

Social Media Guidelines

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Description	These guidelines outline the University principles concerning the use of social media, and provide advice that assists staff in establishing and using social media spaces. They are framed within the University policies relating to conduct, copyright and intellectual property, privacy, use of information technology and information security.

Related documents

[Copyright Guide](#)
[Crisis Management Plan](#)
[Emergency Management Plan](#)
[Griffith University Code of Conduct](#)
[Griffith University Information Security Policy](#)
[Griffith University Privacy Plan](#)
[Intellectual Property Policy](#)
[Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#)
[Student Charter](#)
[Student Communication Policy](#)
[Student Misconduct Policy](#)
[Student Misconduct Procedures](#)
[Information Technology Code of Practice](#)
[Workplace Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy](#)

[\[Background\]](#) [\[Categories of Social Media Networks\]](#) [\[Roles and Responsibilities\]](#) [\[Social Media Guidance\]](#)
[\[Risk Mitigation\]](#) [\[Appendix A\]](#) [\[Appendix B\]](#) [\[Appendix C\]](#)

1. BACKGROUND

Social media refers to the interactions of individuals, groups and communities in online social networks and using digital media. Social networks refer to the groups that form through the use of social media.

Social media is a valuable tool for conversations and sharing of information and ideas - activities that are fundamental to education.

It is also used to showcase the expertise of Griffith staff, promoting our work and driving higher citation impacts.

Griffith supports freedom of expression, critique, autonomy and transparency in social networking provided users act responsibly and University policies and codes are adhered to. A key risk is non-response; issues may escalate quickly via social networks and need to be addressed promptly. Specific examples of social media risks are described in Appendix C.

Griffith staff and students use social media for a range of purposes including:

- Engaging with internal and external communities to improve the experiences of interactions with the University
 - Promoting work outputs
 - Crowdsourcing activities (problem solving, product creation, voting, surveys and University-approved fundraising etc.)
 - Promoting events, awards and achievements
 - Answering queries and responding to concerns
 - Recruitment
 - Facilitating professional networks
 - Enhancing learning and teaching experiences
 - Facilitating research
 - Reputation and brand management
 - Emergency management, such as providing information in times of crisis.
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2. CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS

There are three identified types of social media networks of interest to Griffith:

- Official channels - listed in the [social media directory](#)
- Professional profiles and pages - created by individual staff
- Unrelated sites and groups - that may be connected to Griffith but over which the University has little or no control.

Official

Official social media networks and accounts represent a part of the University and are established and moderated by Griffith staff and/or students. They must be approved by the relevant Head of Element and be included in the [social media directory](#).

Official accounts or profiles may be for: academic or research elements (Schools, Groups, Research Centres etc); courses or programs; marketing and communications; alumni chapters; clubs and societies; or student associations. More details are provided in Appendix B.

The social media directory is administered by the Web Studio team. For assistance visit their website and log a Web publishing support request at <https://www.griffith.edu.au/office-marketing-communications/web-studio/support>

Professional

Professional profiles and pages tend to be created by individual staff and/or students and indicate a current professional relationship with the University. As these profiles or pages indicate an association with the University, the content may potentially impact upon the University's reputation. They include: personal profiles and academic networks; course-related spaces moderated by academics or students; researcher blogs; niche subject spaces; and self-controlled spaces for student group assignments.

Unrelated

Unrelated profiles, pages or accounts have no clear connection with the University but may include comments about the University. The University is not able to directly influence these accounts, apart from conversations with site authors and platform owners. Examples include online communities that informally discuss higher education issues or university study experiences.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Office of Marketing and Communications (OMC)

- Manage the University's primary public social media assets. OMC is primarily responsible for social media assets and use that is relevant to the University's outreach and promotional activities
- Populate the corporate social media channels with content that promotes and supports the Griffith community
- Manage Emergency communications - during any emergency all official social media channels must act as directed by OMC and communications must be consistent with OMC content. The OMC will abide by the University's Crisis Communications Plan during these moments.
- Identify and respond - if appropriate - to controversial and/or prominent commentary about the University in any public social media channels. Responses include alerting the Head of Element to the content for their action.
- Provide strategic advice for the appropriate use of social media channels for community engagement. This includes alignment with the University's brand
- Actively monitor and respond to public contributions to corporate social networks directly or refer contributors to relevant elements for response.
- Measure and report to OMC Executive on the performance of social media activity across the strategic University channels and major campaigns.

