

## **Reuben College Social Media Policy**

*Agreed by Delegated GB Authority and with effect from 1 August 2021*

The principles under the headings 'Personal Responsibility' and 'Complaints' apply to all current members of Reuben College including students, fellows, staff and other affiliate members.

The headings 'Official Channels' and 'Graduate Common Room' relate to social media channels, accounts, pages, groups or similar set up by current College members which use "Reuben College" in their name (by staff and students respectively). Any group that is not an official channel of the College, but still uses "Reuben College" in its name or other online identification (e.g. hashtags), must clearly state that it is an unofficial channel and will only be covered by the sections concerning 'Personal Responsibility', 'Reporting' and 'Complaints'.

### **Official channels**

The College currently uses the following social media channels to share content with current College members and the wider College community:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Various alumni groups
- YouTube

Public posting is not allowed unless in a member-only group. The official channels and groups are managed by the College's communications manager. For questions or concerns please email [comms@reuben.ox.ac.uk](mailto:comms@reuben.ox.ac.uk) - see "Reporting" below for more information on the process for raising concerns. The Communications Manager has the right to remove anything they deem to be offensive, derogatory, or inconsistent with College's values at their discretion.

### **Graduate Common Room (GCR)**

Accounts or groups managed by the GCR are in the first instance the responsibility of the GCR Committee. For accounts or groups managed by College clubs, societies or teams the responsibility falls on the president of that club, society or team. These accounts or groups should be regularly monitored by a designated administrator. It is not assumed that these accounts or groups will be monitored at all hours of the day, so users or members are expected to follow what is set out in this policy and any other specific group guidelines. Please contact the designated administrator of the site if you notice anything that could be in violation of this policy or the group guidelines. See "Reporting" below for more information on the process for raising concerns.

### **Personal Responsibility**

You are personally responsible for the content you publish on social media, blogs, wikis or any other form of user-generated media. Very few people are official spokespeople for College, so if posting

content related to Reuben College, it has to be clear you are speaking for yourself and not for the College. Reuben is a heterogeneous community with diverse sensitivities. Please think carefully about whether your post might be misinterpreted.

Members should respect the different backgrounds, identities, and beliefs of other members, and the values of freedom of expression and academic debate which are at the heart of a thriving College and University community. Please show consideration to other members of the College community when interacting online. For anything that could constitute a welfare, diversity or equality issue, please contact the Welfare dean ([welfare.dean@reuben.ox.ac.uk](mailto:welfare.dean@reuben.ox.ac.uk)) or the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion ([edi.champion@reuben.ox.ac.uk](mailto:edi.champion@reuben.ox.ac.uk)).

Remember that future employers or academic institutions usually check an applicant's social media/online public comments before making employment or admissions decisions.

### **Reporting**

Anybody may report content on Official Channels, sites under the GCR's remit or on unofficial channels which is:

- a) Offensive or derogatory relating to sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief or age;
- b) Intentionally meant to hurt, offend or denigrate an individual, and/or;
- c) Illegal under British Law

In the first instance this should be notified to the communications manager (for Official Channels), the designated GCR administrator (for accounts falling under the GCR's remit), or the administrator of the site (for unofficial channels). In each case this person (referred to going forward as the 'Administrator') will:

- decide whether or not the post should be deleted and/or other action taken;
- decide whether to seek advice from the Deans(s) and/or Senior Tutor;
- record all such notifications (including taking a record of the content, e.g. by taking a screenshot) and actions taken; and
- notify the reporter of their decision/actions as soon as possible.

When content is reported, Administrators are encouraged to lock posts from further commenting as a precaution, (and potentially) to avoid having to take further action. In deciding whether or not to delete posts the Administrator must balance the principles of this policy with the need to protect freedom of expression.

### **Complaints procedure**

Any member of College who wishes to challenge a decision of an Administrator under the previous section should record the post and then submit the record with a formal complaint to the Senior

Tutor or Dean(s). Anonymous complainants or complaints made on behalf of someone else who is anonymous will not usually be allowed.

The Senior Tutor, or the Dean(s), will follow Stage 2 of the Reuben College Complaints procedure in investigating the complaint. Where possible and appropriate the Senior Tutor or Dean(s) will liaise with the relevant Administrator and complainant to reach an agreed solution.

The complainant may seek a review of the Senior Tutor or Dean(s)' decision which will be carried out in accordance with Stage 3 of the Reuben College Complaints procedure, save that the Reviewer will always be the President, unless the President is conflicted or unavailable.

Complaints have to be made via the formal complaints procedure - complaints made on social media will not be investigated.

### **Non college affiliated accounts**

It is not the role of Reuben College to police the social media comments of its members' private accounts or on public accounts which are not affiliated to the College, particularly given the importance of safeguarding freedom of expression. However, there are instances where a member's use of social media may lead to disciplinary action. For example, if social media posts are directed at a named individual, or group of individuals, or those who are readily identifiable, and reasonably likely to cause them distress or concern for their safety or welfare, they may constitute harassment. In such cases, the relevant procedures to follow are detailed in the College's Harassment Policy and Student Disciplinary Procedure.