

Guidelines for social media use

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Introduction

1.1 The nature of social media

Social media is no longer seen as just another marketing channel, but nor is it simply a means of communication between a limited number of people. The both public and interactive nature of this form of communication makes it very different from, for example, a website or email communication.

Like a website, social media networks are (generally) public. Opinions or content that are shared using social media can easily end up being seen by a broad spectrum of people all around the world. Unlike a static website however, social media tools allow users to create, share and respond to content themselves, usually with little or no technical knowledge. It is this public communication and sharing that makes social media so unique – and it makes it easy for others to talk and hear about us as a University.

Along with the opportunities this creates for us comes a level of responsibility. We need to be aware that anything we say or do online (and ‘we’ includes any individual associated with the University) can potentially reach a large number of people and be subject to public response. Indeed, our actions offline are now also subject to public scrutiny via social media channels. In addition, there are new and demanding expectations of us in the connected online world. If we establish a particular social media profile, followers of that profile expect to be able to contact us, and receive a prompt response, using this channel – whenever it is convenient for them. Even where we do not have a profile established in a particular area, there is an increased expectation for us to do so, thereby opening up the conversation.

Managing an organisation’s social networking channels effectively requires some degree of:

- understanding of the channel involved and its audience
- commitment to monitoring and responding consistently and regularly
- marketing and communication skills to create and seek out positive opportunities and to deal effectively with negative situations

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to members of University staff who are involved with social media, for its use both on a personal and professional basis. The guidelines will be divided into two main sections:

Part A Social media for professional use

This section is aimed at those currently using, or planning to use, social media to represent the work of the University in some way. The section aims to provide advice on content creation, monitoring and moderation, and to ensure a consistent look, feel and tone of voice across all the University’s social profiles. It also contains how-to guides on using Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn in a professional capacity.

Part B Social media for personal use

This section provides best practice for those working for the University who have a social media presence in a personal capacity. It includes advice on privacy and ways to use social media for student interaction without compromising the personal privacy of either party.

Part A

Social media for professional use

2.1 Scope of this section

Although most of the advice set out in these guidelines can be applied throughout social media, the main focus will be on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn. Specific guidance will be given on how to set up and maintain a professional presence on these channels.

2.2 Deciding whether to set up a channel

If you are planning to set up a new social media channel, consider the following:

- **Aim**
What is the reason for setting up a channel? Is this the best way to facilitate communication with your chosen audience? Which channel is the most appropriate for you? These guidelines should help you to answer some of these questions
- **Scope**
What area(s) will your channel cover? Is this being covered elsewhere within the University? It is not usually appropriate to communicate publicly at faculty level – if this applies to you, consider a channel for an academic unit or subject area instead
- **Content**
Social media works best when you're able to provide regular and interesting content for your audience. Consider whether you will be able to provide consistent, relevant content on a regular basis. Further guidance on this is set out later in this document
- **Moderation**
Your channel should be moderated frequently (at least once per day) to remove unwanted content generated by other users (such as spam or profanities). More advice can be found below
- **Response**
In addition to moderation, social media channels should be regularly monitored for any comments or questions requiring response. Social media is a two-way channel of communication – be prepared to respond to others as well as delivering your own content
- **Resource**
In order to effectively manage content, moderation and response as outlined above, you will need to ensure that you have regular and consistent resource available. This is likely to include out of hours work such as evenings and weekends, particularly as your profile evolves and grows
- **Crisis management**
As the owner of a social media channel, you may find yourself in a position where you are required to respond to crises. These situations may vary in significance; however large or small the issue, it is important to uphold the University's reputation by dealing with crises swiftly and effectively. Public response is usually expected – seek assistance from the Communications and Marketing team if ever you're unsure how to respond publicly to a difficult situation or comment
- **Promotion/integration**
Consider how you will promote your new channel to your audiences and how it will be integrated with your other communication channels. It is likely that your social channel will

relate to an existing website; make sure that your current web visitors know where to find your new network and that its content is relevant to the subject matter of your website

- Evaluation

Think about how you will measure the success of your new channel, based on your initial objectives. Most networks offer some form of analytical data – consider which metrics will be relevant for you.

2.3 Tone of voice, look and feel

The tone of voice we use on social media differs slightly from the way we write in our prospectus, on our website or most other official forms of communication. While the brand guidelines are still followed, social media lends itself to a lighter, more colloquial tone. The balance is important – we should aim to be professional, authoritative and approachable. The below examples illustrate how this might be achieved:

It's the second day of winter graduation today – well done to all of you! We'd love to share your day with our Facebook fans, so please post your photos to this page.

We've been working on some research to significantly speed up the time a DNA test takes, which comes with a range of benefits. Read the full story www.southampton.ac.uk

Merry Christmas everyone! Sending warm festive wishes from your favourite university. See you in the New Year!

For more examples of the tone of voice we use on social media, visit our Twitter profile [@unisouthampton](https://twitter.com/unisouthampton) or Facebook page www.facebook.com/unisouthampton

In general, the look and feel of your social channel will be largely determined by the channel itself. However, there are some aspects where the University advises consistency across all of our social media profiles.

As the size and shape of the university logo does not always work well as an online profile image, we use the 'S' logo instead. This comes in a variety of colours. The marine blue is reserved for corporate channels, but any of the other colours (including the light blue shown on the right) can be used as a profile photo when representing the University on social media. The original artwork can be obtained from the Communications and Marketing team. You can see these in use on the 'unisouthampton' Facebook and Twitter profiles.



As an alternative to the 'S' logo, you can choose a relevant image instead. As referenced in the university brand guidelines, sub-brands are not permitted. Therefore, avoid using unapproved logos or branding.

2.4 Content and regularity of posting

If you're setting up a social media profile, it's a good idea to have a basic content schedule in place. This can be flexible – you won't always be able to plan for unexpected news and events that you might want to post, for example. A well-thought-out social channel should work seamlessly with the other communication channels to which it relates. If you already have a website (or offline marketing material) for your subject area, your social network(s) should complement its content. As mentioned above, your tone of voice is likely to be a little warmer and more approachable than on more traditional channels, but the subject matter should remain clear. You

might wish to include behind-the-scenes type content, focusing on the people and personalities behind the brand, department or subject.

2.4.1 Facebook

For Facebook, try to plan one to two updates per week in the first instance. These should include a good mix of basic text posts, photos, video, links and questions. As your page grows, you might want to increase the frequency of your new content. Take care not to post too much though, as this could lead your fans to unsubscribe from your posts or even Unlike your page. A well-established page can deliver four or five quality, varied updates each week, but don't be afraid to limit this to one or two when you're starting out. The below examples illustrate the kind of variety you might want to consider.



A simple text update, with a link to another Facebook page relevant to the story



An update consisting of a photo album upload



An update containing a link

Polls can be a great way to engage with your fans on Facebook – provide a few sample answers using the Questions function and make it quick and easy for them to respond. You can have fun with polls – but try to keep the content relevant to the subject of your page as much as possible.

Photos are one of the most beneficial ways to engage with your fans on Facebook and are likely to attract more likes and comments than a text post alone. Add them to your stories to give them life and colour.

2.4.2 Twitter

Use Twitter to talk to others – you can comment on something you’ve seen (as long as it relates to the profile you’re tweeting from), or suggest links to others. If your Twitter profile is presented as an official university channel (eg its focus is a particular subject area, department etc), it is usually best to avoid giving opinions. You can use a personal Twitter profile for this (see Part B of this document). Twitter is a great way to keep your followers up to date with what is happening in your particular area. It is generally less content-rich, making it easy to post simple text updates on a regular basis. If you’re an active Twitter user, you will find that this starts to come quite naturally – keep your followers interested by posting on a regular basis. Unlike Facebook, on Twitter you can post several times a day without this feeling too ‘spammy’ for your followers – just keep your content relevant and interesting. Once your profile is more established, try not to go longer than a few days without an update.

For Twitter, relevant stories and news work best. Avoid posting links to static web content, unless it’s relevant to something you’re talking about. Try to post stories or links that are recent – if you’re talking about something in the news or an event, try to tweet about it the same or following day. Use a link shortener (automatic on twitter.com) to avoid long, messy links within your tweets and to give more room for text. You can use a free, web-based link shortener such as [bitly.com](http://bit.ly) if you prefer – this site also offers analytics to show you how many people clicked on your link. Shortened links are now the standard on Twitter and users will happily click on links they don’t recognise, if they are from a source they trust such as the University. An example of a shortened link is <http://bit.ly/zee8y4>

Some examples of tweets sent from the @unisouthampton channel are below.



2.4.3 YouTube

If you're using YouTube, consider the facilities and resource available to you and how often you might be able to create new content. The central Communications and Marketing team can advise on suppliers of video production. There is less emphasis on regularity of new content on YouTube – concentrate on quality videos that will be of interest to your chosen audience. You can link to each video from a relevant website or other social channel to highlight a particular event or story. To give an idea of what an established profile might look like, the University's main YouTube channel can be found at www.youtube.com/sotoncomms

2.4.4 LinkedIn

LinkedIn is predominantly a professional channel. Use this if you are looking to make a connection between a group of professionals (for example, alumni of a particular subject). If you are planning to run your own group, ensure you post content on a reasonably regular basis that is of interest to the audience you wish to target. Others will contribute to the discussion and provide discussion topics of their own – if you're representing the University, try to ensure that yours is the leading, authoritative voice. The content you share (which may take the form of a question, discussion topic, link, presentation and so on) should be of a professional nature and relate to the title and objectives of the group. Maintaining a level of professionalism and relevance should encourage other like-minded people to join and participate in your group. Bear in mind that the standard group settings on LinkedIn will send an email to every group member whenever a new discussion begins or a comment is made – ensure that your content is interesting and worth reading.

