Translation of document “Användning av sociala medier vid Linköpings universitet” – Dnr LiU 2012-01606"

The translation of this document is provided as a service to users and serves a purpose to make the content available to all employees of Linköping University. However it is the original document in Swedish that is legally binding.

Use of social media at Linköping University

Introduction
This decision describes how social media are to be used at Linköping University (LiU). In this document, social media refers to digital communication channels, with the exception of email and webpages where readers are not able to post comments.

Use
The university should use the communication channel that is best suited for the purpose, in each specific situation. In other words, social media should be used when it is relevant to the university’s operations and appropriate for the circumstances at hand.

When social media are used at LiU there must be someone appointed responsible, firstly to ensure the university does not breach any legislation, and secondly because it is in our own interest to keep a check on our communication channels. The person in charge of the area must approve the creation of any new social media channel and appoint the person responsible, whose duty is to ensure that LiU’s rules and applicable legislation are followed. This can apply to social media intended for a particular assignment, for instance. When creating new communication channels in social media, use the checklist in Appendix 1.

The Vice-Chancellor’s delegation plan specifies who has the overall responsibility for the use of social media at the university.

Sender
For an outsider it can be difficult to see whether a LiU employee’s use of a social medium is in the capacity of a private individual or a university employee. Therefore it is crucial that there is no doubt about which of these is the case. It must be completely clear if the university is responsible or not, and if the person communicating is doing so as a representative of the university.

Avoid private use which might give the appearance that the university is sender. If there is a risk of misunderstanding, it is vital to clarify whether the use is private or work related. This can be done by way of information in the profile or the choice of account name, for instance.

General guidelines
Social media are good channels for service and information. However, handling of individual cases and exercise of public authority in open channels must be avoided. Be particularly restrictive if the communication might contain sensitive or confidential information, or other
personal information. When such information might be present, communication should use other channels, such as encrypted email, phone or post. Other aspects that must be observed are the terms and conditions of the medium.

Openness is a cornerstone in the university’s operations and a free, open debate is fundamental to the essence of the university. Nevertheless, social media must not be used to spread information in breach of applicable legislation. The university is not value neutral: anti-democratic propaganda, racism and sexism are examples of comment we actively oppose. Material that obviously breaches the university’s operations and purpose, that negatively affects the university’s operations or that damages its good reputation must not appear in our social media. It is also important to take care with material that can be perceived as offensive, or if its publication can cause injury to someone or put someone at risk. Also, if it is not specifically relevant to the context, we should avoid linking to documents which we would not publish ourselves.

Employees should also be aware that private content in social media can still become public – and be disseminated widely. An ill-considered comment on a private page, intended only for a limited group, can end up being distributed globally and with vast and unforeseen consequences.

**Requirements for the university’s social media**

There is no separate legislation for social media. Therefore the university must use social media in accordance with the regulations that apply to other forms of communication, for instance the exercise of public authority, registration, archiving, confidentiality and handling of personal data.

**Handling of offensive content**

There is legislation that expressly prohibits the appearance of certain types of information in social media. If such information appears, it must be removed from the social media promptly, regardless of whether the university mistakenly published it or if someone else posted it. What is the appropriate course of action? This depends on the specific circumstances, but can include replying, archiving, removing etc.

The following must be removed from social media immediately:

- **offensive or sensitive personal information** if the one whom it concerns is not the person who published it. Examples include information about health, political views, ethnic background or religion. Even if the person it concerns is the one who published it, as a rule it should be removed
- information containing sedition, hate speech, child pornography, illegal depiction of violence or breach of copyright
- information about a third party which is obviously inappropriate

**Freedom of information, archiving and removal**

The university is a public authority and as such is subject to principle of public access to official records. Consequently, postings in social media for which LiU is responsible are public
documents. This applies to postings made by people from outside the university as well as those made by the university. For more detailed information see the Swedish document “Offentlighetsprincipen inom Linköpings universitet – en vägledning”.

The following points are of particular relevance to social media:
- The university is responsible for the communication channels it opens. Provided it is technically possible, the university has a duty to manage documents that are submitted through social media. Postings that contain documents must be filed and moved to the register.
- LiU must keep the material in our social media in good order, e.g. to facilitate if someone wants access to it. As a rule, public documents are to be registered, or if the document is not confidential, handled some other way. For this reason, when a new communications channel is opened, this should be reported to liu@liu.se
- Every time social media is used, the responsible person must assess whether the content should be kept or removed.¹
- A posting that is not appropriate for the social medium is to be blocked from public access. If it is of minor importance can be removed instead.
- LiU has a duty to reply to questions promptly. Consequently, communication channels that are opened must be monitored so that questions or other matters are not missed.

