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Nursing Society

Social Media Risk Management Plan

Date: 03.04.2025

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Last Reviewed: 10/10/2025

Purpose

To create a safe, inclusive and professional communication platform for Nursing Society members, promoting community engagement, welfare support, and effective peer communication—while upholding University policy, NMC standards, and GDPR compliance.

Scope

This plan applies to the WhatsApp group chat and is also adaptable to the Society's Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and Twitter accounts.

Governance Framework

This policy aligns with:

- NMC Code of Conduct (2018)

- NMC Social Media Guidance (2019)
- RCN Social Media Policy (2019)
- University of Portsmouth IT Acceptable Use Policy (2023)
- UPSU Student Code of Conduct (2019)
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018

Groupchat Admin Protocol

All members agree to:

- Treat others with respect, kindness, and inclusivity.
- Avoid language or content that could be interpreted as:
 - Discriminatory
 - Harassing or bullying
 - Defamatory or maliciously / purposelessly critical of individuals, staff, or institutions
- Not share confidential information, including placements or patients (NMC Code para 5 & 20.10)
- Uphold professional and personal boundaries
- Keep discussions appropriate and relevant to the group's purpose.

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Data Protection & Privacy


- Do not post images, screenshots, or personal information without consent. • The group is for society-related communication only—no unauthorised data sharing or third-party promotions.
- Members can leave at any time and may request deletion of posts containing personal information.
- A GDPR-compliant privacy notice is available on request.

Incident Reporting & Moderation

- Any violations (e.g., discriminatory messages, confidentiality breaches) will be documented and may result in:
 - Removal from the group
 - Referral to the UPSU disciplinary process
 - Escalation to the School of Health & Care Professions
- Repeat or serious offences may result in removal from the society and formal disciplinary action by the university.

Group Rules (to be pinned in the chat)

Group Rules

- Be kind, inclusive and respectful.
- No gossip, slander, or complaints about peers/lecturers/placement/staff.
- No patient info or identifiable clinical details—ever 
- Use this chat for society updates, events, and support.
- Breaking these rules = private dm from committee + possible escalation.

Annual Review & Feedback

- This plan and group rules will be reviewed annually or after any incident.
- Society members will be consulted for feedback to improve safety and engagement.

Additional Safeguards

- Anonymous feedback form linked in the group bio for members to report issues.
- Admins trained in basic conflict resolution and aware of referral pathways (e.g., UPSU wellbeing support, Student Services)
- All committee members will attend the mandatory social media training at the UPSU committee fest.

Risk Breakdown

Category	Risks	Mitigation
Inappropriate or Unprofessional Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative comments about the university, lecturers, or clinical staff. • Swearing, offensive jokes, or casual bullying (even unintentionally). • Breaches of the NMC Code could jeopardise students' future registration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear group rules pinned and referenced regularly • Zero tolerance policy for bullying, with escalation pathway (UPSU disciplinary process). • Admins monitor the group regularly and address issues privately before escalating. • Use NMC Code paragraph 20.10 to remind members of their responsibilities
Confidentiality Breaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing patient stories, clinical experiences, or placement issues. • Screenshots of group messages being leaked or taken out of context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly remind members: “No clinical discussion—no exceptions.” • Periodic posts linking to NMC’s confidentiality and social media guidance. • Consider periodic anonymous audits or polls to evaluate understanding.
Cyberbullying, Exclusion or Peer Pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subtle exclusion, passive aggressive comments, targeting individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a culture of kindness and inclusion; remind members of UPSU Code of Conduct expectations.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members feeling unsafe, silenced, or pressured to attend events or activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a confidential route to report concerns (e.g. Google Form linked in group bio).• Welfare officers to check in with quieter or less engaged members privately.
Discrimination or Harmful Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discriminatory language (intentional or unintentional).• Offensive memes, jokes, or banter leading to harm.• Misinterpretations across diverse backgrounds and communication styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include zero tolerance clause for any discrimination (aligned with UPSU and RCN guidelines).• Proactively share reminders about respectful communication, especially around sensitive times (e.g. Pride Month, Black History Month, religious observances).• Annual unconscious bias and inclusion awareness training for committee members encouraged
Overreliance on WhatsApp / Digital Burnout	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information overload for members.• Mental health impact of excessive notifications or group anxiety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set posting hours (e.g., “no society messages after 9pm unless urgent”).• Keep WhatsApp for essential comms only—use Instagram or Facebook for social or casual interactions.• Allow members to mute the group or opt out without judgement.
Data Protection / GDPR Breaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing contact information, photos, or event attendance lists without consent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No personal data shared without permission.• Consent form during society sign-up to cover WhatsApp inclusion.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retaining member data longer than necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer members the ability to leave the group at any time and request deletion of messages that contain their personal information.• Committee trained in basic data protection (e.g. awareness of WhatsApp encryption and GDPR responsibilities).
Reputational Risk to Society, UPSU or University	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screenshots taken out of context and posted online.• Complaints from students or staff due to member behaviour in the group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include the phrase: “Views in this chat do not reflect those of the Nursing Society, UPSU, or the University” in group description.• Maintain professional tone in all admin communications.• Implement a clear reporting and resolution structure for any breaches or concerns.
Admin Misuse of Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Admins silencing disagreement or acting punitively.• Perceived cliques or bias from leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decisions to remove members or issue warnings must be made by at least two committee members, documented and reported to the UPSU contact.• Regular review of admin responsibilities and shared access with the Welfare Officer for transparency.• Consider rotating admin responsibilities or reviewing decisions monthly in committee meetings.