



POLICY No. 21  
*Communications Policy*

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## *Communications Policy*

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## ARTICLE 1 - Preamble

John Abbott College (the “College”) requires a well-structured communications strategy to properly promote its programs of studies, its activities and the achievements of employees and students. Keeping with the tradition, the delivery of information must be done in a clear, honest and respectful manner.

## ARTICLE 2 - Objectives

To support the College in fulfilling its mission, this policy provides the necessary guidelines to support the transparent delivery of pertinent information to internal and external audiences while respecting the College’s visual identity. This policy also serves as the basis for the development of the College’s annual communications plan.

This policy establishes the roles and responsibilities of all of the College’s employees with regards to communications, and sets a framework when dealing with internal and external communications, media relations, publicity and public relations.

Furthermore, this policy is intended to remind employees of their obligations toward the College, their colleagues and the students regarding the use of social networking sites, and to supervise the use of social networking sites by students where such use can have an impact on the College employees and students.

## ARTICLE 3 - Scope of Application

This policy applies to all members of the College community with respect to the *Access to Information Act* (R.S.C., 1985, c. A-1) and the *Security of Information Act* (R.S.C., 1985, c. O-5).

It applies to all employees, regardless of status, and to all students who use social networking sites.

## ARTICLE 4 - Roles and Responsibilities

### 4.1. Director of Human Resources and Communications

The Director of Human Resources and Communications is responsible for the application of this policy. He/she, his/her delegate and the Director General are the official spokespeople for the College.

### 4.2. Directors, Deans, Managers and Department Chairs

The above are responsible for:

- applying this policy within their jurisdiction;
- supplying accurate and timely information to the Communications Office upon request;
- identifying their communications needs and presenting them to the Communications Office at the beginning of each academic year;
- involving the Communications Office in all media inquiries or requests for interviews.

### **4.3. Communications Office**

The Communications Office will:

- ensure that this policy is advertised and easily accessible;
- make sure, with the collaboration of Print Services personnel, that the College branding is respected;
- promote the College image and engage all stakeholders by promoting programs, excellence in teaching, student services and facilities;
- prepare, in collaboration with the Registrar's Office and departments or services head, all student recruitment material;
- prepare the yearly Communications Plan which takes into account the realities and needs of the various departments;
- identify the target audiences, the preferred communications media and measurable objectives;
- support the College community, including the College Foundation, in all their communications needs as advisory or operational support;
- manage the content of the College and the departmental websites and of My JAC Portal abiding by the Graphics Standards Manual, the College and Departmental Websites Guidelines, and the Guidelines for an Optimal Use of My JAC Portal;
- monitor the College name and reputation on social media;
- ensure that all printed or electronic material, video clips and advertisement intended for external audiences respect the College's visual identity and values;
- maintain harmonious relationships with the external community;
- promote and preserve the reputation of the College on a local, national and international scale;
- be responsible for all media relations.

### **4.4. Members of the College Community**

When communicating on behalf of the College, all members of the College Community are responsible for using a quality of language appropriate to the establishment, for being respectful of the College Graphics Standards Manual and for respecting the culture and the structure of the organization.

## **ARTICLE 5 - Branding**

### **5.1 College Branding**

The logo and its components are the property of the College and shall not be used without the explicit permission of the Communications Office. Furthermore, the logo, its components, the College name, address and phone number shall not be used to promote one's personal or financial gain.

All material other than that on official College letterhead (posters, advertisement, pamphlets, etc.) intended for the external community must be approved by the Communications Office.

### **5.2 Internal Logos**

Departmental symbols and logos are to be used exclusively for the internal College community.

## **ARTICLE 6 - Use of Online Social Networks**

Online social networks are defined as any Internet applications that allow for interaction and the sharing of content.

Online social networks on the Internet include but are not limited to:

- Social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, SnapChat et al.);
- Video or picture sharing sites (YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, etc.);
- Blogs and discussion forums;
- Online encyclopedia such as Wikipedia;
- Any website or application with online publishing tools.

Official College accounts of social networks are managed by the Communications Office.

Social Network accounts with a College affiliation have to meet to following criteria:

- *No account can be created on behalf of the College without approval from the Communications Office.*
- *The content must be in alignment with the College's values and mission.*
- *Information appearing on the College website may not be repeated: admissions information, course calendar, etc.*
- *Credentials (username and password) must be shared with the Communications Office.*

## **6.1 Expected behaviour from all members of the College community**

**6.1.1 Loyalty to the College:** this obligation prohibits, among other things, the publication of information or comments that may affect the image or the reputation of the College.

**6.1.2 Respect for privacy and reputation:** one must not breach the right to privacy and the reputation of other employees and of students. In accordance with Bill C-13 – Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act, permission must be sought before publishing pictures or recordings of a person or group of persons. Furthermore, criticism of or insults to employees or students on social networking sites are prohibited.

## **6.2 Provisions applicable to employees only**

**6.2.1 Personal use of online social networks at work is permitted if the use:**

- does not conflict with the achievement of the College's mission;
- is done during breaks or lunchtime; and
- does not have an impact on the employee's performance.

**6.2.2 Attitude respectful of the College community:** when an employee browses online social networks, he or she must behave in a professional manner consistent with the responsibilities related to his or her employment.

**6.2.3 Safe guarding of confidential information:** every employee has an obligation to keep information obtained as part of his or her official duties confidential. This includes information on employees, suppliers, students, financial information, etc. No confidential or strategic data belonging to the College can be published on social networks or divulged in any format.

**6.2.4 Obligation to identify oneself distinctly from the College when giving an opinion:** the information published by an employee on online social networks may be falsely associated with the official position of the College. The employee must identify himself as the sole author and as being personally liable for what he or she writes on a blog for example. He or she could even put a

warning such as "This is my personal opinion and it does not necessarily represent the views of my employer" to avoid misunderstanding.

For this reason, employees shall not use their College's email address to convey personal opinions.

### **6.3 Control and monitoring**

If the College administration has reasonable cause to doubt an employee's compliance with the terms set out in this policy, it may monitor and audit the employee's use of online social networks.

## **ARTICLE 7 - Possible Sanctions for Employees and Students**

If the use of online social networks does not comply with this policy, the College may ask the offender to remove content deemed non-compliant, ask him or her to apologize to the injured parties, impose a penalty up to and including dismissal from the College for a student, and disciplinary actions up to dismissal for an employee, and eventually take legal actions.

## **ARTICLE 8 - Responsibility for Applying this Policy**

The Director of Human Resources and Communications is responsible for applying this policy.

## **ARTICLE 9 - Effective Date**

This policy enters into effect when enacted.