Other requirements
Below are other rules the university must take into consideration when social media are used:
- The university has a duty to properly manage personal data, regardless of who writes or submits them. This means for instance that personal data like civic registration number (Swedish personnummer), home phone number and home address should not be published in social media without written consent.²
- Copyright and other intellectual property rights must be respected.
- If we use cookies we must communicate this, and explain how users can avoid cookies.
- There must be a policy and it must be accessible in the social medium, e.g. via a link.
- Language used must be easy to understand
- LiU can be liable for incorrect information or advice. For this reason, errors must be corrected as soon as possible.
- If monitoring is not handled properly, the person responsible risks damages or prison. The person might also have to face the disciplinary board.

¹ See LiU’s decision RA-FS 1997;6 (in Swedish)
² See application of PuL at LiU”, dnr: LiU 1494/04-14 for more information. PuL stands for Personuppgiftslagen (1998:204).
Monitoring

Information and postings in social media are normally open to the public or to a limited group. Because the university must respond to queries on an ongoing basis and has a duty to move inappropriate material from publicly accessible channels, we must monitor our social media. The frequency with which the person responsible conducts this monitoring depends on how the medium is used and on its users. If numerous offensive comments have been posted or if there is a risk that sensitive information can appear, monitoring must be more frequent. If the risks are judged to be small, once a week is an absolute minimum. As a rule of thumb, once a day is advisable.

Information to users of the university’s social media

If the university opens a communications channel, it has a duty to receive information submitted through that channel, and to behave appropriately, in accordance with the circumstances. However there is no reason why further communication may not take place through other channels, such as telephone or email. So to help people who want to contact the university find the right channel and understand information, we must inform them about what the specific social medium is supposed to be used for.

In order for users of the university’s social media to know what terms apply for its use, there must be a policy containing such information. The policy is to be formulated according to the template in Appendix 2, and be communicated clearly in the social medium, e.g. by a link.

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This decision is to be registered in Linköping University’s local rules and regulations (Swedish: regelsamling).

The decision on these instructions has been taken by University Director Kent Waltersson following a presentation by Director of Communications Mariethe Larsson, in the presence of University Legal Adviser Martin Putsén and University Archivist Eli-Hjorth Reksten.

Kent Waltersson  
University Director

Mariethe Larsson  
Director of Communications
Appendix 1:

*Checklist for use of social media*

1. Before creating a new communication channel, always get approval from the relevant decision-maker.
2. Appoint someone to be responsible.
3. Identify the aim and the target group. What is the purpose of the social media?
4. Allocate resources to manage the channel.
5. Identify who will be the sender: LiU or LiU through a faculty, division, department, centre or individual employee etc.
6. Decide how monitoring, archiving and removal will be handled.
7. Formulate a policy that will be available on the medium, e.g. by a link. (Use the template in Appendix 2.)
8. Design the social medium in accordance with LiU’s instructions regarding logotypes, typefaces etc.
9. Report that you plan to open a channel to liu@liu.se State which communication channel it is, what the aim is, who the sender is and who is responsible.
10. Open the channel.

Appendix 2:
Template for social media policy at Linköping University

Policy for [...] 
1. Linköping University [through the Department of ...] is responsible for the ongoing management of [this account].
2. The aim of the university’s use of the medium is [...].
3. Linköping University is subject to legislation relating to the principle of public access to official records. Consequently, messages that reach the university by this medium and messages sent by the university can be classified as public documents. As a rule, public documents are available for others to view.
4. If you leave a message it will be available [on the internet, and available to anyone who wants to see it].
5. It is not appropriate to handle individual cases over this medium. Instead, contact us on [appropriate contact channel, e.g. email address]
6. The person who writes/submits material is personally responsible for it.
7. If you post personal information about yourself that is accessible outside the university, you are considered as having authorised its availability in that medium.
8. Offensive information, other people’s personal information or confidential information must not appear.
9. Unlawful material must not appear. Examples include sedition, hate speech, child pornography, illegal depiction of violence and copyright infringement.
10. Users are requested to report content that breaches this policy to: [information on to whom and how the complaint should be submitted].
11. Material or messages that do not comply with this policy will be removed without notification.
12. In the event of repeated breaches of this policy, the university reserves the right to block a person or IP number from using this medium. In this case the person will have to use other means of communication for contact with the university, such as telephone or post.
13. If cookies are used, we have a duty to notify the user of this, why they are used, and how they can be avoided.