message can be very useful and reflects positively on LWETB. Any requests via social media from the press or members of the public for official comment from the ETB on any topic should be referred to the Head of corporate Services and Chief Executive's office. When a very specific question or request is posted to any of our main accounts/pages, they should be referred to the relevant section by the Head of Corporate Services for a response as soon as possible unless that section is in a position to respond to the particular query.

In the event of abusive, concerning or vexatious messaging, the matter should be referred to the Head of Corporate Services. Similarly, if material posted on social media is identified to be inaccurate or misleading, it should be referred to the Head of Corporate Services. As far as possible, full and accurate information should be promoted.

14.1. Policy on Retweets and 'Likes'

A retweet/share on Twitter/Facebook or a like on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram could be construed as an endorsement by LWETB or a particular message, tweet or post.

No retweet/share on Twitter/Facebook or a like on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram shall be made which will impact negatively on LWETB. Social media account administrators are not expected to retweet/like/share personal tweets from staff. Again, where relevant, think and consult if necessary before responding.

14.2. Policy on Following/Followers

Users/account administrators must be conscious of which accounts are followed, for example, on Twitter, as this is publicly visible online; following a questionable account can cause reputational/brand damage to LWETB. It is perfectly reasonable to follow the accounts of ETB constituent parts, government departments, other organisations we work with, leaders in the field etc. Before you follow or like another account, check who follows them already, who they follow, the type of tweets/posts they put out and if in doubt, do not follow or like.

14.3. Promotion of Social Media Platforms

Where possible, the social media accounts (and website) of LWETB and its constituent parts should be promoted e.g. printed posters, leaflets, banners etc. and should be included in staff email signatures. Social media icons should always be displayed on the front page of website home pages and blogs.

15. Personal Profiles/Use of Social Media

The personal use of social media sites regarding personal matters which do not identify the user as an employee of LWETB will not fall under the remit of this policy. However, this policy will apply in the following circumstances:

- Where an employee identifies him/herself on a personal account as an employee of LWETB
- Where an employee comments on or discusses any business, programme, services or activities of LWETB and its constituent parts
- Where an employee enters a discussion with a fellow colleague through social media in respect of colleagues, LWETB staff, students/learners or other stakeholders which may be considered to be offensive or inappropriate

Employees who choose to identify themselves as a LWETB employee on social media profiles, or in their commentary/participation in social media platforms in a personal capacity, must be aware of the nature of their comments/participation and potential consequences and that material tweeted or posted is capable of being construed as representing the views of LWETB. Such personal accounts remain subject to the policies and standards applying to ETB staff generally. Data protection, privacy requirements, defamation law etc. all still apply when staff are online. It is likely that staff personal and professional profiles may overlap at times, and colleagues and students/learners may have access to content posted by staff. Be aware that information intended only for viewing by friends and family may be forwarded on/shared very easily. Once published online, information is, to all intents and purposes 'permanent', despite efforts to remove it/anonymise it at a later point. Therefore, it is important to remember that how staff conduct themselves online in their personal capacity may reflect on their professionalism and employment with LWETB. Therefore:

- ▶ It is best practice staff should not post or tweet about work activities from their own personal account
- ▶ However, if staff do post or tweet about work activities from their own personal account they must state in their profile 'Personal account; all tweets/opinions my own, not that

- of my employer Longford and Westmeath ETB'
- ▶ Staff must not post or tweet photographs or videos of students/learners (under or over 18 years) from their personal accounts under any circumstances, including if they have stated that it is a personal account
- ▶ Staff must not openly discuss students/learners on their personal accounts

Staff must not comment, post, tweet to ETB accounts as if they were their own personal accounts.

- ▶ Staff must not use LWETB logos or logos associated with its schools/centres/services in their personal social media profiles (e.g. profile/header/cover/picture photos).

Staff using social media platforms in their personal capacity should decline/refuse 'friend', 'link', 'follower' or other 'connection' requests from students/learners. Personal email addresses should not be provided to students/learners and emails should not be sent to/replied to students/learners from a personal email address. Staff should only use an official LWETB email address for work purposes.

Such personal use of social media is subject to the Code of Conduct for Staff (available in the HR Section on the Intranet) and the general expectations around the conduct and behavior expected of an ETB employee. Teachers' personal use is also governed by the Teaching Council 'Code of Professional Conduct' paragraphs 3.3.6 -3.3.9.

LWETB reserves the right to restrict access to social media sites during working hours and any access to social media websites should fall within the parameters of the LWETB and/or individual school/centre/service ICT Acceptable Use Policy. LWETB also reserves the right to monitor employee's internet usage and/or examine the logs of web browsing to ensure that staff are not excessively viewing websites that are not work-related and/or not acting in a manner that would result in violation of this policy or other policies.

In addition staff with access to and use of ICT Equipment provided by LWETB (PC, laptop, phone, tablet etc) have additional responsibilities that such equipment is used appropriately and complies with ICT usage policies.

16. Monitoring and Reporting

Each section/account administrator will take responsibility for frequently monitoring their own accounts on Facebook and Twitter and other social media platforms. Every effort should be made to keep accounts updated as accounts which are not kept up to date look stale and reflect poorly on LWETB. Even for relatively inactive or infrequently used accounts, an effort should be made to check regularly for messages/queries received or consideration should be given to shutting down such accounts as they serve no purpose if they are not active. Any issues of concern should be reported to the Corporate Services as soon as possible. LWETB's Head of Corporate Services will meet at regular intervals to monitor, review and discuss our social media output and monitor the implementation of this policy.