Digital Solutions (DS)

- Provide advice, advocacy and support for the implementation, management and promotion of social media
- Provide advice on technology platforms and licensing
- Continually identify and assess emerging platforms and applications for potential University adoption
- Systematically monitor official account ownership to ensure site continuity in the event of staff turnover
- The University, via INS, reserves the right to audit, record, manage log files and archive content (including that generated by staff and students) on University servers.

The Information Policy Officer

- Provides advice on best practices, copyright and licensing.

Other University Elements

- Campus Life and the Vice Chancellor may use social media during emergencies in accordance with the University Emergency Management plan
- Each Element may:
 - Establish context-specific social media guidelines/strategies for use within that element, including approval processes for official accounts or profiles
 - Advise element staff (with assistance from relevant DS/OMC staff) on optimal social media strategies
 - Monitor and moderate their own official and professional spaces
 - Identify any potentially controversial issues
 - Seek advice on how to deal with these issues from the Office of Marketing and Communications as appropriate
 - Measure and report to the Executive of their Element on the performance of social media activity across their official channels and campaigns.
 - Maintain brand integrity for any official University pages, accounts or profile.

Individual staff and students

- Monitor and moderate their own professional accounts, profiles and networks
 - Seek advice on issues relating to their own professional accounts and networks from their supervisor, Academic Advisor, or the Office of Marketing and Communications as appropriate
 - Identify any potentially controversial content that relates to the University and refer it to their supervisor or Academic Advisor
 - Supervisors or Academic Advisors should refer content that potentially breaches University policies to their Head of Element and copy the Office of Marketing and Communications.
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4. SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE

4.1 General principles

The University encourages participation and engagement in social networks in the spirit of mutual trust and fairness. Staff and students must be aware of their responsibilities as outlined in the Griffith University Code of Conduct or Student Charter. Staff and students must also comply with each social media platform's *Terms of Use Agreement* and associated rules.

Staff and students are advised to remember that information posted on social media is generally publicly and permanently accessible.

University policies noted under 'Related Policies' apply both when using social media in an official capacity on behalf of the University and when using University resources for personal activity. They may apply where social media profiles note an affiliation with the University.

University policies apply irrespective of the access medium (e.g. mobile device / computer / wearable device) or location (e.g. work / office / classroom / café / home).

The use of the Griffith University logo or branding on **any** social media accounts, pages or networks is only permissible through formal, written consent of the Director, OMC, or delegate. This branding will not be withheld unreasonably but should not be assumed. Unauthorised use of the Griffith University logo or branding on unofficial sites is prohibited and in most cases would breach the social media network site rules.

4.2 Use of social media by all staff

Issues to consider when using social media

- Ensure compliance with copyright, privacy, defamation, moral rights and University policies in any site that discloses a connection with the University. Please see related policies for guidance. Note that when using a social media provider, you agree to that provider's terms and conditions, and they override educational fair use and our statutory licenses
- Do not imply University endorsement of your personal views or use Griffith University trademark or logos without authorisation. If a professional profile notes an affiliation with the University, it should contain a disclaimer to the effect: The opinions and positions expressed are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of Griffith University
- Establish a set of community guidelines immediately after creating a page or group on Facebook in particular, so that fans, followers and members are made aware of the 'rules of engagement' within the community and how unacceptable behaviour will be managed. For an example visit the Griffith University Facebook page community guidelines at - <https://www.facebook.com/pg/griffithuniversity/about/>
- Social media profiles should include a link to the staff member's public University profile page if appropriate (for example, [Griffith Experts](#))
- Be careful with the publication of personal information. Published material is widely accessible and will be permanent (even if deleted)
- Communicate transparently, honestly and with respect and fairness. Take time to verify details to ensure they are accurate and current before posting

