**Digital Governance**

**Policy**

# Introduction

This policy governs the use or creation of digital content in pursuit of official Queen’s University Belfast operation and in accordance with the Queen’s University Belfast brand guidelines and sets out expectations for oversight, requirements, and privileges. This includes the people, processes and technology necessary for such efforts.

The University is committed to providing a digital presence that meets accessibility standards and offers our key stakeholders an easy to use, high quality, interactive and personalised experience, ensuring content is optimised in support of Vision 2020 and strategic priorities.

The University’s digital channels represent the University and provide its most visible recruiting tool and, as such, should reflect the University's purpose and standards with a consistent look, user-friendly navigation and factual information that work together to present a positive, uniform image.

Digital governance is one of the core principles of an effective digital channel. Good digital governance will make Queen’s more effective in achieving our business objectives - poor digital governance exposes the University to risk and liability.

In this context, this policy provides guidance to staff, students and to lay members of Senate/University Committees in the management of our digital content.

The purpose of this Policy is to promote consistency in the University’s official public presentation, provide resources to individuals responsible for creating and maintaining digital corporate communications and digital content, and reduce legal and regulatory risks related to privacy, consumer law and security and to ensure that content will be presented in tone, style and manner specifically for delivery across our digital channels.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following University policies and procedures:

University Data Protection Policy

Social Media Policies

 ▫ Policy for Staff

 ▫ Policy for Students

Acceptable Use Policy

Social Media Guides

 ▫ Guide for Staff

 ▫ Guide for Students

Information Services Security Policy

Information Security

 ▫ Use of Computer Systems

 ▫ Data Protection Regulations

 ▫ Information Handling Policy

 ▫ Mobile Computing Policy

Core Website Legal Statement

 ▫ http://www.qub.ac.uk/home/Legal/

JANET Web Development Guidelines

Further information on the Digital Content and Corporate Digital Communications Policy is available on the (Digital Transformation) website.

# Policy Objectives and Guiding Principles

This policy is underpinned by the following guiding principles:

1. The University encourages Faculty, staff, and students to publish freely and openly on the internet, within the constraints of existing laws and policies.
2. We must give our audiences content made to professional editorial and the highest ethical standards.
3. Our core digital channel should support the University’s Global Vision and Strategic Priorities.
4. Effective digital governance is one of the core principles of an effective University digital channel.
5. Digital content must comply with all University regulations, including the IS Data and Information Security Policies and Acceptable Use Guides.
6. The University is committed to providing and maintaining a digital presence that meets accessibility standards.

# Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all University staff members, students and lay members of Senate and co-optees to University Committees who contribute content to the University’s digital channels.

The University Digital Policy is deemed to include all web pages whose addresses (URLs) contain a domain (e.g. qub.ac.uk) associated with the University or one of its organisational units, or are hosted on a server at the University.

The Policy also includes all social media accounts maintained by staff or students which could reasonably be deemed as having a relationship with the University.

The policy relates to all aspects of the University’s digital channels, including design, content, development, network and infrastructure.

For the purpose of this policy, the term “content” includes:

▫ All websites managed and maintained by Queen’s staff or on the behalf of the University, including all external websites using the qub.ac.uk domain (www.qub.ac.uk/folder) or any subdomain (www.subdomain.qub.ac.uk).

▫ All material associated with pages of the website such as documents, audio, video and any other additional files.

Personal or private communications are not covered in this policy, although they are governed by other policies, procedures, and standards, including the Social Media Policy for Staff, Social Media Policy for Students and Staff Computing at Queen’s Acceptable Use Guide.

Courseware, including scholarly work, student work and learning and teaching materials are not covered in this policy.

The policy also extends to cover lay members of Senate and co-optees to University Committees, where these individuals are directly contributing to the University digital channels in connection with their role as a lay member of Senate or related Committee.

In addition, any organisations which are employed by the University to carry out work on its behalf (e.g. consultants, agencies, suppliers), must also be made aware of and follow this policy and its supporting standards and guidelines.

# Definitions

Digital corporate communications and digital content (“content”) as defined in this policy includes all communications, content, and assets used to interact with public audiences and to undertake official University business or otherwise further the mission of Queen’s University Belfast. Categories of content include, but are not limited to:

 ▫ Internally and externally hosted web sites, web pages, and web-based assets;

 ▫ Internally and externally hosted intranets or portals;

 ▫ Social media sites and tools

# Considerations

5.1. General Considerations

Before any content is created, consideration should be given to the following:

1. No content should be published without an adequate resource and content life-cycle plan.
2. When publishing content no member of staff or student should act in any way that could endanger the good name or reputation of the University or provide material which is inappropriate for publication by the University.
3. When developing content, content owners should aim to take a “COPE” approach to web content management. COPE – Create Once Publish Everywhere.
4. Every page, whether personal or official, will conform to the requirements of appropriate legislation including, but not limited to, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Copyright, The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, Designs and Patents Act 1988, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.