



Communications Policy: Faculty and Staff

1 Background

- This policy is part of MC's overall risk management framework and is designed to incorporate procedures for appropriate communication within and from MC

2 Foundational perspectives

- This policy is framed within the broad general principles of the Second Great Commandment: *You shall love your neighbour as yourself (Matt 22:38)*, and the Golden Rule: *So whatever you wish that others would do to you do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets (Matt 7:12)*
- This policy supports openness, transparency, and telling the truth in love. It is not intended to stifle freedom of speech. But it does call for integrity, respect, and expressions of the fruit of the Spirit—for the organization as a whole, and for each individual within the organization.

3 Policy framework

This policy incorporates the appropriate use of:

- 'Traditional' Media;
- Electronic Systems; and
- Electronic Communications Guidelines (for Telephone, Email, Internet, Social Networking)

Traditional Media

Traditional media is broadly defined but is generally segmented into the following:

- External media (such as TV, newspapers, magazines or journals); and
- Internal media (e.g. *Summa Supremo*, enews, MC website, as well as any other MC publications)

External Media

MC faculty and staff need to refer any requests from external media immediately to the Principal. MC faculty and staff are not permitted to discuss MC issues with the external media, without the express permission of the Principal.

Internal Media

MC faculty and staff will follow the standard operating procedures for any 'internal' style media publications or releases.

Use of Electronic Systems

MC faculty and staff use of IT equipment and systems is primarily intended for MC related communications. MC faculty and staff need to ensure only reasonable personal use of MC's computer systems and Internet gateway is acceptable, and this is provided such use does not interfere with the performance of their duties, or expose them or MC to any potential liability or claims which could bring them or MC into disrepute.

However, MC recognises that access to electronic communication is useful for general research and the organisation of social activities. MC will not restrict reasonable use of its systems for such purposes. However, the use of MC equipment and systems is subject to Electronic Communication Guidelines (see below).

During the course of employment, MC faculty and staff are expected to adhere to MC's guidelines for the use of MC computers and its computer systems. MC faculty and staff need to be aware that it is not permissible to:

- Cause a computer to perform any function with intent to secure unauthorised access to any computer program or data or to make unauthorised modification to any computer program or data;
- By-pass any security mechanisms or access controls that may be built into any computer system; and
- Access, download and/or distribute material that is otherwise discriminatory, illegal, or likely to cause offence, via MC's systems (this is a MC disciplinary offence which can lead to summary dismissal and possible criminal prosecution).

Electronic Communications Guidelines

Electronic communications include (but are not limited to) use of the internet, intranet, email, electronic bulletin boards, instant messages services, mobile phone SMS, news and discussion groups such as Facebook or Twitter, and any on-line services which send, receive and search for information.

MC faculty and staff need to consider their use of electronic communications including:

- Appropriate use
- Privacy
- Security
- Liability
- Email
- Internet
 - Inappropriate use
 - Messaging
 - Blocking strategies
 - Disclaimers
 - Information downloads
 - Social Networking Media
 - Facebook, Twitter, Blogs or similar networks

Appropriate Use

MC faculty and staff must not use the system in an inappropriate manner. MC considers 'inappropriate use' to include any use which may be harassing or discriminatory. Further details on harassment and discrimination are set out in the MC Workplace Policy. For example, MC faculty and staff must not send messages to individuals or groups that include abusive or offensive language about a person's race, age or disability.

Privacy

Electronic communications and specifically emails are not private communications. MC faculty and staff should not view electronic communications as confidential, secure or private.

Security

Any information sent or retrieved across the internet or intranet (which includes emails) can be intercepted and possibly altered by another person. Accordingly, before transmitting information via the internet or sending email, MC faculty and staff should consider whether that form of transmission is appropriate.

Liability

Any electronic communications sent by MC faculty and staff may be attributable to MC, and as such may be assumed to be a statement of MC's position for which it may be held liable. MC faculty and staff need to ensure that care is exercised to avoid mistakes, misstatements, misrepresentations and defamatory imputations. Defamation occurs when a statement or publication injures the reputation of another person, and can lead to a civil action or a criminal offence under relevant legislation.

Email Usage

MC faculty and staff will ensure:

- MC email address must not be used when subscribing to non-work related newsletters, bulletins, email groups or websites;
- Deleting attachments and emails from unknown origins without opening them to view their contents;
- Advising MC immediately on any documents or files found to contain viruses. The person sending the infected file should also be requested to install or update their virus checking software to prevent further contamination; and
- Responding to any system support request to reduce the size of email files in a responsible manner.