- Be the first to admit and correct mistakes
- Be timely and maintain material to ensure accuracy and currency. As a guide, if a (non-course) site has had no activity in over six months it should be withdrawn or deleted
- When questionable comments are made by others on a social media site, the basic rule is to allow the good and the bad but not the ugly. Content is 'ugly' and should be removed if it is: offensive (culturally, politically or socially), denigrating, illegal (for example breaches privacy, copyright, intellectual property, or platforms terms of use) or is out of context (for example inappropriate for some age groups). Appendix A has guidance for responding to social media comments
- Public official and professional spaces are encouraged to apply a Creative Commons CC BY license so that if others use the content they must attribute the author. This protects author moral rights
- When crowdsourcing ideas and feedback be especially aware of the intentions of those providing input. When contributing to other crowdsourcing initiatives in an official or professional capacity disclose your role at Griffith University
- Professional social media use is voluntary, staff should not be unreasonably intrusive when collecting information from other profiles
- Be aware of enabling location identifiable tags via social media – this could compromise personal safety both on and off campus.

4.3 Use of social media in Learning and Teaching

Social media are used as communicative, collaborative and community platforms in support of learning and teaching activities.

Staff should use the social media tools endorsed by Griffith University (unless the University grants an exception).¹ These tools create a consistent student learning experience across all subjects and are typically accessible by a student's number and password. Such tools have security protection for personal information and are copyright compliant.

Staff should avoid using platforms that are inherently personal by nature (such as Facebook and Instagram) to maintain their professional responsibilities towards students. Such platforms overstep the divide separating the professional and personal and thus can invite difficulties arising from the power disparity inherent in the staff-student relationship. Social media networks do not replace or otherwise eliminate the requirement to use the University's existing learning management system, Learning@Griffith, for:

- Course profiles & course information
- Announcements and course notices and responses to student feedback
- Assessment (submission or marks)
- Course readings and learning content.

Staff should consider using the social media functionality within Learning@Griffith to facilitate ease of access for participants.

Rules of engagement

Staff should not accept requests from students for access to the staff member's personal social media **accounts or networks, unless the network is professional in nature (such as LinkedIn), and the purpose of the connection is to enable professional development and enhanced employability**

¹ Exception processes are managed at Executive Level via Digital Solutions Chief Digital Officer, Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) and Learning Futures. Exceptions do not imply full operational support.

- When creating social media accounts or profiles for a course, teaching staff should create a group or course specific account and only accept requests for inclusion by students enrolled in that course
- Course-related social media accounts should be restricted to course participants and be non-public (e.g password protected). In such instances course resources licensed for Griffith University use only may be shared or referenced
- For the purpose of access and equity, all content (including announcements) posted by an academic staff member to Learning and Teaching social media pages or accounts outside Learning@Griffith should also be 'dual posted' to the respective course site within Learning@Griffith. This can be organised through the relevant Manager, Learning and Teaching Design.
- For the purpose of respecting privacy, encouraging academic integrity and responsible conduct among students, academic staff using Learning and Teaching social media accounts and networks should:
 1. Review the guide to [the Quick Guide to good Netiquette](#)
 2. Review and abide by the Social Media Platform Terms of Use Agreement
 3. Review the University's Student Charter and abide by the Griffith University Code of Conduct
 4. Consider an end-of-life or de-activation of the social media account at course completion
 5. Never publicly post grades or marks within the social media space.
- For the purpose of disclosure and student engagement, Learning & Teaching social media accounts should include (in an 'About' section):
 1. Information on use of Learning@Griffith's Mark Centre and My Marks (Student view)
 2. A brief course description (or a link to it)
 3. The academic's connection to the site (convenor, tutor)
 4. The reason for the site
 5. Whether the group/site is public or closed (the latter is recommended)
 6. Provision of links to Learning@Griffith where applicable eg. My Marks.

4.4 Use of social media in Research

Social media can also be used to facilitate the conduct of research.