2.5 Moderation

Once you've set up your social channel, you will need to monitor this on a regular basis. Ideally you'll moderate every day – and as your audience gets larger, this should include evenings and weekends. Look out for the following on your page:

- Advertising/spam
Most applicable to Facebook, this can take on varied forms, from classified-type ads posted by students, to local businesses, to spam from completely unrelated companies. In general, university Facebook pages (or other social channels) are not considered to be a suitable outlet for this type of activity. Allowing one or two can lead to an inconsistent approach; allowing many more could result in your well-crafted posts being hidden amongst a number of less valuable ones. For each individual post in question, you can choose to either hide the inappropriate content from your fans (a soft approach), or delete it altogether. If a particular advertiser persists in posting on your page, you can ban them from posting to your page in future

- Profanities/ offensive content
This may seem obvious, but ensure you delete posts containing extreme profanities or hateful language. The significance here is the amount of time a post such as this spends sitting at the top of your page. Check as regularly as you can to prevent this. This is again most applicable to Facebook – YouTube and LinkedIn have ways to avoid this. On Twitter, if an individual is repeatedly posting offensive or inappropriate messages directed towards your channel, you can report them for breach of Twitter’s terms and conditions of use
Note: this does not include all negative feedback, only where it contains offensive language or abuse. If a post is negative about your channel or field of work, this should be dealt with separately (see Response, below)
- Irrelevant content
This can cover a huge range of content too broad to list here. If someone posts an update that does not relate to your page in any way, assuming it is not offensive or harmful, the easiest thing to do (on Facebook) is to hide the post. On Twitter, you can simply ignore these kinds of messages, and on YouTube you can prevent them from being published in the first place (depending on your settings). If an individual persists in posting irrelevant content to your channel, you can take further action (such as banning or reporting them).

2.6 Response

2.6.1 Positive feedback

As a rule, most of the feedback you receive on your channel will (or should) be positive. There are several ways to respond in order to make the most of positive feedback:

- Like
This is a very quick and easy way to show your appreciation of a post made by someone else, and is applicable on Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn. Try to avoid liking your own content though, as this can appear over-enthusiastic
- Comment
If you wish to appear particularly friendly, you can comment on a positive post, thanking the originator or adding something to the discussion. The ability to comment and respond to others is applicable to all channels and is one of the cornerstones of successful social media management
- Share / retweet
If someone posts something worth telling others about, you can share it with your channel’s followers. This is particularly prevalent on Twitter in the form of retweeting an interesting or complimentary tweet. The ability for a user to retweet content quickly and easily to followers is the main reason that messages are distributed all around the world so quickly on Twitter

2.6.2 Questions and queries

Try to deal with questions as swiftly as possible. Given the nature of social media, your followers are likely to expect a response within 24 hours (ideally faster). This highlights the requirement to monitor your channel regularly. If you do not have the answer, acknowledge the question and let the enquirer know that you will answer it as soon as possible. Do not be afraid to take the question offline if it’s complicated to answer – it’s fine to provide them with an email address or telephone number where they can get more information.

You may often be asked questions that are related to another area of the University – rather than ignore them, try to point them to another Facebook page, web address or email address that is applicable to their query. This approach is usually best even if you know the answer, as it will discourage others from using your channel as a general information point (remember that your

responses are all public and can be viewed by your followers or anyone who visits your profile). Try to stick to the subject of your channel when answering queries directly.

2.6.3 Negative feedback

From time to time, you will come across negative feedback directed towards your specific channel, field of work or even the University as a whole. As a rule, the two least effective actions you can take when faced with negative feedback on a social media channel are a) ignore it and b) delete it. (The exception to this is offensive or harmful content, see Moderation above.)

Negative comments left unanswered can appear that we are not interested, not capable of a response or failing to monitor the channel. If the topic is particularly controversial, ignoring it can lead to others joining the discussion and potentially escalating the problem. Similarly, deleting such posts does not usually solve the problem either. If the individual wishes to make a point, they will repeat it – or worse, take their issue elsewhere, making it more widespread. Deleting an unwelcome post will also affect your integrity as a channel operator and could have an effect on the reputation of the University.

Instead, consider the following:

- Acknowledge the comment as soon as you're aware of it. If it can be dealt with there and then, try to answer in a way that addresses the concerns and politely closes the discussion.
- If it's a specific or more complex issue, take it offline if possible. You can do this by asking the originator to email the appropriate department or contact (this may be you).
- If it's a wider issue that requires a public response (to let your followers know how it was dealt with), carefully craft your reply. If it is potentially controversial, consider how you might respond if talking to the media. If in any doubt, contact the Communications and Marketing team for advice using the email address at the bottom of the page.

The following examples demonstrate different types of issue that you might face when operating a social media channel.

Example one

Originator: I don't think your subject is particularly relevant to today's society. Why doesn't the University offer more courses in business and media related subjects?

Response: Thank you for your message. Our students, researchers and graduates contribute to society in a number of ways, and we think SubjectName is as relevant to today's society as ever. You can see examples of our great work here (insert link). In addition, the University of Southampton offers courses in over 65 subjects, determined by demand from prospective students. You can find out more about our undergraduate degree programmes here <http://www.soton.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/2012/index.shtml>.

The above example illustrates how you might deal with a negative viewpoint, while also taking the opportunity to draw attention to the University's strengths.

Example two

Originator: I've been waiting for ages for a reply to an email I sent you. The University is useless at responding in a timely way.

This is an example of a specific issue, but also a wider one, as the user has made a general claim against the University. Consider a response along the following lines:

Response: We are sorry to hear that you have found it difficult to reach us. We aim to answer all emails in xx days (check facts first). Please forward your original message to us directly at youraddress@soton.ac.uk so we can follow this up on your behalf.

Apologise for any difficulty the user has faced, let them know that you plan to rectify the problem and also that there is a system in place to ensure that this is not a regular occurrence.

The below example illustrates a negative comment that could potentially be posted on your social channel, but relates to the University as a whole.

Example three

Originator: I heard that next year's tuition fees will prevent those of us who are less well off from studying SubjectName at university. What are you doing about this?

This is an example of an issue that affects people on a national level, and depending on the nature of your channel, you can choose how to respond to this.

Response: Thank you for contacting us. The University's fees will change in 2012 according to new governmental funding arrangements. These will not be repayable by graduates until they earn £21,000 a year and we have a number of measures in place to assist students from low-income households such as our tapered fee waiver. We also offer an annual credit to all undergraduate students. You can find out more about student finance here http://www.soton.ac.uk/study/feesandfunding/feesandfunding_2012.html

The above is a sample statement – if you are faced with broad issues such as this, you can contact the Communications and Marketing team (or other relevant department) for an appropriate statement. Alternatively, you might wish to redirect the comment elsewhere – although it is always preferable to answer directly if you are able. If you plan to redirect the query, consider a response such as the following:

Alternative response: Thanks very much for your message. We're going to pass this on to the main university channel for response, as this page/profile is specifically for SubjectName.'
(Tag or mention the main University page in your post, to ensure this is seen. Follow up offline with the Communications and Marketing team if necessary.)

The above example relates to a very broad issue that should be dealt with by the University's corporate communication channels. You can expect that a statement (similar in content to the first response above) would have been publicly issued by the University. In these cases, you can quote the official statement as necessary for your response.

Remember that you are seen to be representing the University and any comment you make on a social channel can be perceived as such. If you receive negative feedback on your channel and are in doubt about how to respond, contact the Communications and Marketing team for advice as soon as you are aware of the issue.

2.7 Crisis management

Crisis management refers to how you deal with situations that have emerged either online or offline, that might potentially impact the operation and/or reputation of the University (or a division within it). Fortunately, these are a relatively rare occurrence for the University – however it is practical to be prepared for when these situations may arise. Examples of this might be:

- Negative press stories around your specific faculty or subject area
- External factors affecting the University (for example tuition fees, extreme weather conditions, political factors)
- Issues arising from your social channel – for example content posted in error or which causes an unexpected negative reaction

If you're responsible for managing a crisis, use social media to publish a public response as soon as possible. Your statement should aim to diffuse the situation quickly and effectively, with minimal impact on the University as a whole. Where necessary, make apologies, but consider liability before publishing an apology for a situation (if in doubt, you can use language like 'We apologise for any inconvenience caused'). Contact the Communications and Marketing team for advice on how to compose your statement.

2.8 Promotion and integration

There should be a seamless link between the content of your new social network and your other communication channels, so use your other channels to promote your new one. This works well both online and offline, although online channels have the advantage of allowing a one-click link through to your channel. You can facilitate this by using the official logo icons downloadable from the network's owner (links to where to find these are provided in the How-to sections of this guide). For offline materials, you may need to provide the URL of your new social channel to help users to find you. This is provided automatically for most social media channels and usually consists of the social network's home URL (eg www.youtube.com) followed by the / symbol and your channel name (eg. /sotoncomms), to form the full link to your page (www.youtube.com/sotoncomms). For Twitter, you can simply provide your Twitter username with an '@' symbol (eg @unisouthampton). For Facebook, you'll need to create a vanity URL, which is explained in the How-to: Facebook section of this guide.

How-to guides

The following practical guides are designed to help you set up your social media channel for the first time. Existing knowledge of each channel at a personal level is assumed; it is recommended that you take some time to familiarise yourself with your chosen network and become a regular user before consideration is given to creating a professional profile. Having this understanding will also help you to establish which platform is the most appropriate for your objectives.

3.1 How-to: Facebook page

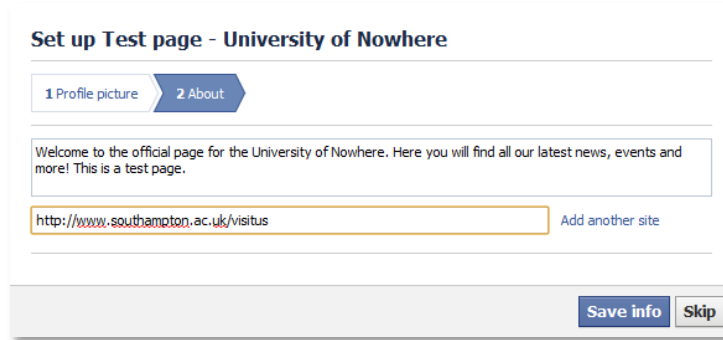
3.1.1 Basic set-up

As stated above, this guide assumes a basic to intermediate level of understanding of Facebook for personal use.

