

## Social Media College Procedure

Approved: September 5, 2024  
Executive Responsibility: Marketing

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### A. Background and Definitions

Social Media encompasses websites and applications that allow users to create, share content, and engage in social networking. It includes various forms of electronic communication, such as websites, through which individuals form online communities to exchange information, ideas, personal messages, and other content like videos.

*Account Lead.* An employee of the College who manages the primary social media account and is in charge of posting content and interacting with followers.

*Conversion Rate.* A widely tracked metric in social media, representing the percentage of individuals who completed a desired action, such as filling out a form or following a social account.

*Doxxing.* The act of disclosing someone's identifying information online, such as their real name, home address, workplace, phone number, financial details, and other personal data, and then distributing this information to the public without the individual's consent.

*Impression.* A metric used by marketers and advertisers to monitor and count each instance an ad is displayed or "fetched."

*Niagara College – Toronto (NCT) Social Media Platforms/Accounts.* Social Media platforms supporting NCT include, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X, TikTok, and YouTube.

*Primary Account.* The main page on each social media platform that represents the College as a whole, rather than individual departments.

*Secondary Account\*.* A College-affiliated social media account managed by a department, program, or learning enterprise.

*\*No secondary account creation has been approved by NCT and NC.*

*Social Media.* includes websites and applications that let users generate and share content while participating in social networking and communications. It covers different types of electronic interactions, such as websites, where people build online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and content like videos and photos.

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*Trolling.* Posting intentionally offensive or provocative content online to upset someone or provoke an angry reaction.

*User Generated Content.* Content created and shared by users rather than brands or professionals, including text, photos, videos, reviews, and social media posts. This type of content often reflects personal experiences and opinions, contributing to the authenticity and engagement of online platforms.

### B. Procedure Purpose

This social media procedure is created for the purpose of ensuring:

*Consistency.* Ensures a consistent voice, tone, and brand message across all social media platforms, maintaining a cohesive online presence.

*Guidance.* Provides clear guidelines for staff, faculty, and students on how to effectively and appropriately use social media in a way that aligns with the College's goals and values.

*Compliance.* Helps ensure that all social media activities comply with relevant laws, regulations, and College policies, including privacy and copyright laws.

*Crisis Management.* Establishes protocols for handling negative comments, crises, or emergencies on Social Media, ensuring timely and appropriate responses.

*Engagement.* Encourages meaningful and positive engagement with the college community, fostering a supportive and interactive online environment.

*Measurement and Improvement.* Defines metrics and processes for monitoring and evaluating social media performance, helping the College continuously improve its social media strategy.

*Risk Mitigation.* Identifies potential risks associated with Social Media use and outlines steps to mitigate these risks, protecting the College's reputation and assets.

### C. Procedure Statements

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1. After obtaining approval from the Marketing Director, the Account Lead will proceed to create the social media accounts following the College's requirements. The usernames/handles and passwords for these accounts must be mutually agreed upon. The login credentials for the College's social media accounts, including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X, TikTok, and YouTube, should be shared with the social media specialist.
2. The Account Lead will develop a content pillar, strategy, and content calendar for review before launching a social media account.
3. Once approved, the social media specialists will create, schedule, and post content on the primary account.
4. If any member of the social media team leaves their position, the Account Lead will ensure a contingency plan is in place to keep the social media accounts active and managed by the newly assigned employee.
5. It is recommended that all Account Leads review and adhere to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) guidelines to ensure accessibility and inclusivity in our communications. Familiarizing oneself with these standards is crucial for creating content that is accessible to everyone. By following AODA guidelines, we can better serve our diverse community. Please reach out to Marketing for any support or resources you may need.

### **D. Creating a new secondary social media account or managing an existing social media account.**

There will be no creation of secondary social media accounts for Niagara College – Toronto.

### **E. Managing your new or primary account.**

To maintain accuracy, safety, and respect online, all employees are required to follow these guidelines.

1. Be Respectful. Always communicate respectfully and professionally, avoiding offensive language and behavior.
2. Maintain Confidentiality. Follow all of NCT's privacy guidelines when posting online. Do not share sensitive or confidential information about the company, colleagues, or current and future students online. Failing to comply with [NCT's privacy guidelines](#) may lead to disciplinary action.

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3. Accuracy is Key. Ensure all information you share is accurate and fact-checked to prevent the spread of misinformation.
4. Protect Personal Information. Avoid sharing personal details like addresses, phone numbers, or financial information.
5. Be Transparent. Clearly identify yourself and your role within the company when engaging in work-related discussions.
6. Avoid Controversial Topics. Refrain from engaging in discussions about politics, religion, or other sensitive topics that can cause conflict.
7. Report Inappropriate Content. If you encounter offensive or harmful content, report it to the appropriate platform or authority.
8. Use Secure Connections. Always use secure internet connections and devices to protect against cyber threats.
9. Follow Company Policies. Adhere to all company policies related to social media use and online behavior, and seek clarification if needed.
10. Respect Copyright Laws. Do not use copyrighted material without proper permission or attribution.
  - X: <https://support.twitter.com/categories/284#>
  - YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/yt/policyandsafety/policy.html>
  - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards>
  - Instagram: <https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119/>
  - LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/legal/privacy-policy>
  - TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/legal/page/row/privacy-policy/en>
11. Brand Consistency. The NCT branding guidelines must be reviewed and understood before creating an account. These guidelines ensure consistency and alignment with our brand identity across all platforms. Adhering to these standards helps maintain a unified and professional appearance. Please consult the branding guidelines document for detailed instructions and reach out to the marketing team if you have any questions or need clarification.