Rules of engagement

- Prior to the creation of any social media site, staff and students should ensure the planned use of social media for research purposes complies with:
 - [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#)
 - [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
 - [Copyright Guide](#)
 - [Griffith University Code of Conduct](#)
- Clearly communicate how social media is to be used in the course of research undertaken by staff or students and ensure that this is included in any ethics application or approval request
- Ensure that the privacy policies of each social media initiative provide adequate protections for participants.
- Understand and ensure compliance with copyright and intellectual policy rights as they apply to staff or students and the University.

4.5 Use of social media by Students

Social media use can enhance learning and student engagement. The University encourages but does not influence social media use by students - apart from:

- where students note an affiliation with the University
- use via University networks (wifi) and / or
- use of social media within courses and/or research.

In these instances this guidance and the Student Charter and its related behaviour, misconduct and grievance standards and policies shall act as guides for student use of social media. The advice above (s.4.1-4.4) may be of interest to students and below is further specific advice. If in doubt about appropriate use, students are urged to contact their Academic Advisor in the first instance.

- Students are encouraged to discuss their University and learning experiences with peers via social media but should avoid publicly:
 - providing assessment answers and results or offering to help peers with assessment tasks for a fee
 - posting course materials and assignments into shared public spaces
 - posting works by others without permission. The 'fair dealing' copyright protection for students applies only for use within the University's network, not public use
 - posting private, identifiable or sensitive information .
 - An exception to this is social media accounts or networks created for courses that are open only to course participants
- Unless otherwise indicated, students own the copyright in their works and are advised to be cognisant of moral rights, namely to attribute the work of others they use and not to treat the work of others in a derogatory or false way. Students can also expect the right to be attributed when their work is used by others
- If students have a grievance with a specific aspect of the University or their course, they are encouraged to raise it directly through their Academic Advisor or Course Convenor rather than indirectly via social media
- If a staff member is also a student, the University's Code of Conduct will apply
- Learning is life-long. As students transition to alumni, the University encourages the continuation of relationships with the University and peers via official social media spaces.

5. RISK MITIGATION

Social networks are dynamic and evolving. Risk management in the social media landscape involves maintaining a balance between community autonomy and institutional monitoring. The University favours autonomy and transparency in social media networking provided University policies and codes are adhered to.

Risks of misinformation and trolling behaviour are of medium likelihood and low impact provided they are addressed promptly. A key risk is the risk of non-response; issues may escalate quickly via social networks and need to be dealt with in a timely manner. Additionally, time spent using social media should be self-monitored to ensure it adds sufficient and appropriate value.