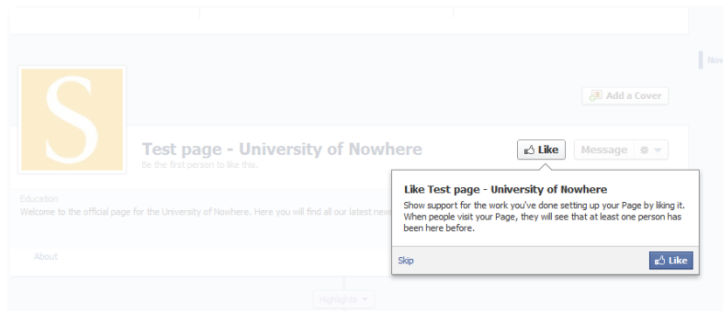
- i. In order to create your page for the first time, log in as normal and go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php> (you can also find this link at the very bottom of most pages on Facebook)
- ii. Choose your page type, for example 'Company, organisation or institution'
- iii. Choose your category, for example 'Education'
- iv. In 'Company Name', write the name of your page. Try to avoid names that are too long. If the page is to represent a University department, subject or similar, include University of Southampton in the title
- v. Read and agree to the terms and click 'Get started'. You'll then move on to Facebook's step-by-step process
- vi. (Step 1) Upload an image for your profile photo. If your page represents an area or department of the University (and is the official or main page for that area), use the University 'S' logo. This comes in a range of brand colours for you to choose from and is available from the Communications and Marketing team via the email address at the bottom of the page. Your profile image will appear in the top left-hand corner of your page and will also be your thumbnail image whenever you interact as your page on Facebook. For a perfect fit, choose an image sized to 180 x 180 square. Continue when you're happy with the image (you can change it later)



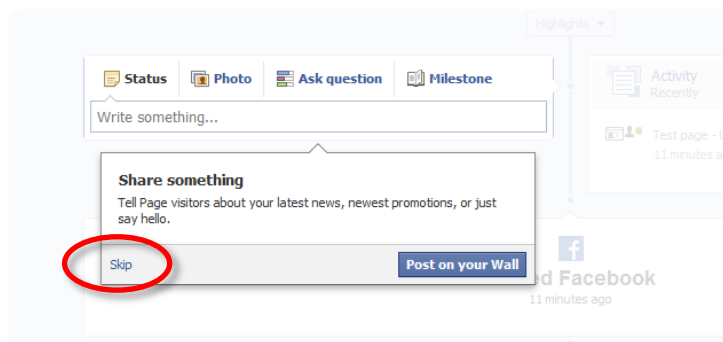
- vii. (Step 2) Add the website address (ideally an official university one) that corresponds with your Facebook page. In the 'About' field, add a short welcome message that sums up the objectives of your page. Save info when ready



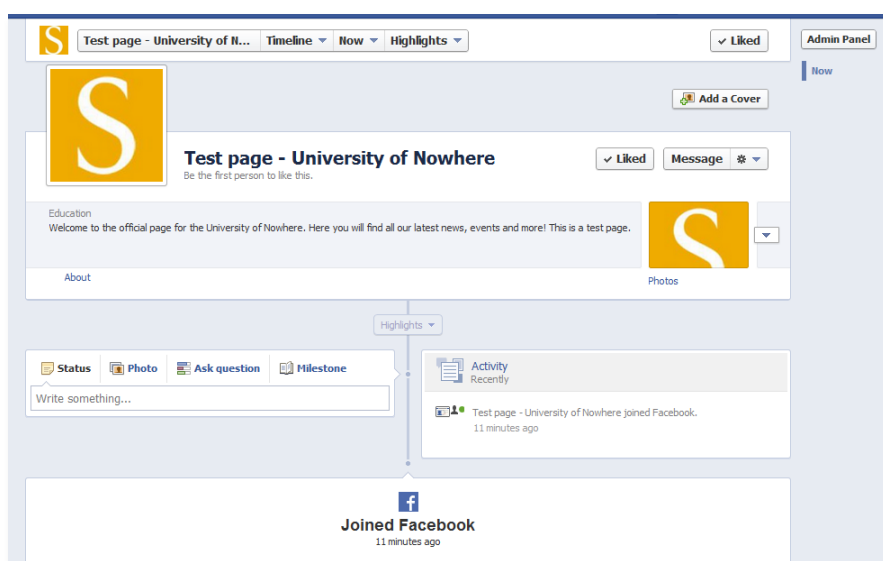
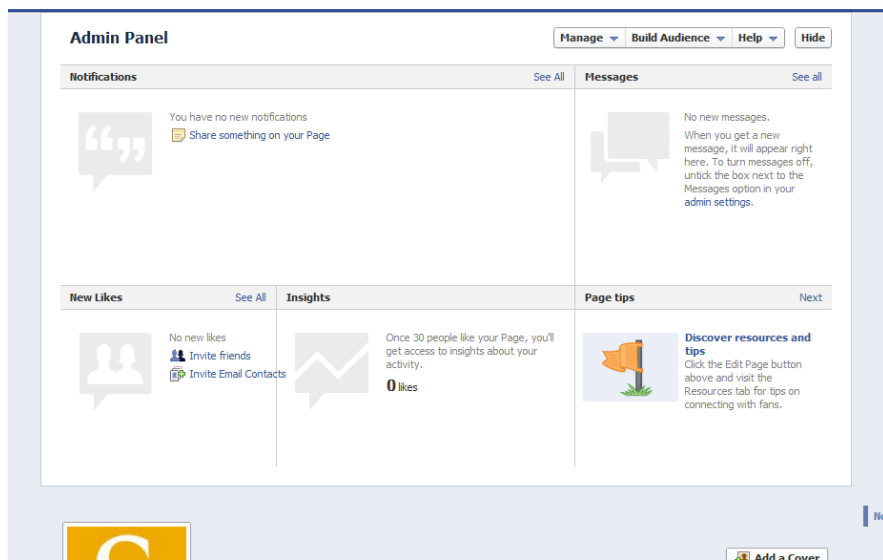
- viii. You are now encouraged to Like your page. You should always do this



- ix. Facebook now encourages you to add fans to your page by inviting your friends and email contacts. As your page is not fully set up yet, you may prefer to skip this step for now. Click Next for both 'Invite your friends' and 'Invite your email contacts'. Then, Skip 'Share something' – you can do this when there is content on your page



- x. You should now see your admin panel at the top of the page, with your new page beneath it:



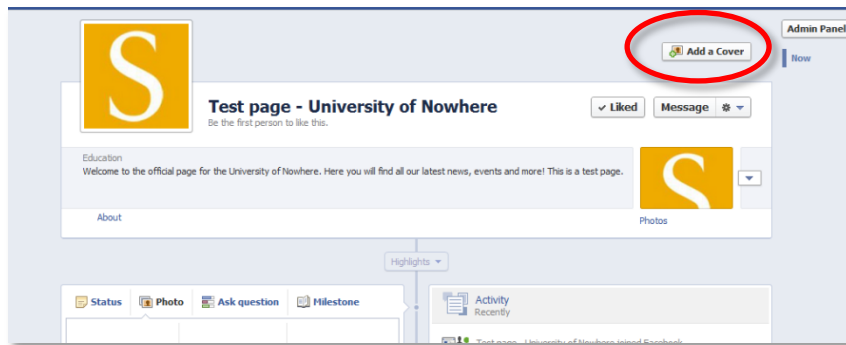
The Admin Panel is a feature of Facebook Timeline for Pages, and can only be seen by those who are administrators of the page (at the moment, that's just you). Visitors to your page will see everything below the Admin Panel. You can choose to hide the panel at any time by clicking 'Hide' in the top right-hand corner. Click on 'Admin Panel' to show it again.

Congratulations – your page is now live. You can follow Facebook's instructions to add fans to your page and start sharing.

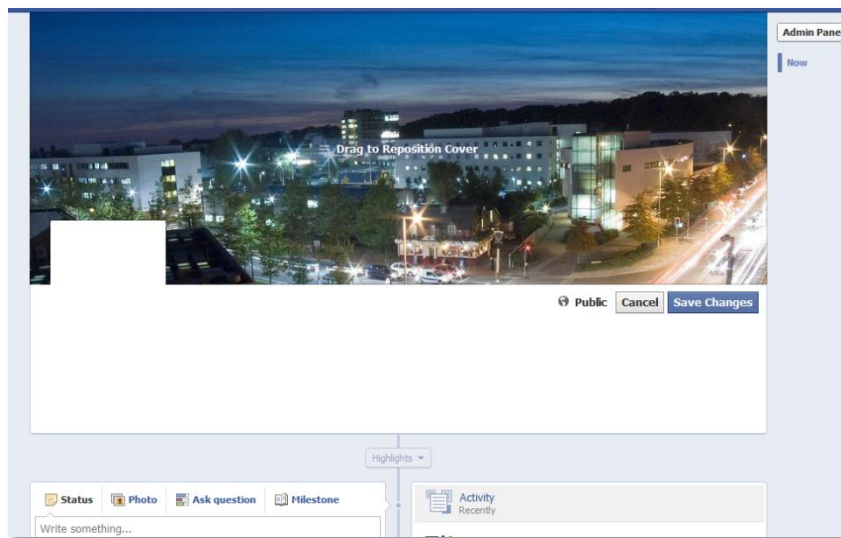
3.1.2 Next steps

Get the most from your page by following these next steps.

