



St Berchmans College

Founded 1922

AUTONOMOUS

College with Potential for Excellence | Reaccredited by NAAC with A Grade

Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala
Changanassery, Kottayam, Kerala, India-686101

Policy on Public Relations and Social Media

Volume	II
Responsible Executive	Vice Principal - In Charge, St Berchmans College
Responsible Office	PR and Social Media Cell ,St. Berchmans College
Date Issued	November 2020
Date Last Revised	November 2022

1. Statement of Policy

In an effort to promote and bolster St. Berchmans College, the Public Relations Department of the college frequently disseminates information, including photographs, regarding activities on campus to the media as well as to the general public through the local and national newspapers, college's website and social media. This information includes, but is not limited to, announcements and reports on curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities and programmes conducted by the various departments of the college and the Berchmans community as a whole.

Mass media and social media are tools that have a significant ability to positively impact St. Berchmans College's reputation as an institution committed to community, faith, and scholarship. St. Berchmans College aims to foster the growth of virtual communities, protect the reputation of the college and its community members and provide for the cooperation of those who create and administer social media pages on college's behalf.

However, there are some inherent challenges. To address the challenges, St. Berchmans College has drafted this policy to ensure that both personal and professional reputations are enhanced and protected when expressing in social media and to avert situations of misuse or abuse of digital rights and freedom of expression through social media.

The St. Berchmans College website, Berchmans TV (BTV), YouTube channel and BTV Academics YouTube channel are the college's official online identity along with the below mentioned Facebook, Instagram and Twitter handles and WhatsApp Number: Social Media platforms for the purpose of this Policy would mean and refer to the above platforms

- Facebook Page : @st.berchmanscollege
- Instagram : @stberchmanscollegeofficial
- Twitter : @ SB COLLEGE
- WhatsApp : 9961072121

2. Objectives

This policy will therefore bind students, faculties, staff and those others who are directly or indirectly associated with the Institution and who use various social media platforms for communication, while acting or representing in conjunction with St Berchmans College

- To enhance its prestige and present a favorable image to the public as well as the appropriate use of social media when connected, or linked in some way, to their status as a member of the college, or when directly or indirectly referring to the college in any way.
- This policy applies to mass media and more particularly to social media communications available on public and private platforms.
- Rising incidents of digital and social media abuse being reported from other Institutions of academic, has forced the institutions to adopt measures whereby students and those other concerned need to be alerted and made conscious that action can be taken by the College if their behavioural pattern do not comply with the parameters and standards envisaged in this Policy Guidelines, when identified either publicly or privately

3. Scope of the Policy

- This policy will apply to the communication about any and every programme conducted in and by the college and its constituent departments, associations and organizations; social media accounts created by St. Berchmans College staff for the official business purposes of the College, including College's faculty, groups, departments, programs, entities, etc.

- This policy will therefore impact students, faculty, and staff who utilize various social media for communication in conjunction with representing St. Berchmans College.
- All officially-recognized social media accounts will be publicly listed by the College in a directory displayed in its official website.
- Student organizations that wish to create social media accounts that will be officially recognized by St. Berchmans College must be registered through the Office of Public Relations and Social Media Communications.
- It is mandatory that any programme whatsoever being conducted at the college level or department level should reach the media through the Public Relations Department and it is informed to all the departments that PRD is to be notified of such events without fail.
- Every department shall assign the task of reporting, editing and submitting the news to the PRD, to the students who have received specialized training in this regard. These students shall act as the department reporter.