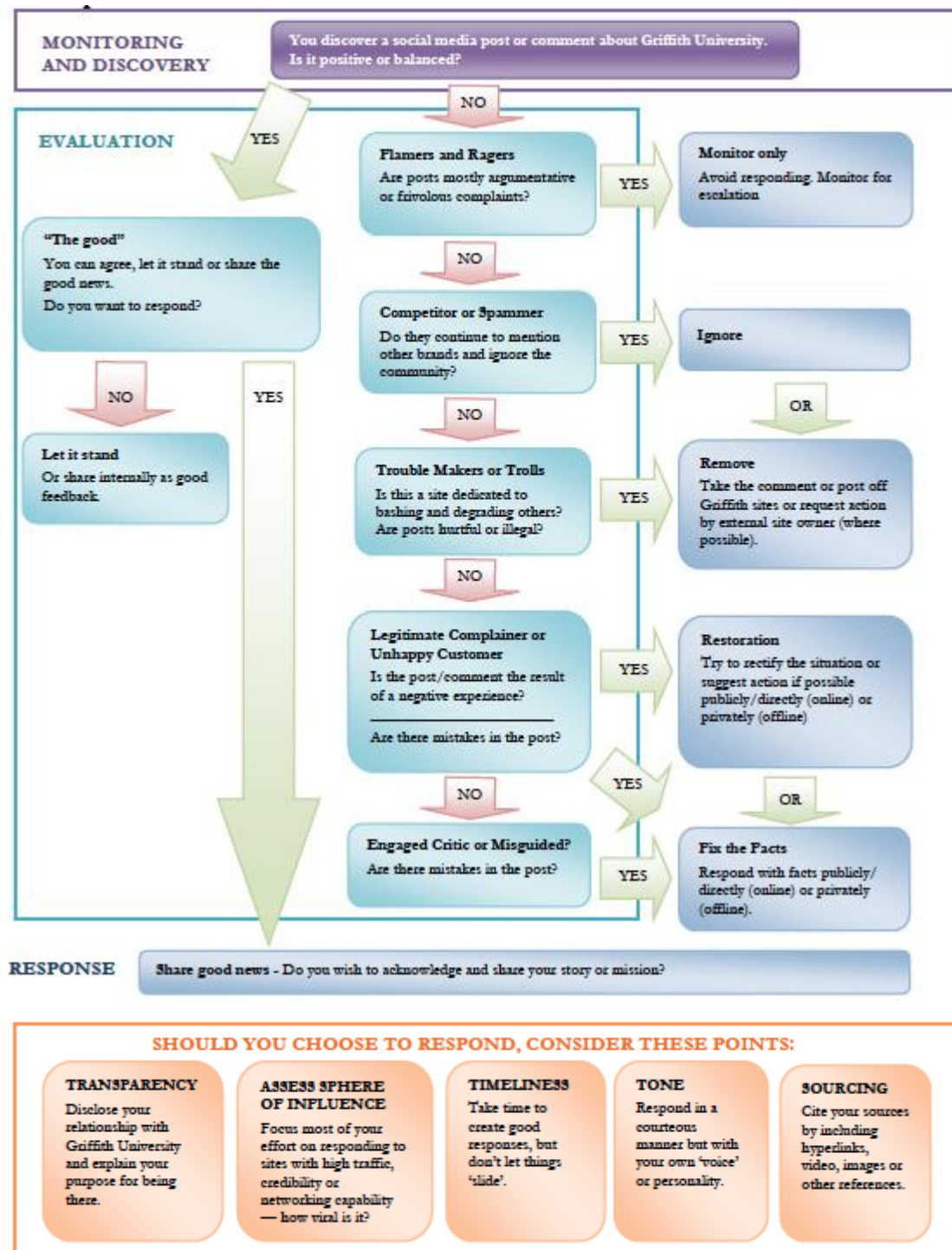
Risks relating to social media are managed by the Heads of Element and, when appropriate, the OMC. However, professional and official social media administrators are obligated to moderate their own networks and accounts professionally and in a timely manner. Responsibility in social media is devolved so users are trusted to act responsibly and transparently. All users should be aware of and abide by the terms and conditions of use of the relevant platform/s they are using, as well as relevant Griffith policies (listed under *Related Policies*). Where individuals identify questionable content in social media sites they should refer to the site owner/administrator to moderate it. Where it potentially breaches University Policies and Guidance, the Head of Element is responsible for taking action. The Office of Marketing and Communications staff may advise the Head of Element as appropriate.

The University's student misconduct policy and procedures are to be applied in the consideration of potential or perceived risks involving the use of social networking. If in doubt about appropriate use, staff and students are urged to contact their supervisor or Academic Advisor in the first instance.

Figure 1: Risk mitigation

Risk	Likelihood	Impact level	Mitigation approach
Misinformation and trolls	medium	medium	Address promptly with fairness and accuracy.
Non-response	low	medium	A lack of engagement and openness may reflect poorly on the brand of Griffith University. Address promptly with fairness and accuracy.
Inadvertent disclosures	low	low	Because social media tends to be conversational, relaxed and with blurred organisational boundaries, staff may inadvertently disclose information that they shouldn't (privacy, ethics, information security, embargoed, commercial etc.). Account owners are responsible and should take it down immediately upon notification, and treat as per relevant policy/code of conduct.
Social media use becomes a time drain - cost outweighs benefits	medium	medium	For official accounts and pages, an approach that shares tasks and responsibilities amongst teams is encouraged.
Reliance on proprietary infrastructure	low	low	Most social media networks are proprietary and terms of use are subject to change or the site may close. If terms become adverse or the site closes, other networks or accounts may be selected and content moved across. Secondly, works where copyright is owned by the University generally may be posted onto social media, but a copy should be retained within the University.
Incorrect messaging during a crisis	low	high	OMC will use social media as a communication tool during emergencies and crises, in accordance with the University's Crisis Communications Plan. In any crisis all official account holders must message consistently with OMC and/or act as directed by OMC. OMC will call upon and/or seek approval from relevant University staff as required.
Content shared by Griffith staff or students breaches policies	low	high	OMC to remediate and/or refer the issue to other University elements and offenders shall be treated as per misconduct policies. Account owners are responsible for potential breaches on their sites.
Copyright and Intellectual Property breaches	low	high	Account owners are responsible for potential breaches on their sites. Where claims arise relating to entries in official Griffith social media networks or accounts on third party proprietary platforms, the University will make every effort to resolve them, as per standard practice and policies.
Retention of content on social networks	low	low	The University is not responsible for retention of content on third party proprietary social media platforms.