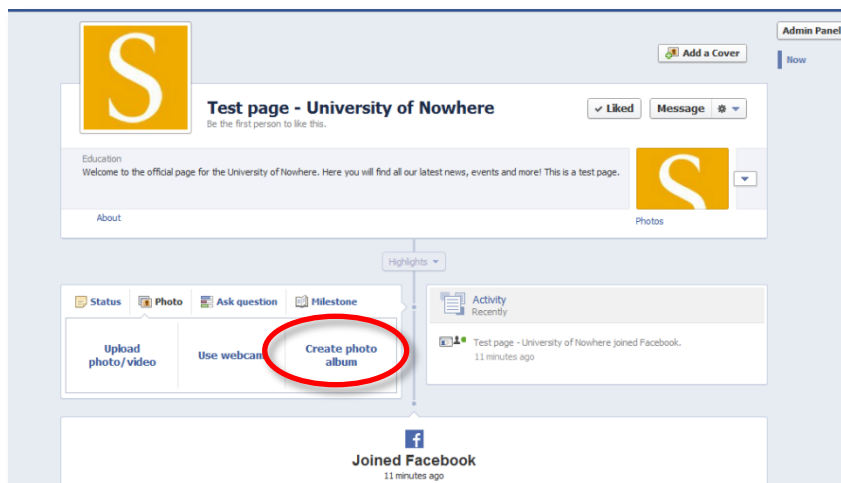
- i. Now that your page is live, make it more interesting by adding photos. Start with the cover photo – this should be an iconic image for your brand or area and will be the first thing a visitor sees when they view your page. Click on 'Add a cover' to upload your photo



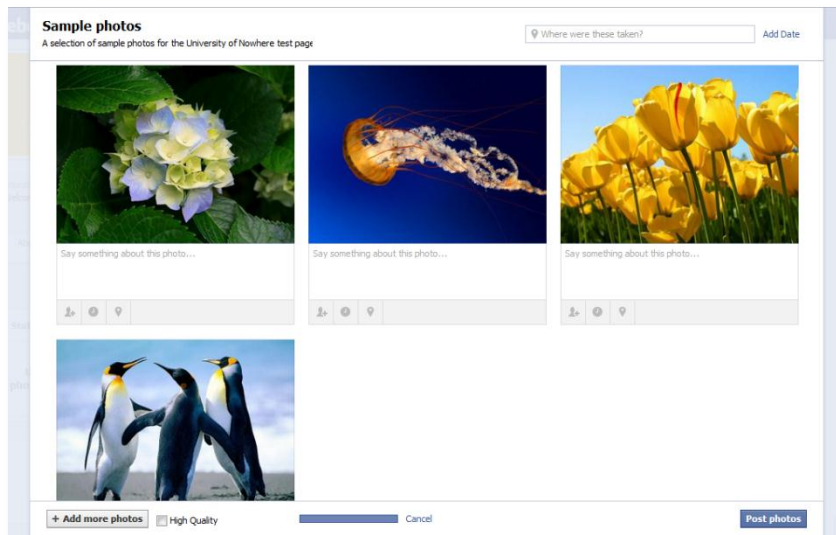
Choose an image (or more likely resize an existing one) that is 850 x 315 pixels (or of an equivalent ratio) for best effect – the cover image size is panoramic style. Click on Save changes when you are happy with your image



- ii. You can add more photos to your Timeline by clicking on Photo within a status update and creating an album

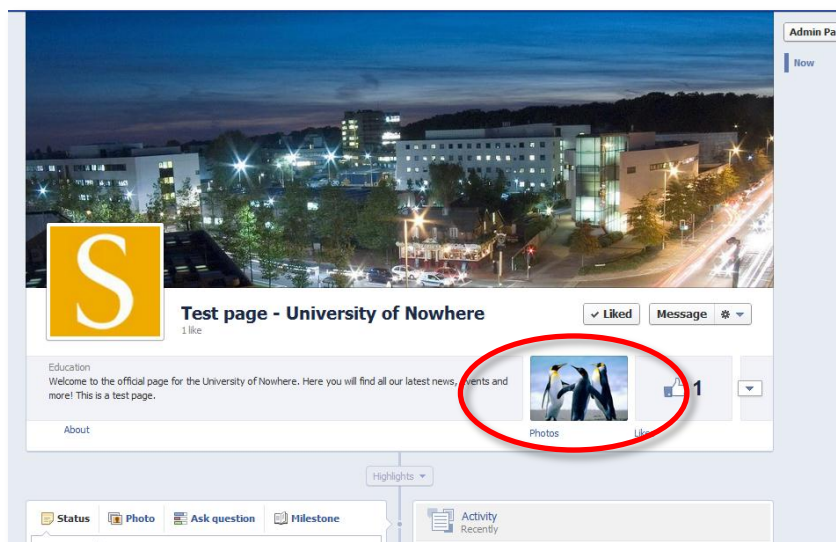


Add photos that are relevant to your page from your computer or network files. You can add a title and description to the album at the top left of the page



Click 'Post photos' when you're happy with the album

- iii. When you visit your Timeline again, you'll see that the photos have been added to the Timeline, and the most recently added photo can be seen on the Photos tab beneath the cover photo



- iv. Create a schedule of future status updates, to keep your page fresh and varied. As previously mentioned, this will be flexible and allow you to post things as they happen as well – but the schedule is there as a back-up for days when you don't have any news to share
- v. Add detail to your About area. You can do this by clicking on 'Manage' and then 'Edit Page' at the top of the Admin Panel, then clicking Basic Information on the left

Test page - University of Nowhere View Page

Category: Companies & organisations Education [?]

Official Page: Pick a topic [?]

Username: You can now direct people to www.facebook.com/uniofnowhere. [Learn more.](#)

Name: Test page - University of Nowhere

Founded: 1952

Address: Nowhere Road, Nowhereville

City/town:

Postcode:

Note: If you add a valid address, users will be able to see and check in to your page using Facebook Places. It may take a few hours for our system to process the address.

About: Welcome to the official page for the University of Nowhere. Here you will find all

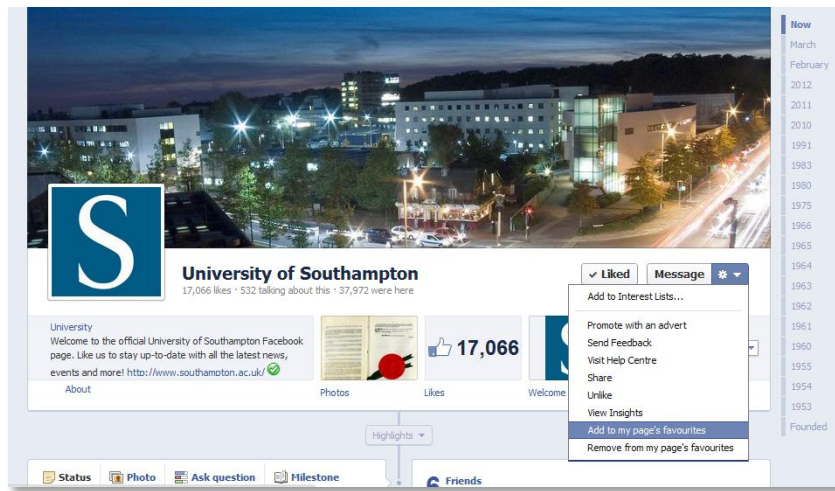
Description:

Mission:

Save your changes at the bottom when you're happy with the update. Viewers of your page will see this information when they click on 'About' within the top section of your Timeline



- vi. Add other pages to your page's favourites, such as the main university page. This will display a link to that page on your own, and will help to illustrate that your page is an official one. You can add pages by visiting the page you wish to add (eg www.facebook.com/unisouthampton) and clicking 'Add to my page's favourites' using the drop down box under the cover photo, next to the Message box



- vii. Create a vanity URL (Page username). This allows users to find you by typing in an easy-to-remember web address (as opposed to the string of numbers you are given when you first set up). So for example, you might change your page from something like www.facebook.com/pages/Test-page-University-of-Nowhere/244988792244978 to www.facebook.com/uniofnowhere. You can then share this address with others to help them to find your page

Learn how to change your page's username here <http://www.facebook.com/username/>
- viii. Link to your page from your website and other areas. You can download the official 'Like' button and 'f' logo directly from Facebook here:
<http://www.facebook.com/brandpermissions/logos.php>
- ix. If you want to hide or delete unwanted posts made by others in the Recent Posts by Others section of your Timeline (for the reasons set out in 2.5 Moderation above), click on 'See all' within this section, hover over the right-hand corner of the post and click on the icon that appears. You can then choose to hide or delete the post. If necessary, you can also ban the poster from interacting on your Wall in future – this option appears after you choose 'Delete post...' Note that the Recent Posts by Others section will not appear until others have posted on your Timeline
- x. If you have a smartphone, download the Facebook app to monitor your page on the move
- xi. Explore Facebook's Insights (from the Admin Panel) to see detailed information about your content and users

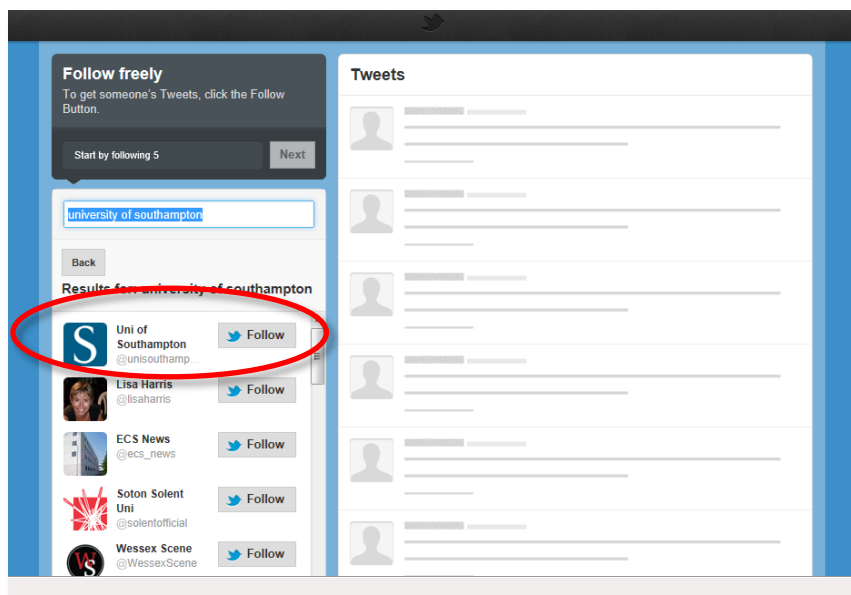
For more guidance on content, moderation and response, refer to Section 2 of this document.

3.2 How-to: Twitter profile

3.2.1 Basic set-up

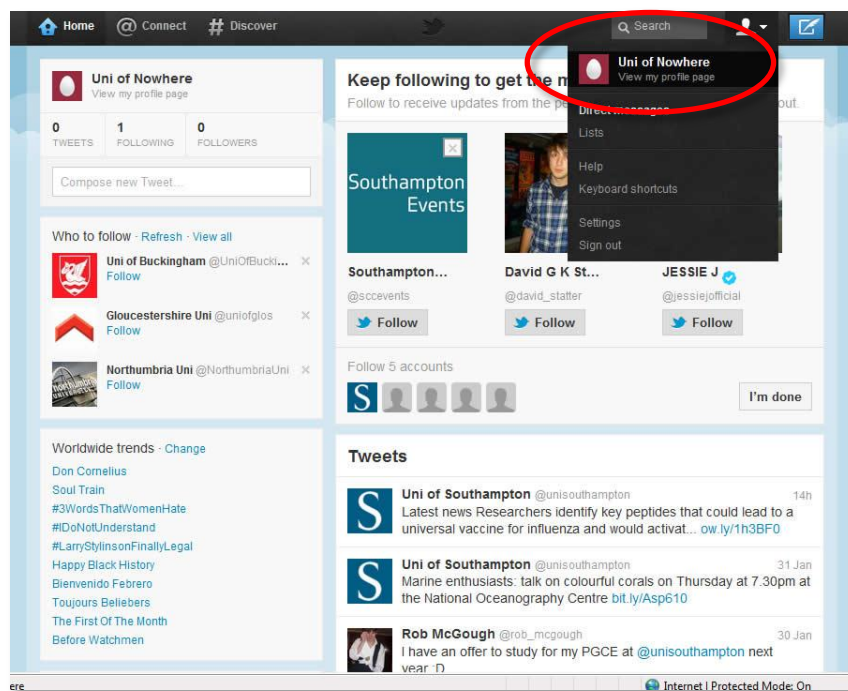
This guide assumes an existing basic knowledge of Twitter. Unlike Facebook, you do not need to have your own personal Twitter profile in order to set up a professional one. However, some previous experience on a personal level will increase the chances of success when you set up your new profile.