Content

MC faculty and staff will ensure

- Good judgement and common sense when creating and distributing email messages. MC faculty and staff may be liable for any defamatory or misleading or deceptive statements contained in email messages;
- Check addresses and spelling carefully prior to sending any email correspondence.

Personal Use

MC acknowledges that on occasions email may be used for 'personal use'. If email is personal MC faculty and staff should make it clear that the message is not being sent on behalf of MC.

Prohibited Use

Email (including personal email) cannot be used to:

- Send email messages which contain inappropriate or offensive material;
- Distribute electronic chain letters;
- Send unauthorised email from another user's email address or impersonating another user;
- Send non-urgent or non-work related emails to large numbers of users at any time; and
- Send personal email to any person who does not reasonably wish to receive it.

Discovery

MC faculty and staff should be aware that email communications may be discoverable in any legal proceedings in the same way as any other communication.

Email Management

MC faculty and staff will:

- Use appropriate language;
- Check emails regularly; and
- Delete unnecessary messages regularly, especially those with large attachments.

Internet

MC requires faculty and staff to use the Internet in a lawful and ethical manner, while protecting all proprietary information belonging to MC. In all cases, use of MC's Internet gateway must be guided by common sense and the ethics, security and employment policies of MC. Limited personal use of MC's Internet gateway is acceptable only when carried in accordance with the following:

- It does not interfere with work responsibilities or those of other MC faculty and staff;
- It does not interfere with the use of the Internet for MC's business purposes;
- It is not used to operate a business other than that of MC's business;
- It is not used for political or similar promotional activities; and
- It does not result in undue expense for MC.

Under no circumstances should MC's Internet gateway be used to offend or harass other employees or third parties, or be used to the detriment of MC's reputation or business activities. Improper use of the Internet may result in disciplinary proceedings.

Social Networking Media (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, Tumblr, Behance, and Blogs hosted by Wordpress)

Social networking sites, such as Facebook, are becoming increasingly popular in organising people's lives and communications, but they can also cross over the boundary of work versus private life from time to time. MC faculty and staff need to be aware that anything said or published on Facebook is relatively public and can be regarded in the same way as comment passed to a MC colleague either in the office or outside of MC duties.

MC faculty and staff are strongly encouraged to use a general disclaimer on their personal social media site/s, such as:

“The views expressed are my own and do not necessarily represent the official views of Morling College or its affiliates and partners.”

MC faculty and staff need to realize, however, that such a general disclaimer will not prevent actions arising from social media use that damages the college’s reputation or stands in contrast to the college’s values and ethics.

MC faculty and staff need to be mindful of personal or confidential postings becoming public (in relation to MC matters), and the amount of time that can be consumed updating personal postings and the potential for lost MC productivity in viewing new postings. MC faculty and staff should be aware of how much information they are revealing, and how to secure and maintain privacy.

Interaction on social media (whether personal site/s or official Morling site/s) should have the following characteristics:

- The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23) – “Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”
- Respect (respectful interactions)
- Transparency, accuracy, and honesty
- Apologizing, where appropriate, for causing offense or hurt

Before posting, ask yourself:

- Does this post reflect those characteristics?
- Am I comfortable with what I am about to post (and with a wide range of people potentially viewing this)?
- Am I comfortable with personally owning and being associated with this comment?
- Will this comment inflame or offend your audience?
- Am I happy to be responsible for the consequences that might arise from this post or comment?
- Am I posting this in a gracious, respectful, prayerful, Christlike manner?

MC allows the positive use of social media as a means of actively engaging in the marketplace of ideas. The use of social media by MC faculty and staff during work time should be focused on areas that are related to areas of expertise, MC’s activities and/or the fulfillment of workplace responsibilities (as described in the position description). Social media is not to be used in a way that contravenes this policy’s guidelines for general Internet use, or in a way that may bring MC into disrepute.

4 Accountability

All faculty and staff are accountable for acting within the guidelines of this Communications policy. Disregard of this policy will lead to disciplinary procedures (as set out in the relevant Morling policy document). If you are concerned about any dimension of this policy or about whether you are acting appropriately in any of these areas, please speak with the member of the *Morling Leadership Team* to whom you are accountable.

<i>Communications policy: Faculty and staff</i>	
<i>Date approved</i>	March 2014
<i>Approval authority</i>	MC Board
<i>Date for review</i>	March 2017