



COMMUNICATION AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

1. U3A Emerald Inc. is committed to communicating accurately, consistently and appropriately; and recognises the importance of electronic media and E-communication tools in providing enhanced opportunities for our members to communicate, learn and engage.
2. The context for this policy includes:
 - 2.1. the purposes of U3A Emerald Inc. as expressed in the Constitution (Section 2)
 - 2.2. the U3A Emerald Inc. website, Facebook account and email system—which provide information about membership services, courses and events from the Committee to members and the wider community
 - 2.3. social networking platforms such as Facebook and other E-communication tools, and Internet access in some courses—which allow members to access and share information, opinions, ideas, messages and other content
 - 2.4. from time to time, the view of U3A Emerald Inc. is sought—for example by the media, U3A Victoria Network, and Government or other agencies and organisations.

Purpose

3. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:
 - 3.1. all communication transmitted on behalf of U3A Emerald Inc. to members and the wider community is congruent with our purposes, and accurate, consistent and appropriate
 - 3.2. U3A Emerald Inc. is represented appropriately in the virtual world, for example, when members use its Facebook account, email system, mobile phone and website
 - 3.3. E-communication tools are used appropriately in U3A Emerald Inc. supported activities.
4. This policy includes any other forms of technology adopted after its endorsement, but does not include private communication or the use of electronic media by individuals, for example when members send personal communications from their own devices.

Definitions

5. In this policy the following definitions apply:
 - 5.1. *Communication*: the transfer of information including verbally, in writing and digitally.
 - 5.2. *E-communication tools*: the U3A Emerald Inc. Facebook site, website, email system, mail, class Internet access, the U3A mobile phone, and other information-sharing platforms
 - 5.3. *Electronic media*: all forms of communication transferred by electronic means that is accessed and used by members in any U3A Emerald Inc. related activities.

Related policies

6. Various endorsed U3A Emerald Inc. policies set out the principles for acceptable behaviour and interactions in all U3A Emerald Inc. related activities. These include the Anti-bullying Policy; Anti-discrimination Policy; Anti-sexual harassment Policy; Code of Conduct; Conflict of Interest Policy; and Privacy Policy. These policies are available at www.u3aemerald.org.au

Policy

7. The only person authorised to speak on behalf of U3A Emerald Inc. in any official capacity, such as to the media or any government department or authority, is the President or their delegate.
8. The Committee of Management will delegate information-provision roles and responsibilities to members of the Committee. This will include for example, information about membership, courses, events and activities. The delegated Committee members will report back to the Committee on these matters through their monthly reports.
9. All U3A Emerald Inc. communication will support the organisation's purposes, for example by:
 - 9.1. providing our community with accurate and timely information about courses, activities and events, as well as the benefits and responsibilities of U3A membership
 - 9.2. promoting opportunities for U3A participation, not only in our courses, activities and events, but also in the Committee and related volunteer roles
 - 9.3. promoting positive, cooperative and respectful relationships with our community and beyond.
10. In recognition that information shared electronically is potentially public and can be traced back to the U3A, members communicating through social networking and electronic media in U3A Emerald Inc. supported activities must ensure that:
 - 10.1. all communication is respectful, being fully considerate of the diversity of our membership and the wide spectrum of our broader community
 - 10.2. information is accurate
 - 10.3. confidentiality is respected, including NOT sharing personal or confidential information and not sharing images of others unless they have given their permission
 - 10.4. the terms and conditions of any social networking tools such as Facebook are followed
 - 10.5. all communication supports the purposes and activities of U3A Emerald Inc.
 - 10.6. any mistakes are corrected as soon as they are discovered, with an apology if required, and with any major mistakes such as the sharing of confidential material reported to the President as soon as possible, so that the proper steps to minimise impact can begin
 - 10.7. all communication is apolitical and non-partisan
 - 10.8. copyright, trademarks and branding are appropriately observed, with acknowledgment of any published material or images that are used with permission
 - 10.9. care is taken with any links that are shared, by checking these before sending to ensure they are appropriate, legitimate and accurate.
11. Cyber-bullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding and cyber-stalking are all examples of cyber-bullying. Any person engaging in such behaviours can be subject to the U3A Emerald Inc. disciplinary procedures, noting also that cyber-bullying can be a crime.
12. Internet access is provided to members in some courses and activities to enhance those experiences. In using such services, members must not access websites containing material that a reasonable person would view as offensive.
13. U3A events and information can be shared on the U3A Emerald Inc. social networking and electronic media platforms. However, when promoting such information members are required to take adequate steps to ensure that the announcements are factual and accurate.
14. Any external organisation or agency wishing to publicise non-U3A related activities or services must seek approval from the Committee.

15. Only a Committee-approved person can administer and moderate the U3A Emerald Inc. Facebook site, with access managed by password.

Procedures

16. The Committee will consider applications to publicise non-U3A related activities or services, making a decision based on factors such as the intrinsic value of the activity or event to members, whether the event is in the community interest, and its alignment with the U3A Emerald Inc. purpose as expressed in the Constitution.
17. Any promotion of any Committee-agreed activity or service must clearly state its purpose and origin, including any commercial arrangements, so that members can make an informed decision about accessing the activity or service.
18. All information provided by U3A Emerald Inc. in any official capacity, such as to the media or any government department or authority, must be authorised in writing by the President.
19. The Facebook Administrator will check the site weekly and add and remove posts as required, moderating the site to ensure content is appropriate. When a Committee member who resigns who has access to the Facebook account, the Committee must ensure the password access is secure by changing the password.
20. Emails to members of U3A Emerald Inc. sent using the U3A email system must be sent as 'bcc' so that individual email addresses are not shared.

Responsibility

21. The U3A Emerald Inc. Committee of Management is responsible for developing, implementing, reviewing and publishing this policy.

Authorisation

22. This Social Networking and Electronic Media Policy was adopted by the Committee of Management of U3A Emerald Inc. and minuted as such, on 26 November 2019.