

Social Media

The use of Facebook, Twitter and other social media formats are now common place. Even if your use of these formats is in your own personal name (and not your employers) it is still possible for you to be disciplined for comments made on them, even if you made those comments in your own personal free time.

Remember, you may be in your home when you make comment on social media, but they are not private comments. All social media is in the public domain. Even if your personal security settings are appropriate, who you think is a friend, may inadvertently or purposely pass your comments onto somebody that you do not want to read them.

Here is a quick guide to avoid getting into trouble at work from your use of social media.

1. If you think your message could place you into trouble if read by your line manager or employer, why place it on there in the first place? Don't give your boss easy ammunition to discipline you.
2. If you are on sick leave for whatever reason it does not look good to post pictures of yourself having fun, socialising with friends or family. Nor would it impress your colleagues if whilst they are working harder to cover your absence you post pictures from a sunny beach.
3. Do not pass on jokes or comments that your colleagues or employer could find offensive. Why prompt a complaint?
4. Do not criticise your boss or colleagues on social media. Such comments are common instigators of investigations and disciplinary situations. What you may perceive as a joke could cause you a lot of stress and anxiety later on.
5. **The best advice is simply not to refer to work in any capacity on social media.** We appreciate that this can sometimes be difficult as your colleagues can also be your personal friends. In which case you need to be mindful of what is placed on formats that can become public to your boss all too easily.



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What do I do if I am being investigated?

If you are unfortunate enough to be questioned by your employer for communications sent by e-mail or on social media you should contact your UNISON representative or Branch Officer immediately. Likewise if you think you have breached the Data Protection Act.

UNISON has representatives that can help you through such stressful times and be there for you when your employer questions or investigates any matter.

UNISON always advises members not to attend any investigation meetings or disciplinary without a representative being present to assist you.

Please call the above telephone number for any queries or for representation.

If you cannot find a local UNISON representative simply call UNISON Direct on 0800 085 7857.



Check out your Branch website at www.sandwellunison.co.uk