Appendix A: Options for engagement on official and professional spaces



Note: if you cannot remove the content, refer to your supervisor and/or OMC. If an issue falls outside this guidance or escalates, please refer it to OMC.

Adapted from: United States Air Force Public Affairs Agency 2010, 'Air Force Web Posting Response Assessment', accessed 23 August 2013 <<http://www.afpc.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-091210-037.pdf>>.

Appendix B: Establishing a social media site

- Social media is context-dependent and may not be suitable in all instances
- Teams and individuals who wish to create an official social media presence are encouraged to:
 - Seek advice from the ODS or OMC Communications teams about your goals and objectives for social media engagement.
 - Understand and adhere to Griffith branding guidelines
<https://remarkablehub.griffith.edu.au/resources>
- Official Griffith University social media spaces are approved by the Head of Element via a proposal that considers:
 - Objective and alignment with University strategy
 - Target audience
 - Rationale for the appropriateness of the proposed social media space (do you transfer copyright to the site?; can you control access to the content?; privacy settings?; how will the provider use your content?)
 - Alignment with existing communication activities
 - Alignment with Griffith branding guidelines
<https://remarkablehub.griffith.edu.au/resources>
 - Resourcing and roles (manage, moderate, contribute, respond, refer)
 - Risk management.

Appendix C: Hypothetical ‘lessons learned’ of social media misuse

Key social media networks (as at 2015) include: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Instagram, Pinterest, Vine, Yammer, blogs, Flickr, YouTube, Vimeo, Wikipedia, Google Groups, Academia.edu, Researchgate.com, vodcasts, podcasts, discussion lists and sms groups.

- Teaching staff should respect professional boundaries. Accepting students as "friends" on social media can lead to some very difficult situations if the student subsequently takes offence to content on personal pages. Staff are advised not to accept requests from students for access to their personal social media networks.
- The [Workplace Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy](#) applies to all University-related use of social media, including private sites for informal discussion by students about their course. Think before posting and be careful to avoid content that could be perceived as humiliating, offensive, intimidating, racist, sexist, or harmful to others.
- Be mindful that on social media sites you cannot control the destination of your material and comments that you consider to be private may end up in the public domain.
- You are not anonymous, even if you use a pseudonym or delete posts, and are accountable for these posts. The university records all activity on its servers and users can be identified from it.
- In some cases, prior permission must be obtained to make identifiable images of individuals available - especially if it is of research participants, minors, or if it signifies membership of groups that may be culturally, politically, or socially sensitive. The Office for Marketing and Communications can provide release forms for participants who may be photographed at official public events at the University. Do not post content that might be embarrassing to an individual or that could be construed as placing an individual in a negative or false light. While social media networks are visually-heavy and participants generally accept the wide and unfettered distribution of images, in relation to official Griffith University networks and accounts, permission should be sought before posting such materials, even if it is informal. If a complaint is made about breach of privacy or moral rights, the first response is generally to immediately take the content down, and then negotiate a resolution and/or apology.
- Do not upload commercially licensed materials to social network sites, even if they are closed or if you were the author, without firstly checking if you can do so. Similarly do not download materials that appear to be copyright infringing. The protection of fair use for research does not apply to ‘broadcasting’ third party materials outside the University, even if on academic social networks.