



SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

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1. PRE-AMBLE

This document is the Social Networking Policy of Ashton International College-Benoni, as approved by the Board of Directors (**11/2019**).

The policy has been drafted in accordance with:

- 1.1. The provisions of the Constitution of South Africa, 1996
- 1.2. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 ('SASA')
- 1.3. The National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996
- 1.4. Child Protection Act 38 of 2005
- 1.5. The Protection from Harassment Act 71 of 2011
- 1.6. The Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-related Information Act 70 of 2002.
- 1.7. Film and Publications Amendment Act II of 2019.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. **Intercept** – the aural or other acquisition of the contents of any communication by any means so as to make some or all of the contents of a communication available to a person other than the sender or recipient or intended recipient thereof, and includes the:
 - monitoring of any such communication by means of a monitoring device;
 - viewing, examination or inspection of the contents of any indirect Communication; and
 - Diversion of any indirect communication from its intended destination to any other destination.
- 2.2. **School** – the school Board of Directors, as well as any person to whom particular authority or functions have been delegated in terms of this policy in representation of Ashton International College - Benoni.

- 2.3. **School Management** – the principal or a member of the school staff delegated by the principal.
- 2.4. **Social Media** – the means of interaction among people during which they create, share and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts and other multimedia communications.
- 2.5. **Stake Holders** – any person or persons directly involved with a vested interest in Ashton International College Benoni such as but not limited to current and former Staff, Management, Students and Parents.

3. PURPOSE

Ashton International College – Benoni, herein after referred to as “The School”, recognises the evolution of social media as a mode of communication, but also realises that to optimise the use of social media, it must be used responsibly and appropriately in relation to the School’s business and the larger School community. Students, Parents and Staff are expected to behave in a manner which is representative of the School’s policies, values and ethos. It is vital for Students, Parents, Staff and all other stakeholders to understand both the advantages and the potential risks of social media, so that they may enhance their use thereof and avoid or mitigate the risks inherent in social media. Stakeholders should be aware of the effect their actions may have on their image, as well as the School’s image. The information that Stakeholders post or publish remains available online for lengthy periods of time.

This policy provides guidelines for Students, Parents and any associative persona affiliated to Ashton International College, in their interaction and use of social media services, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include emails, blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, social networking apps, and other sites and services that permit users to share information and views with others in an interactive manner.

The school respects the individual privacy of educators, non-educators and learners. However, this right to privacy does not extend to their work-related conduct or to the use of equipment, resources or supplies provided by the school or to personal devices if reasonable suspicion exists that any of the afore mentioned Acts have been transgressed in regard to any of the stake holders of Ashton International College Benoni.

In terms of the Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-related Information Act 70 of 2002, “any person ... may intercept any communication if he or she is a party to the communication, unless such communication is intercepted by such person for purposes of committing an offence”.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Focus: All Stakeholders

- 4.1 Social media platforms may not be used by “Stakeholders” to communicate unsolicited communications of any kind.
- 4.2 Stakeholders may not engage in online communication activities which could bring Ashton International College’s name into disrepute.
- 4.3 Stakeholders may not impersonate third parties or act in any manner that may mislead, confuse or deceive others.
- 4.4 Stakeholders should regularly review the content of social media postings and remove any information that could reflect negatively on Ashton International College, its staff, students,

parents or other stakeholders (for example inappropriate comments made in response to postings).

- 4.5 The School and Management reserve the right to investigate any allegations which contravene the School's policies and /or involve student safety.
- 4.6 Social media networks, blogs, and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention or legal questions. Students, parents and staff should refer these enquiries to the management of Ashton International College.
- 4.7 If "Stakeholders" encounter a situation while using social media that threatens to become antagonistic, "Stakeholders" should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and report the incident to management **IMMEDIATELY**.
- 4.8 Computer software, network and electronic equipment are made available to students and staff for the express purpose of the School's instructional and educational purposes. Any abuse of this property or private use thereof to the extent that it impacts negatively upon Ashton International College and/or could be potentially harmful, shall be treated as an offence.
- 4.9 Social media platforms may not be used by students or staff for personal use during the School day.
- 4.10 Stakeholders must ensure that the contents of their postings are accurate, ethical and legal.
- 4.11 Students should read and adhere to any website's terms and conditions of use, including those around age restrictions.
- 4.12 Stakeholders may not post:
- information, comments or images which may be detrimental to Ashton International College, or pertaining to current or former staff, students, suppliers, parents and any parties directly or indirectly involved with Ashton International College;
 - any person's/student's private information (including photographs or images of the person) of whatever nature, without the authority of the person /parent/guardian;
 - any inappropriate, obscene or pornographic images;
 - any communication or image which may be defamatory or violate the rights of any party;
 - any communication which is offensive, threatening, abusive, harmful, hateful, malicious, discriminatory, demeaning, derogatory or which amounts to unlawful harassment or discrimination;
 - illicit photos, profanity or other derogatory content;
 - any communication which violates the intellectual property rights of third parties.
- 4.13 Students and Staff should be aware that any conduct, even in their private capacity, which impacts on the interests of the School, must be in accordance with the School's rules and policies. In circumstances where a student or staff member, for example, defames or discloses confidential information on a social network and this causes damage to the School's or any individual's reputation and/or results in the loss of business, this shall be treated as an offence.
- 4.14 Any violation of the above rules may result in disciplinary action being taken against the party concerned and any appropriate legal action may be pursued

Focus: Ashton International College – Benoni Social Media Presence

- 4.15 The School may post any appropriate image of activities, students or staff unless Management, prior to the subsequent post, has received express written refusal.
- 4.16 The School must ensure that no images or posts created by the School contradict any of the underwritten policies and guidelines adhered to in the School's Code of Conduct or current and future laws and procedures as stipulated by the Government of South Africa.
- 4.17 The school reserves the right to remove or censure any post or image that might affect the general wellbeing of the associated "Stakeholders" or the image and wellbeing of the School itself.
- 4.18 Ashton International College will notify parents via newsletters at the beginning of the academic year that students may be photographed and these photographs posted on Social Media. Any parent that is not in acceptance of the aforementioned, must communicate this in writing to the Marketing Manager : marketing@ashtonbenoni.co.za

Focus: Ashton International College – Interception

- 4.19 In accordance with "The Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-related Information Act 70 of 2002", Ashton International College has the right to intercept any and all communications involving Ashton International College or any of its stakeholders in the event that an allegation or suspicion exists where the rights of any of its Stakeholders have been infringed. Interception may be, but is not limited to:
- Digital / Hard Copy copies of the communications;
 - Verbal transcriptions of the communications with accompanying affidavits;
 - Screen dumps/ Screen Grabs;
 - Cloning of devices.
- 4.20 The school reserves the right to detain and analyse any device that has direct or indirect involvement between the presumed or proven affected Stakeholders.
- 4.21 The school must ensure that the chain of custody of all digital and other forms of evidence is preserved and may not be disclosed to any non-involved, non-legal orientated entity to ensure that no further infringements of either party's rights are caused.
- 4.22 The School is obliged to ensure, in the event of ***Crimen Injuria***, that the correct Department of Education, Human Rights Commission and/or Legal channels are followed in full accordance of the Law. Any attempt to prohibit the investigation of any of the legal actions may result in Obstruction of Justice charges.