17. Cyberbullying

It is important that each LWETB School, Centre and Office takes measures to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying. This includes bullying of students and staff, whether by students, parents, or colleagues. Management, staff, parents, and students all have rights and responsibilities in relation to cyberbullying and should work together to create an environment in which students can learn and develop and staff can have fulfilling careers free from harassment and bullying. Staff members who have any concern in this regard should refer to LWETB's Bullying Prevention Policy.

All LWETB Schools, Centres and Offices should ensure that their anti-bullying policies incorporate and include cyberbullying and that they work with the whole school community to prevent cyberbullying.

LWETB will react in a timely manner to reported incidents and support any member of staff who reports such incidents. Staff who are harassed in this way will receive support and information enabling them to access appropriate personal support. The School/Centre/Office will endeavour to approach Internet Service Providers on their behalf in order to request that the inappropriate material is removed.

The Internet Service Provider may only accept a request from the individual concerned. However, the School/Centre/Office may want to take action if the inappropriate material is on a School/Centre/Office Social Media Page. In the case where it is necessary for the person being bullied to contact the service providers directly, the School/Centre/Office/ LWETB may provide the necessary support. This may apply, for example, in cases of identity theft, impersonation or abuse via Social Media.

Breaches of this policy may result in personal liability of users and/or vicarious liability on behalf of LWETB under many enactments and policies including (and updated versions of), but not limited to the following:

- Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 1999, updated 2011
- Children First Act 2015
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Companies Act 2014
- Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018
- Longford and Westmeath ETB Bullying Prevention Policy - Complaint Procedure for ETB Staff
- Longford and Westmeath ETB Harassment and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy - Complaint Procedure for ETB Staff
- Longford and Westmeath ETB Grievance Procedure for Staff Employed by Education and Training Boards (ETBs)
- Education Act 1998
- Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015
- Equal Status Acts 2000-2015
- Freedom of Information Act 2014
- National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012-2016
- Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Acts 2005 and 2010

18. Breaches of this Policy

If any staff member is notified of or concerned about misuse of social media, e.g., an abusive or offensive post, profile, page, or comment relating to a LWETB staff member or service, he/she shall report it to their line manager immediately. All staff are encouraged to be proactive in this regard. The line manager should have the post reviewed, and a record taken of the comment, e.g., a screenshot, and where possible or appropriate, the post should be reported as abuse with the relevant site's existing reporting process. The line manager should also report the post to LWETB's Head of HR as appropriate, depending on the nature of the issue.

LWETB reserves the right to remove or require to be removed any content which is deemed by LWETB to be in breach of this policy and/or disable user access. LWETB will make every reasonable effort to have inappropriate content removed. However, for third party sites, it has no control over the functionality of or data stored on these sites and therefore may be unable to ensure removal.

Inappropriate accounts which like, retweet, share or comment of tweets or posts should always be blocked immediately.

LWETB also reserves the right to initiate disciplinary procedures where appropriate in relation to the misuse of social media. Any misuse of this social media may lead to, if appropriate, action under the disciplinary procedure.

19. Legal

LWETB staff are responsible for ensuring that the use of Social Media facilities is lawful and must exercise due caution and diligence to ensure the use of all Social Media services adheres to all applicable laws and regulations.

Failure to do so may result in any or all of the following legal consequences:

- Disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
- Members of staff being personally liable to criminal prosecution
- Members of staff being personally sued for damages in a civil court
- LWETB or a School/Centre being sued for damages in a civil court

20. Recruitment and Social Media

In line with LWETB Equal Opportunities Policy, LWETB will not, at any stage of the recruitment process, conduct searches on prospective staff or candidates on social networking websites, other than on professional networking sites (e.g., LinkedIn).

21. Security

LWETB may enable technical risk mitigation controls to the greatest extent possible.

Such controls may include:

- Filtering and monitoring of all Social Media web site content posted and/or viewed
- Scanning any and all files exchanged with Social Media web sites
- Blocking sites that are inappropriate for access by staff or students

22. Review And Implementation

This policy will be reviewed triennially by the Senior Leadership Team in line with best practice, or in light of changes in legislation and guidance from sources such as Internal Audit, C&AG, the Department of Education and the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform. The date of implementation is the date of Chief Executive LWETB approval.

Appendix I

Request to create a Social Media Account within a School/Centre of LWETB

Name of Staff Member responsible for managing the account:	
Name of School/Centre:	
Type of Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	
Username:	
Password:	
What is the Educational Purpose of the Social Media Facility?	
How will this Social Media Facility be managed?	
What email address will be used to create this account?	
Authorised Permission has been granted to create this Social Media by:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Authorised Permission can only be signed by School Principal or Centre Manager. No accounts can be opened in the name of LWETB or in the name of an individual School/Centre/Office of LWETB without authorised sign off being secured in advance from Senior Management.

Appendix II (landscape)

Register of Social Media Accounts within a School/Centre/Office of LWETB

School/Centre/Office Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Name of Social Media Account/Profile	Account Username and Password	Email Address used to open account	Date of Account Setup	Staff Administrator(s)	Other Account Users

Regularly updated and a copy issued to Corporate Services minimum twice a year