Social Media Guidelines for Placement Students

Students must ensure that all personal social media platforms are set up with the strongest available privacy settings. This will ensure that clients and the public cannot gain access to personal photos, comments and information. Students are advised to avoid online platforms where total privacy cannot be guaranteed.

Students should be aware of not being able to control other’s privacy settings, hence, even if their own site is private, their information could be accessible through a friend’s site.

Students need to ask themselves if their posts would be appropriate for a stranger or client to view.

Students cannot become social media friends with the clients they counsel while on placement, or when they leave the placement agency. This will allow professional boundaries to be maintained.

Students may wish to have an ambiguous or de-identified Twitter account, so as to make it difficult for clients to find them on this platform.

**Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) Code of Ethics** advises counsellors to avoid social media contact with clients, as follows:

- avoiding social contact with clients on social media as there are risks of disclosing personal information or impacting on the therapeutic relationship.

**Australian Association of Social Worker (AASW)** have developed a range of social media guidelines that expand on their Code of Ethics and Practice and Standards:

Social Media, information and communication technologies Part 1:


Social Media, information and communication technologies Part 2:


Social Media, information and communication technologies Part 3:


If you have any questions regarding the use of social media while on placement, contact your Student Placement Adviser.