

UCL Centre for Access to Justice Social Media Policy 2023/24

1. Social media plays a huge role in our lives, and it's important to understand how to use it responsibly. As you participate in pro bono activities, you are representing UCL, and have a responsibility to conduct yourself appropriately and respect the sensitivity of cases and events you may experience.
2. Please familiarise yourself with UCL's [Social media guide | UCL Brand](#) which includes specific guidelines for staff. Although not specifically drafted for students, this guidance is still relevant and will help you understand UCL's social media ethos.
3. For students who are placed on pro bono projects with partners:
 - a. Much of the work that you undertake at your pro bono placement will be case or client related. It will often be sensitive and/or subject to legal professional privilege. It may contain sensitive information and be distressing for those involved. Confidentiality is one of our highest priorities and is a principle all future lawyers should adopt as early as possible. A breach of client confidentiality could have long lasting consequences for your legal career.
 - b. To avoid any misunderstandings and to err on the side of caution, we therefore ask that you **do not discuss your pro bono activities (especially casework) online or on any public platforms, including social media platforms such as: Instagram, Twitter, TikTok or Facebook**. This includes scenarios where you may be merely observing things in the public domain (in court, for example).
 - c. If you wish to make a general social media post about the skills you have learned or experiences you have gained, we ask that you check the content of the post with CAJ and your relevant project partner organisation to ensure there are no concerns.
 - d. Our project partners are also placing a significant degree of trust and responsibility in you as students, and in UCL as an institution when they accept UCL student volunteers. This includes trusting that the activities you participate in with them will not be shared on social media – most organisations carefully curate their social media presence to align with their vision and goals. We hope that you will understand and respect this.

4. For student-led projects:
 - a. We would ask you to carefully consider your posts and how they reflect your project. We also ask you to not discuss specific details of your project (in particular Grassroots) on any social media or other public platforms, however you are able to share your opinions on pro bono or volunteering generally or the broad skills and/or experiences you gained from the project.
 - b. Where a student-led project has a social media account (such as Instagram, Twitter, etc) please make it clear that this is a **student-run** account. This is to avoid people messaging you with questions about UCL/UCL Laws admissions, policies, etc. If you receive any messages like this, please direct them to UCL's official social media channels or direct their query to laws.communications@ucl.ac.uk
 - c. If you would like to set up a new social media account or profile for your student-led group/project, please discuss this with a member of CAJ staff first. This is to ensure that there is not already an existing profile and to avoid making duplicate accounts.
 - d. This year, we are trialling the set-up of a TikTok account, led by the SPBC. If you would like to feature content on TikTok, please contact the SPBC TikTok Officer at caj.spbc@ucl.ac.uk. Please do not set up a separate TikTok account. If you are posting things on a personal TikTok, please note the same social media rules apply.
5. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy includes not posting selfies or other images at your placement or outside/near it. You never know who might be watching you do this, who might see the image or how they might be feeling. An exciting day for you may be the worst day of someone else's life. You may also inadvertently capture something or someone on camera that could breach confidentiality or put someone at risk.
6. If you are working with children, please also be aware that you sharing the names or images of children without their parent's consent would be a significant safeguarding concern (and a breach of most organisations' safeguarding policies).
7. Some exceptions to this policy are:
 - a. Events and fundraising activities where you, your partner or parent organisation are specifically asking you as students to use your social media channels to raise awareness of an issue or cause.
 - b. Blog posts written for the CAJ Blog, which will have been signed off by CAJ staff.

8. If you are in doubt about whether something should be shared on social media, the answer is most likely that it should not be. But please check with the CAJ staff if you are unsure.
9. Please be mindful that prospective employers may also check your social media. You should therefore consider the professional image that you present on your social media. The legal profession is by nature quite conservative and traditional.
10. That being said, we understand that throughout the course of your pro bono activities, you may experience events or interactions that could cause distress or frustration, or indeed great joy and satisfaction. We would ask that rather than sharing your thoughts online, you instead please contact the CAJ team at accesstojustice@ucl.ac.uk. We are always happy to listen, support and offer guidance. If you are volunteering with a partner organisation, you can also talk to your supervisor there.
11. Please note that failure to comply with this policy may result in your pro bono activity placement being terminated and being prevented from participating in further pro bono activities at UCL.
12. We are genuinely interested in ensuring your pro bono experience is a positive one. If you have any feedback for us, we are always happy to hear it. Please feel free to contact us with queries, feedback or comments: accesstojustice@ucl.ac.uk , or you can pop by our office in Bentham House (Room 413) between Tuesdays – Thursdays, 10.00 – 13.00.

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