4. Exclusions

- This policy will apply only to social media accounts displayed in the official website of the college, created for the purpose of representing St Berchmans College Groups, Departments, Programs, entities, etc. and will not apply to other social media accounts
- College employees acting in an individual capacity should exercise due care and caution to communicate clearly that they are not acting in a representative capacity, or expressing either on behalf of the College or expressing the views of the College.
- St Berchmans College will not be responsible for any information posted or circulated in any other social media platforms other than those recognized in the official website of the College.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

a) Public Relations:

- The main responsibility of the Public Relations Department is to bring the activities of the College to the knowledge of the public by using the potential of various media resources.
- The PRD is responsible for the preparation of the news and to get it delivered to various media houses. Priority will be given to those events which are of utmost importance; meanwhile PRD will not be responsible if any news item doesn't get published by the media sources.
- PRD will take required measures to publish the achievements and scholarships earned by the teachers and students, if reported by the respective departments
- It will be the sole responsibility of the PRD to accurately archive the incoming news, both physically and digitally.
- The Public Relations Department will be solely responsible for holding press conferences and preparing press releases for important events of the college.

b) Social Media

- The PRO cum Social Media Administrator will be responsible for administering this policy.
- The PRO cum Social Media Administrator will manage the day-to-day application process and update the social media page in the website.
- All applicants for officially-recognized social media accounts are required to submit ideas for profile picture/avatar for each account as part of the application process to ensure that St. Berchmans College's branding standards are upheld.
- All social media accounts officially recognized by St. Berchmans College must be accessible by the PRO cum Social Media Administrator as an administrator at all times to ensure adherence to this policy.
- When PRO cum Social Media Administrator or the administrator of an account leaves the College for any reason, it is the academic or administrative department's responsibility to designate another St. Berchmans College staff to be an account administrator and remove the former Staff's administrative permissions to the site.

Whenever possible, a department should appoint an individual to act concurrently as account administrators for a social media site representing St. Berchmans College.

- If there is no staff available to serve as account administrator, a member of the St. Berchmans College Public Relations and Social Media Committee may serve in that capacity.
- St. Berchmans College staff identified as administrators is responsible for managing and monitoring content of their social media accounts.
- Administrators are responsible to remove content that may violate the College Conduct Policies or the Social Media Terms and Conditions.

Guidelines for Content:

- St. Berchmans College employees, faculties and students are expected to adhere to the same standards of conduct online, as would be binding on them offline. Laws and policies with respect to contracting and conflict of interest, as well as other applicable policies and guidelines for expression and interaction with all college constituents apply online and in the social media context just as they do in personal interactions. All individuals and entities coming within the purview of this policy are fully responsible for the contents they post in social media sites.
- Use good judgment about content and respect privacy laws. Do not include sensitive personal information or confidential information about the College, its staff, or students.
- Do not post content that is defamatory, threatening, immoral, obscene, annoying, offensive, or derogatory in nature or otherwise illegal or injurious, or constituting a violation of intellectual property rights, copyright or privacy laws.
- St Berchmans College fosters an educational environment that allows expression with responsibility and subject to constitutional limitations. Hence the College will not tolerate any activity or posting on an official College – recognized social media, content that loses constitutional protection. The College reserves the right to remove any such posting without notice and to refer such social media activities to the applicable social media platform and/ or appropriate authorities for appropriate action.

- Representing your personal opinions in any manner as being endorsed by the College or any of its organizations is strictly prohibited. St. Berchmans College's name, symbols, marks and other identities may not be used to endorse any opinion, or to support any product, private business, cause, or political candidature or for personal gain.

6. Related Documents, Forms and Tools

Social media users acting on behalf of the College must adhere to all St. Berchmans College policies and procedures, including:

- Fair Use Policy.
- Copyright information.
- IT security policy.
- Privacy statement.
- Website requirements and guidelines.
- Student Conduct Code.

Each officially-recognized social media account will be required to include a disclaimer declaring it an official St. Berchmans College social media account.

7. Approval & Review Details

Approval Authority:

Manager, St. Berchmans College, Changanacherry

Officer In charge:

Vice Principal In charge /PRO, St. Berchmans College

Approved on: November 2022

Next Review Date: November 2024

8. Feedback:

Stake holders may provide feedback about this document by e-mailing to IQAC.