- i. Go to www.twitter.com and fill in the basic sign up information. You might need to get creative with your profile name, as you are only given 20 characters. This name can include spaces and is the equivalent of your real name if you were setting up a personal profile. It does not have to be unique to you on Twitter. Click 'Sign up' when you're ready
- ii. Twitter will suggest a username for you based on your 'full name' – this is your opportunity to change it. This name will be unique to you on Twitter – try to choose something that best sums up your department or area. You only have 15 characters for this one. Click on 'Create my account'
- iii. You are now shown a brief tutorial to help you get started with Twitter. You can choose to follow people or organisations of interest to your page – search using your best description of them (this is an example of why a relevant username and full name are important). For example, a search for University of Southampton should deliver the result Uni of Southampton, with the username @unisouthampton – this is the official Twitter profile for the University



You can also search for people using email addresses in your contact list. Click on 'Done' when you've finished following. The tweets of those you are following will appear on the right-hand side of your Twitter home page

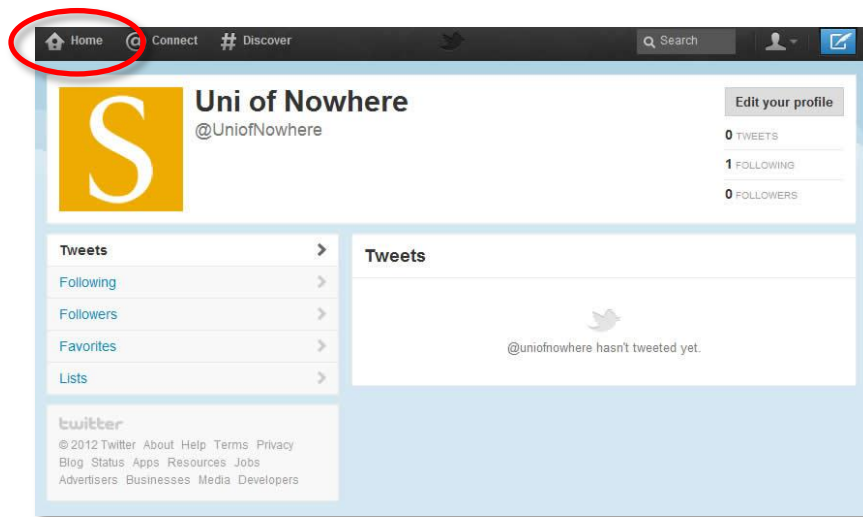
- iv. To change your profile image, click on your profile in the top right corner of the page



Click on the photo to change it



If your page represents an area or department of the University (and is the official or main page for that area), use the University 'S' logo. This comes in a range of brand colours for you to choose from and is available from the Communications and Marketing team. Your profile image will appear in the top left-hand corner of your profile page and will also be your thumbnail image whenever you interact with others on Twitter. Continue when you're happy with the image (you can change it later)



Click on Home and you're now ready to start tweeting – remember each tweet must be within 140 characters



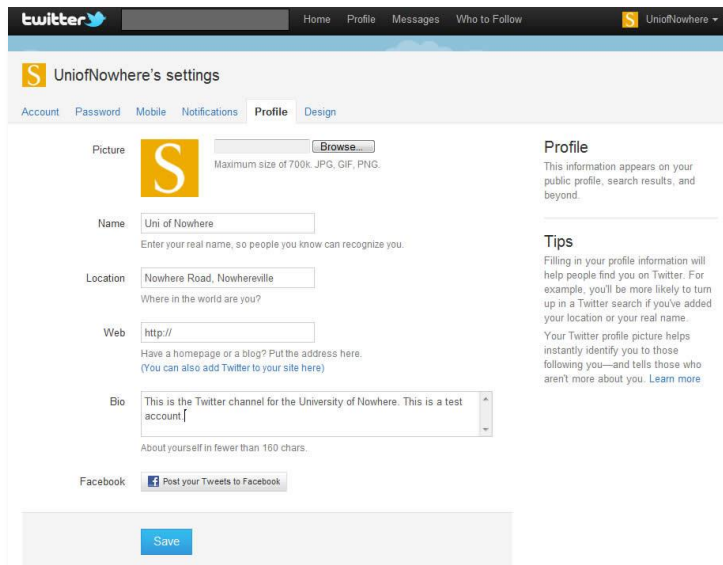
3.2.2 Next steps

- i. If you're tweeting about someone else who is on Twitter, use the opportunity to mention them. You can do this by writing the '@' symbol followed by their Twitter username. For example, if you want to tweet about a BBC news article, write @BBCnews within your tweet (the BBC has a number of Twitter accounts, each with a slightly different purpose). This will enable the person or organisation involved to see your tweet within their own mentions. If you're not sure of their Twitter name, search for them first
- ii. To see when others have mentioned you in a tweet, click on Connect at the top of the page. Your followers will use this method to interact with you, including for questions and queries. This is the main place to check your account on a regular basis. You'll also see when new people follow or retweet you here

- iii. If you see relevant or interesting content from someone you follow (or anyone on Twitter), you can retweet it. This sends the same message out to your followers. This is the main method by which content is shared widely and rapidly on Twitter
- iv. To bring ideas from lots of different people together under one concept, use a hashtag. This enables a word or phrase to be searched for on Twitter and all results found in one place. Hashtags are very simple – just add the '#' symbol to the word or phrase you wish to use. For example, in a tweet about higher education marketing, you might add the hashtag #HEmarketing. You can search beforehand to find out whether there is already an established hashtag for your particular subject, idea or event. Try not to overuse this – one or two hashtags per tweet is enough.



- v. Create or follow lists of people in areas in which you have (or your profile has) a particular interest. This helps you to collate a group of users under one category (for example 'historians') and look at that particular list whenever you want to see tweets from those people. Find out more about how to use lists here <https://support.twitter.com/articles/76460-how-to-use-twitter-lists>
- vi. Edit your profile to add a brief biography, website and location information, if relevant



You can also change your background image by clicking on the 'Design' tab

- vii. If you envisage becoming an advanced Twitter user, you might decide to use a Twitter management tool such as [Hootsuite](#) or [Tweetdeck](#). These can help you to manage your account and allow you to plan and schedule future tweets
- viii. Link to your page from your website and other areas. You can download the official Twitter logos directly from Twitter here: <https://twitter.com/about/resources/logos>
- ix. If you have a smartphone, download the Twitter app to monitor your page on the move

For more guidance on content, moderation and response, refer to Section 2 of this document.

3.3 How-to: YouTube channel

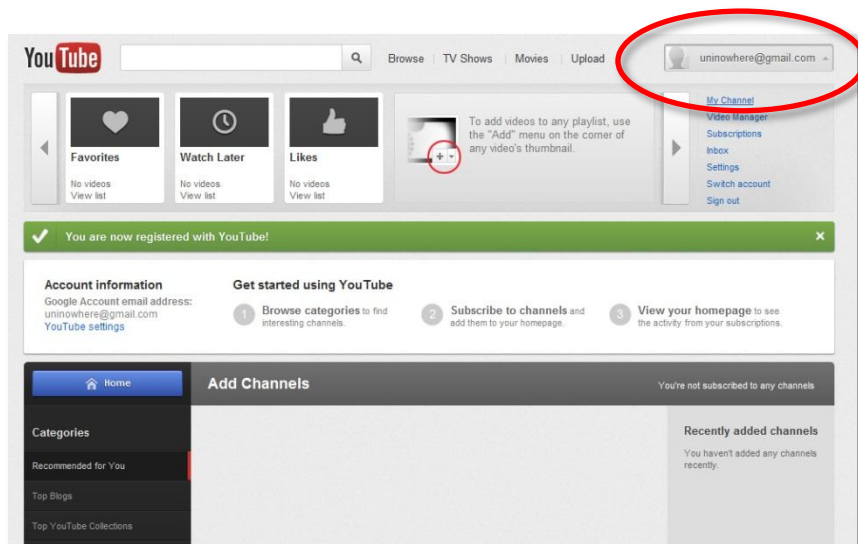
3.3.1 Basic set-up

Having a dedicated YouTube channel for your subject area or department allows you to collate all relevant video content in one place and provides a means to link to these videos from other channels such as your website, other social networks or even print material.

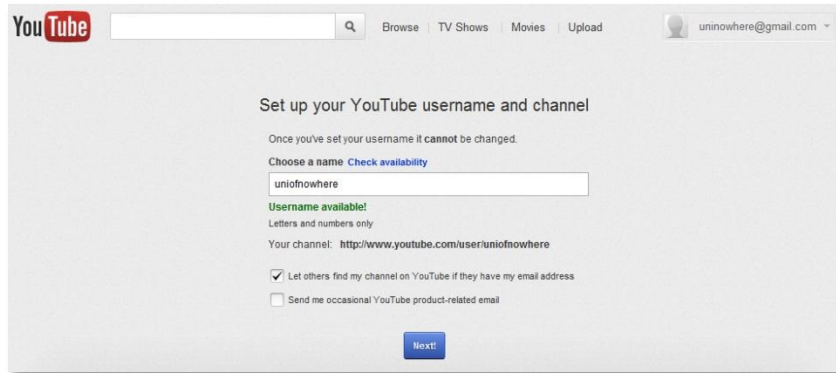
As with Twitter, you do not need to have your own personal YouTube channel in order to set up a professional one, however, previous experience of using YouTube would be beneficial.