### *a. Tone of Voice*

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The tone of voice for NCT reflects its distinctive personality. We will maintain a high level of formality and professionalism in our communications, using language that aligns with the core values of NCT.

The structure and style of our social media captions will be tailored to each specific platform. We incorporate emojis in our posts on Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok, and Threads to enhance engagement. However, to maintain a formal tone, we refrain from using emojis on LinkedIn and YouTube.

Our goal is to ensure that our social media posts are both informative and motivating, creating a relatable connection with both future and current students.

We aim for our tone of voice to consistently embody the following key attributes:

- Authenticity
- Clarity
- Empathy
- Professionalism
- Inclusivity
- Innovation
- Positivity
- Respect
- Consistency

### ***b. Hashtags***

NCT's hashtags are a combination of relevant popular, niche-specific, and branded hashtags to reach different audiences.

3-5 hashtags will be used on each of the social media platforms.

#### ***Branded Hashtags:***

#NiagaraCollegeToronto  
#NCToronto  
#myNCTstory  
#myNCT  
#NCT

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*c. Language and Grammar*

NCT has a diverse, multilingual audience. To ensure clear communication, please avoid using slang, as it may be difficult for international students to understand. Maintain simple and straightforward language and tone.

### 12. Posting Content Guidelines

- a. *Identify Your Audience.* Clearly define who your followers are, what they are interested in, and why they have chosen to follow you. Understand your target market by considering key demographics such as age, educational background, and socioeconomic factors.
- b. *Create a Content Pillar and Calendar.* Develop a content calendar or use a scheduling tool like Hootsuite and Meta Business Suite. Depending on the tool's capabilities (free vs. paid), you can review follower data such as peak interaction times, location, and primary interests. This information will help you gauge your audience and schedule relevant posts effectively.
- c. *Share Valuable Content.* Ensure the information you share is relevant and relatable to your audience. Sourcing valuable content is key to fostering engaging relationships with your followers.
- d. *Post Accurate Information.* Verify that your posts are accurate, come from reliable sources, and include the correct handles or hashtags. If you post something incorrectly, rectify the situation quickly by either deleting or editing the post. For severe errors, inform your manager immediately.
- e. *Proofread Before Posting.* Ensure your post is free of typos and grammatical errors before publishing.
- f. *Tag Partners in Posts.* When posting an article or sharing an event, tag affiliated partners and use the correct hashtags related to the event.
- g. *Handle Negative Posts Professionally.* If you receive a negative post or feedback, do not delete or hide it unless it violates our online posting standards. Addressing it transparently shows trust and accountability. Consider the writer's perspective and respond courteously and respectfully. If the complaint needs escalation, relay the information to the Social Media Manager or Marketing Director. If you can provide a solution or answer, do so, or ask the person to directly message (DM) you.

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### 13. Monitoring & Maintenance

- a. *Designate a Single Account Lead.* While sharing the workload is helpful, having one person regularly monitor posts ensures consistency in your page's tone and avoids confusion.
- b. *Maintain Regular Posting.* Avoid long gaps in activity or leaving follower questions unanswered. In the event that the Account Lead will be on leave, all posts must be scheduled and there should be a proper endorsement to a teammate that will cover the task.
- c. *Update and Manage Accounts as Needed.* Ensure all information related to changes in Account Leads or updated usernames and passwords is communicated to the Social Media Coordinator and Marketing Director.
- d. *Handle Threatening Posts.* If you encounter threatening posts that may compromise the safety of students or employees, contact the Marketing Director immediately. Document the post (e.g., take a picture or screenshot) for future reference, and delete the post after consulting with the concerned team.
- e. *Monitor Engagement and Feedback.* Regularly review comments, messages, and overall engagement to understand follower preferences and concerns. Address any issues promptly and adjust your content strategy based on feedback to improve follower satisfaction.
- f. *Stay Updated with Trends and Policies.* Keep up with the latest social media trends and platform policies to ensure your content remains relevant and compliant. Regularly review and update your social media strategy to align with current best practices and guidelines.
- g. *Analyze Performance Metrics.* Use analytics tools to track the performance of your posts and overall account. Monitor metrics such as engagement rates, reach, and follower growth to measure success and identify areas for improvement.
- h. *Ensure Accessibility.* Make sure all content is accessible to a diverse audience by following accessibility guidelines. This includes using descriptive text for images, ensuring readability, and providing subtitles for videos.

By following these guidelines, you can ensure effective and consistent management of your social media accounts.

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14. Emergency and Crisis Situations. For students, faculty, and staff, do not create your own posts during emergencies or crises. Always repost notifications from the primary account. In the event of an emergency (e.g., a snow day, server interruptions, construction) or a public relations crisis, refer to NCT's primary social media accounts and share the content.
  15. Account Security. Social media Account Leads are advised to implement multifactor authentication (MFA) to enhance account security. It is recommended that Account Leads periodically update their passwords to maintain security.

### E. Document History

Date	Approval/Review/Key Change(s)
September 5, 2024	New

### F. Review of this document

The document will be regularly updated to reflect changes in social media platforms. Any alterations will be documented, dated, and kept current.