As YouTube is part of Google, it is possible to add a YouTube channel to an existing Google account (for example Gmail, Google+), meaning that you sign in once to access all your Google services. If you have an existing account with Google, you might choose to do this. This guide assumes that you are starting a new account.

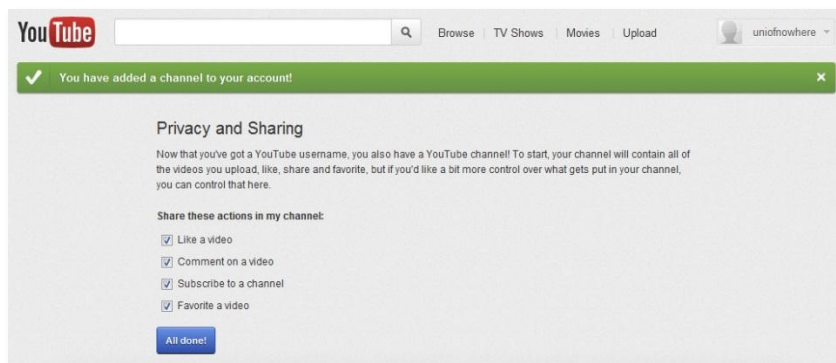
- i. In order to create a YouTube channel, you now need to create a Google account. This will offer other services such as Gmail and Google+ – however this guide focuses on YouTube only. Go to www.youtube.com and click on ‘Create account’ in the top right-hand corner. This will take you the Google Accounts page
- ii. Complete the basic sign up information and click on ‘Next step’ when you’re ready. Now go ‘Back to YouTube’
- iii. In the top right-hand corner of the page, you should see your new Google user name. Click on the box and go to My Channel



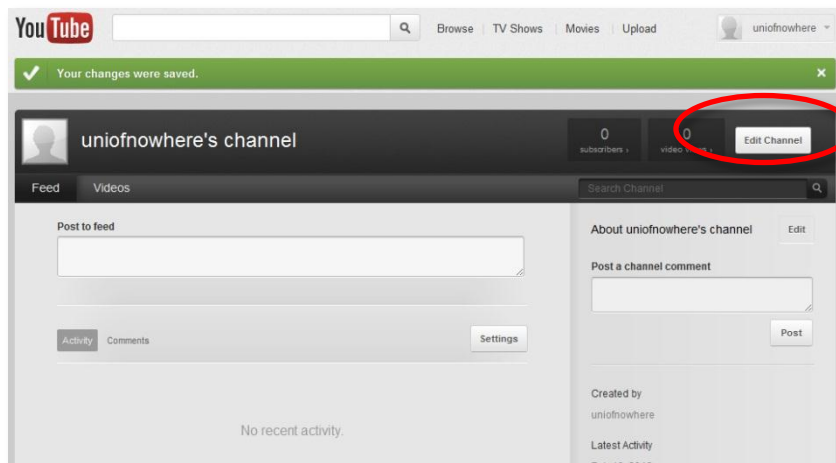
- iv. Choose your desired username and click on ‘Check availability’ to make sure no one else is using it. This name will be unique to you on YouTube – try to choose something that best sums up your department or area. You have 20 characters, which must be letters or numbers (no spaces). For example, for a YouTube channel that represents Music at the University, you might choose ‘unisouthamptonmusic’. Note that this cannot be changed in the future, so make sure you get it right first time. Click on ‘Next’ when you’re ready



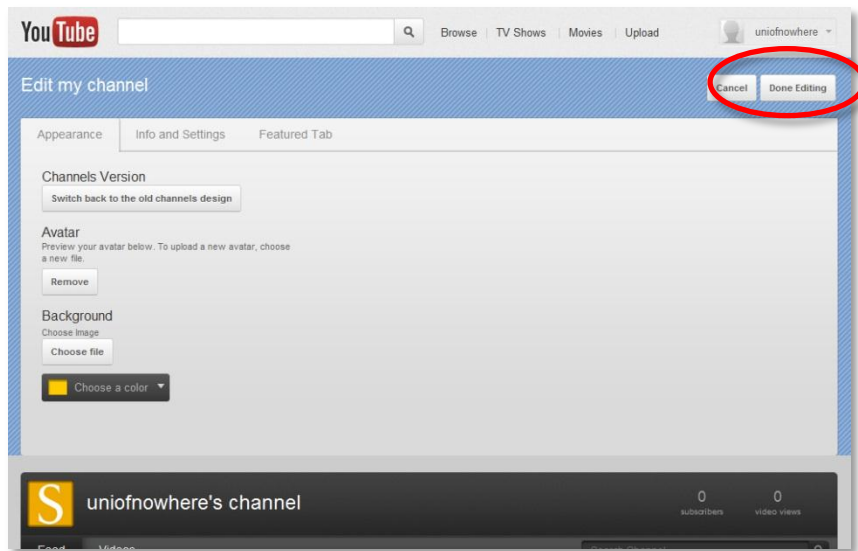
- v. The next step is Privacy and Sharing. For full functionality across YouTube, keep all the boxes ticked. Then tick 'All done!'



- vi. You'll now be taken to your channel, which will look quite empty at first. Click on 'Edit channel' to begin to personalise your page

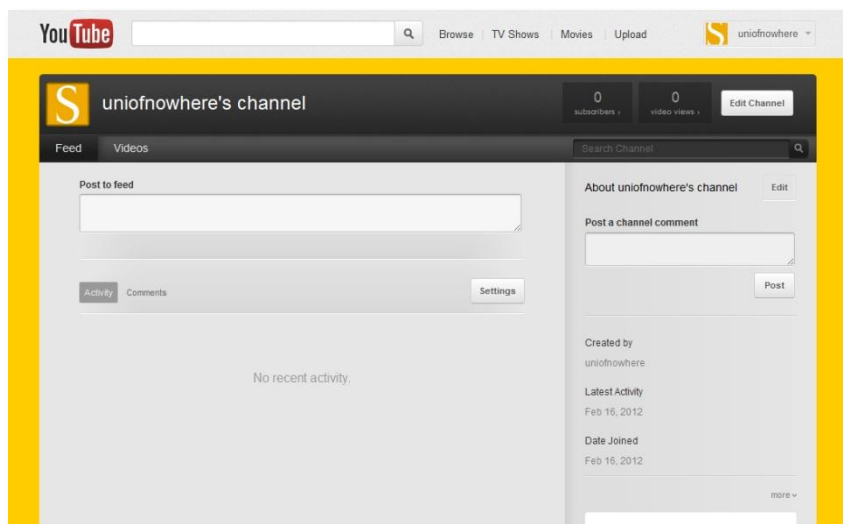


- vii. Choose your avatar. If your page represents an area or department of the University (and is the official or main page for that area), use the University 'S' logo. This comes in a range of brand colours for you to choose from and is available from the Communications and Marketing team. Your profile image will appear in the top left-hand corner of your profile page. You can also add a background image or colour at this stage



Click on 'Done editing' when you've finished

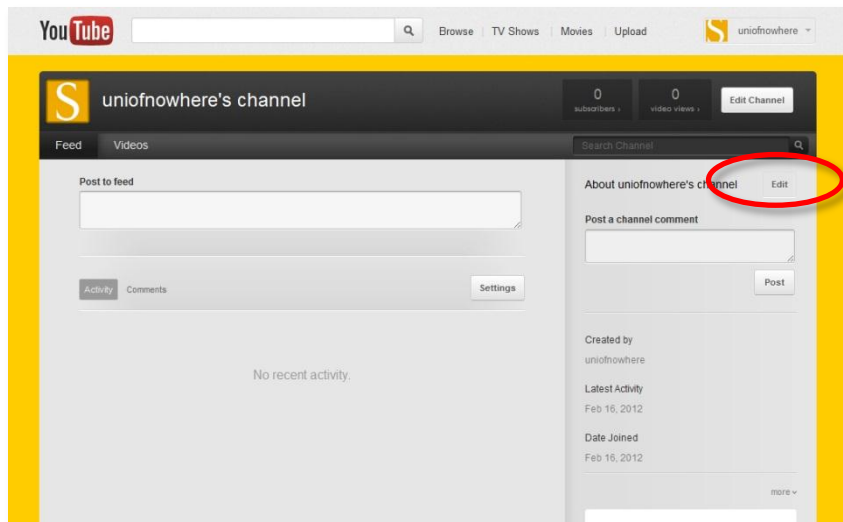
- viii. You should now see your channel with your new avatar and background



From here you can start to upload videos and direct others to your channel using your new URL (which will be www.youtube.com/ followed by the user name you chose, eg www.youtube.com/sotoncomms)

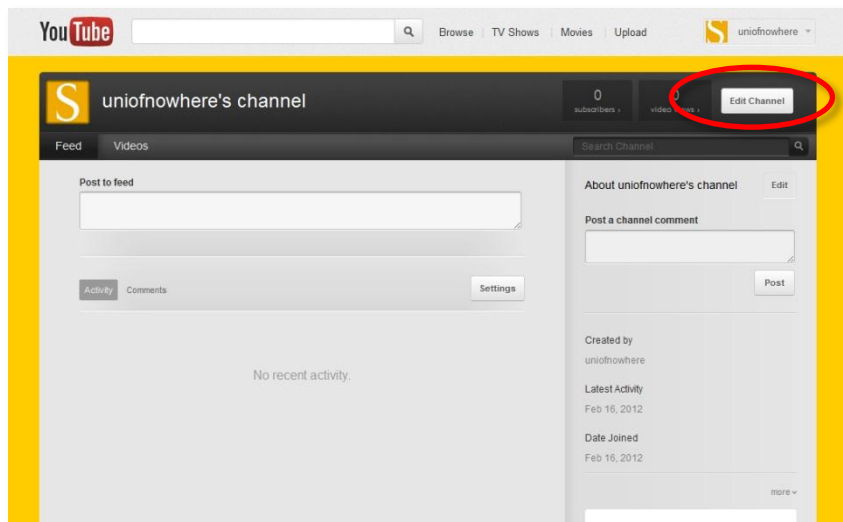
3.3.2 Next steps

- i. Add a brief description by clicking on 'Edit' next to 'About [your name]'s channel'

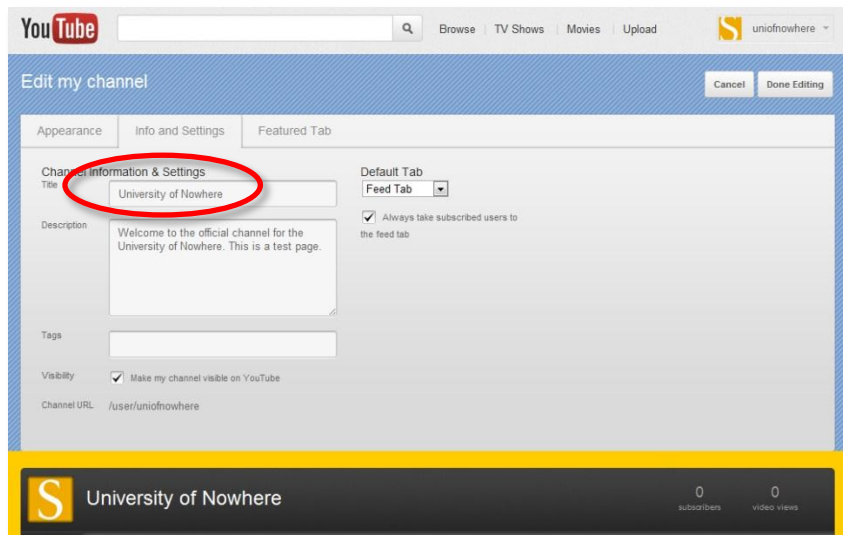


Click Apply when you've made your changes

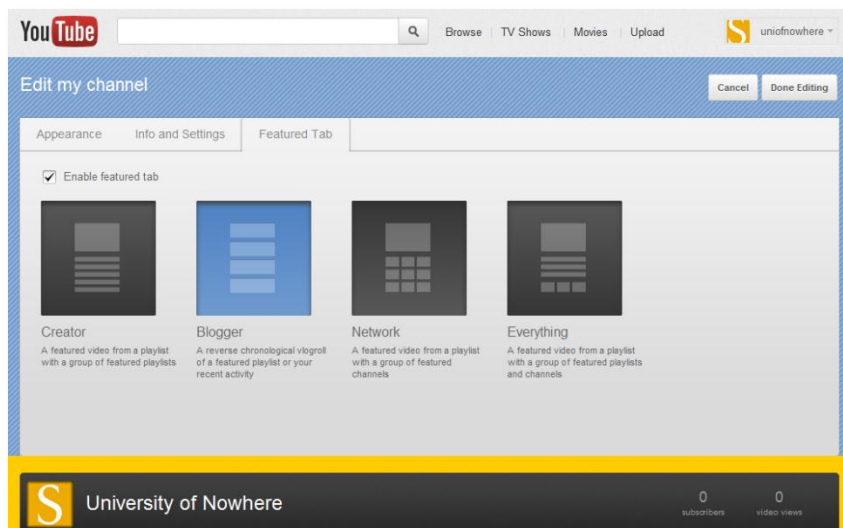
- ii. You can further edit your channel by clicking on 'Edit Channel' as before



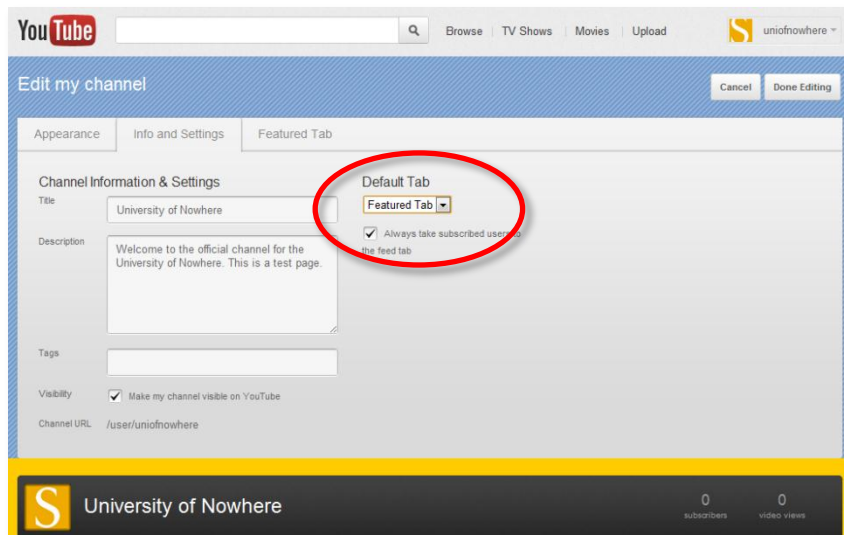
From here, you can change your channel's title (not your username) in the Info and Settings tab. This will change the wording that appears at the top of your main channel page



Click on 'Featured tab' and tick the box to enable this function – this will allow you to highlight your best video and showcase this when users arrive at your channel

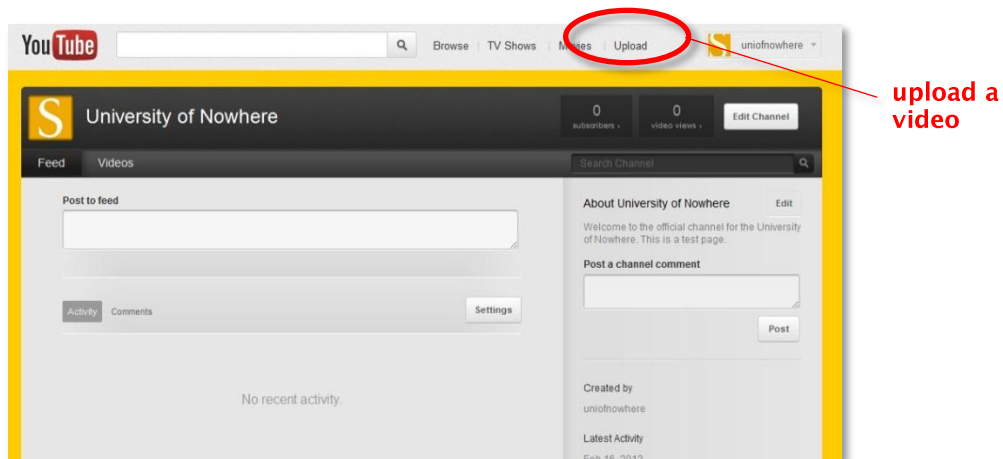


Now go back to 'Info and Settings' and make the Featured tab the default tab. You can also check beneath this that the 'Always take subscribed users to the Feed tab' box is ticked. This allows your existing subscribers to see your latest videos and the comments you make on other channels and videos (as well as any updates that you mention). The Feed tab brings your subscribers closer to seeing your channel comments, so they are more likely to start commenting themselves to keep up with the conversations

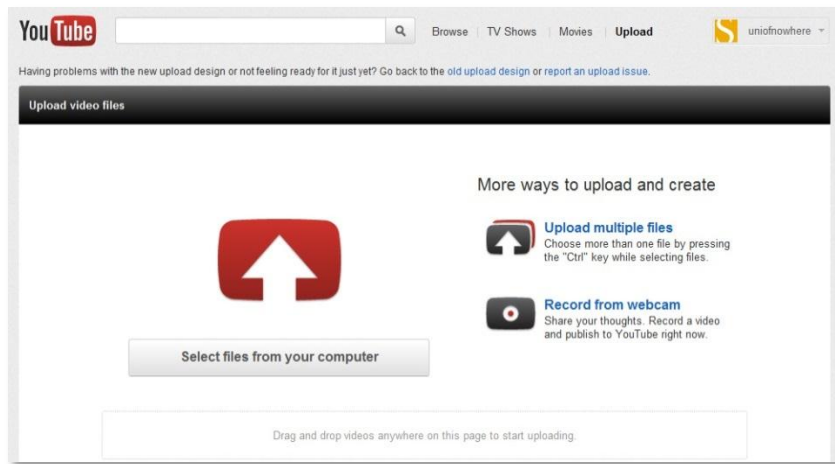


Click 'Done editing' when you've finished

- iii. Once you're back to your main channel, you're ready to start uploading videos. Click on the 'Upload' button to begin



Follow the instructions to upload your videos. Remember to make sure that all the content you upload to your channel is original and owned by you and that the relevant permission documents have been obtained for anyone featured in your video. In particular, ensure that any music used is either royalty-free or that you own the copyright. The Communications and Marketing team can provide permission document templates via the email address at the bottom of the page



Each video will have its own unique URL, which you can use to link to a particular video from another social platform or your website

- iv. You can edit your videos using the Video Manager (available from the profile menu in the top-right corner). Clicking on 'Info and Settings' will bring up the same page as you saw during the Upload process – this enables you to go back and make changes after uploading. From here you can choose a thumbnail for your video, add a title and description and choose whether to allow users to comment. If you do allow comments, ensure that these are moderated on a regular basis. You can use your email options (within Settings) to help with this. You can also choose whether to make a video public, unlisted or private. In general, you will probably want to choose Public. For videos with specific subject matter, or that will only be shared with a select audience, choose Unlisted – you will then need to provide your chosen audience with a link to the video. Choose Private if you are still making changes to the video's settings, or if you plan to launch the video at a later date – don't forget to change it to Public (or Unlisted) when it's ready
- v. Link to your page from your website and other areas. You can download the official YouTube logos directly from YouTube here http://www.youtube.com/t/press_room_image_files
- vi. If you have a smartphone, download the YouTube app to monitor your page on the move
- vii. Explore YouTube's Analytics (found by clicking in the profile box in the top-right corner, then Settings, then the Analytics tab) to see detailed information about your content and users

For more guidance on content, moderation and response, refer to Section 2 of this document.

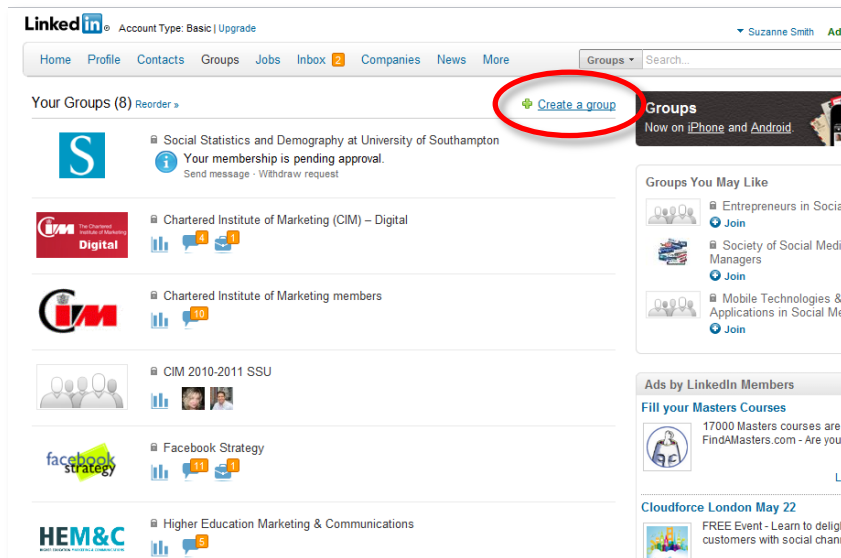
3.4 How-to: LinkedIn group

Use a LinkedIn group to connect with like-minded professionals, to share discussions on specific topics of interest.

3.4.1 Basic set-up

This guide assumes a basic to intermediate level of understanding of LinkedIn for personal use.

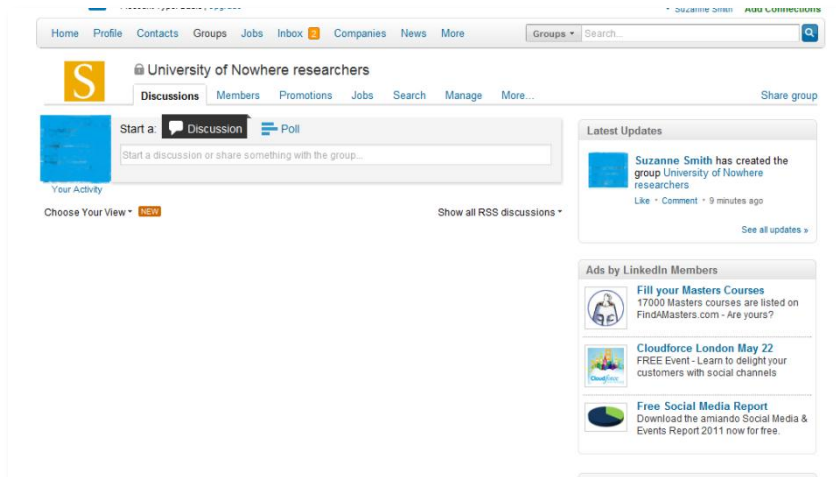
- i. In order to create your group for the first time, log in as normal and go to Groups at the top of the page. You'll see a list here of all the groups of which you are currently a member. Click on 'Create a group'



- ii. You'll now be taken to a page which prompts you for information about your group, beginning with your profile picture. If your group represents an area or department of the University (and is the official or main group for that area), use the University 'S' logo. This comes in a range of brand colours for you to choose from and is available from the Communications and Marketing team via the email address at the bottom of the page. Your profile image will appear in the top left-hand corner of your group page. Complete the Group name, type, summary and description sections and add a website if relevant

- iii. Decide whether you would like other LinkedIn users to be able to join automatically, or whether you (the Group Manager) would like to approve members before they can join. The latter option will help you to reduce spam and members who are not related to your specific area of interest from disrupting the discussion. You can also set the groups to appear in LinkedIn's directory and tell your connections about your group. You can choose whether or not you wish to allow members to invite others to join (you will still be able to approve each member before they can join)
- iv. Now decide whether you wish to create an Open Group or a Members-Only Group. To keep your group on topic and avoid any unwanted contributors, the Members-Only option is recommended. Click on your choice to continue

- v. You now have the option to send invitations to your connections, or skip this step and add members later. You should then be taken to a page that looks something like this:

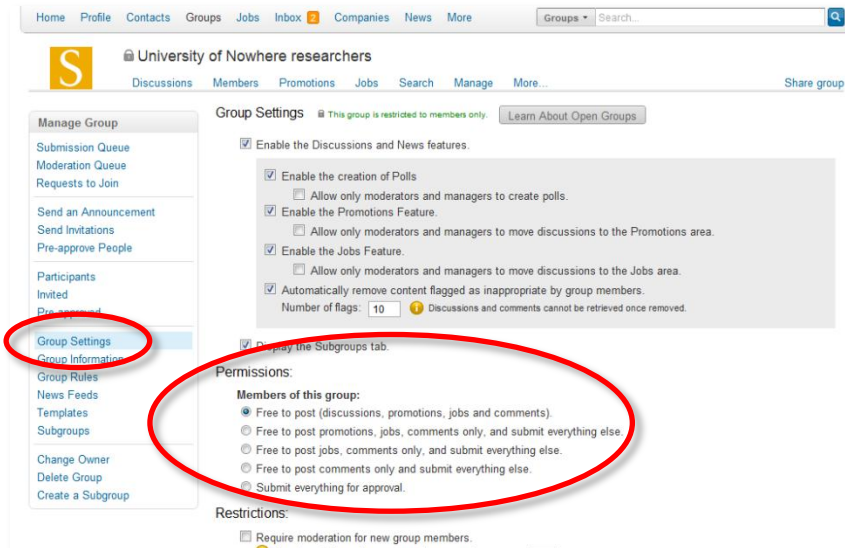


From here you are ready to start discussions with your group's other members. Try to keep the content engaging and relevant, including links to related stories where appropriate. Join other groups in your area of interest to help with ideas for content and tone

3.4.2 Next steps

Get the most from your group by following these next steps.

- i. Create a schedule of future discussion points, to keep your group content fresh and interesting. Think about relevant news and events coming up in your field of interest that your group might want to talk about. How often you start a new discussion is entirely up to you (and dependent on how much interest there is in current discussions), but you might want to consider 2–3 times per month as a guide. You can also create Polls for quick and easy answers to a simple question
- ii. Become familiar with the Manage area of your group – this is the place where you can moderate discussions, manage your member lists, add new members and set group rules, among other options. Within the ‘Group settings’ section you can set permissions to determine the extent to which members will need your approval before their contributions are published



It is friendlier and provides a better user experience to allow your group members to post freely – particularly if you have already approved all members before they join. Unless you have an Open Group, you are unlikely to need to change this setting

The ‘Discussions’ area will be the main area where member activity takes place

- iii. Link to your group from your website and other areas. You can download the official LinkedIn logo and ‘In’ button directly from LinkedIn here <http://press.linkedin.com/logo-images>
- iv. If you have a smartphone, download the LinkedIn app to monitor your group on the move

For more guidance on content, moderation and response, refer to Section 2 of this document.

Part B

Social media for personal use

4.1 Scope of this section

Although most of the advice set out in this section can be applied throughout social media, the main focus will be on Facebook and Twitter. For any social media network, it is important to be aware that you are often communicating in the public domain and you should follow the media and sensitive issues protocols (obtainable from the Media Relations team within Communications and Marketing). These protocols apply to all staff across the University and for the purposes laid out within them, social media should be treated in the same way as all other forms of communication.

4.2 General advice

As mentioned above, social media is a form of communication. When you communicate using this medium, remember that your comments can (usually) be seen by the public, can be forwarded or saved by other users and can be perceived or presented as being representative of the views of the University, unless you have clearly stated otherwise. As you would in person, in writing or via any other method of communication, always maintain the high level of honesty, professionalism and integrity that is appropriate to an employee or representative of the University. Please refer to section 8.5 of the University's Electronic Communications Policy for clarity on what is considered to be unacceptable content.

If you wish to communicate with others (in particular students) at a personal level (for example on your personal Facebook profile), ensure that you are aware of the privacy settings available and have these in place as applicable. When interacting with students using social media, it is suggested that this communication takes place in a public domain, for example by using a Facebook open group or communicating by tweet on Twitter. This avoids the possibility of unrelated personal information (either your own or a student's) passing between the two parties, and also allows open communication across wider groups of participants. As a general rule, it should not be necessary to send private messages between staff and students using social media; the university email system is recommended for this purpose.

You should be familiar with Section 8 of the Electronic Communications Policy when undertaking any kind of social media activity at a personal level.

4.3 Facebook

When communicating with others as a representative of the University, it is usually best to use a Facebook Page, as outlined in Part A of this guide. In some instances, you might want to create a Group instead of a page. A group allows multiple users to communicate within a controlled environment, and can be useful for collaborative work that is not in the public interest (for example to share knowledge or information at course level); and where student recruitment and promotion of the subject do not form part of the objectives. Groups allow users to post using their personal profile, but without group members being able to see each other's personal information that has not been made public (assuming Group members are not Friends with one another). They work best when comprised of a small number of people working collaboratively on a project. For more about Facebook Groups see <http://www.facebook.com/help/groups>

When using Facebook in this way, it is important that representatives of the University have an understanding of how groups work, take steps to protect their privacy and encourage other group members to do the same. To find out more about privacy settings on Facebook, see here <http://www.facebook.com/help/privacy>

It is usually not recommended for staff to become Facebook Friends with students with whom they work, as there are other options available that should meet the majority of requirements. It is best practice on Facebook to limit your Friends list to those whom you know personally and would feel comfortable with on this level. For professional purposes, a Page or Group is almost always more appropriate.

4.4 Twitter

Twitter is by nature a public forum, and unless your tweets are protected (which arguably defeats the object of the network) they are publicly viewable by anybody. All those employed by, or otherwise involved with, the University are encouraged to consider this at all times. It is recognised that many people working for (or with) the University will want to engage on this channel in either a personal or professional capacity, or both. For academic staff in particular, this is encouraged by the University and can be a great way to share knowledge and achievements with others within or outside of your own field and throughout the world. As always, the University anticipates that its staff will act with integrity and in line with the media and sensitive issues protocols as applicable.

If you are in any doubt about whether your comments on Twitter may be seen as representative of the University, or you wish to tweet on a personal basis, add a disclaimer such as 'Opinions expressed here are my own and not those of the University' to your biography. On Twitter it can sometimes be more relevant to use your own name rather than a department name, particularly if you are known by others in your particular field of work. The University encourages this, but asks that the above guidance is followed.

Summary

5.1 Social media – new opportunities

Social media has brought a wealth of new opportunities to the way we communicate with our audiences. As a University we are excited by this and believe that, when used appropriately, social media can help us to grow and develop as an institution. The benefits of two-way conversations with our stakeholders, in real time, can lead to greater understanding of our audiences and improve the way we work as an organisation.

This guidance document is designed to support this development. Should further advice be required, the Communications and Marketing team are contactable at the email address at the bottom of this page.