Social media top tips for departments
Setting up a social media channel
1. Consider aims and audience

**What is your aim in setting up the channel?**
- Promoting research
- Promoting a service
- Interacting with current students
- Raising awareness.

**Who are you targeting with your content?**
- Current students
- Prospective students
- Other academics
- Research collaborators
- Business/enterprise.
2. Find the right channel

Each platform has a different purpose and typical audience. Once you have defined your aims and target audience, find the channel that is most relevant to share your content on. Demographics shift overtime. You can use a search engine to find the latest reports. A good example is Sprout Social, who do an annual demographics report.
3. Inform the Digital team

Contact digital@royalholloway.ac.uk to tell us that you are creating a channel. The Digital team are able to offer help and advice where needed. It also means that the main Royal Holloway accounts can follow and engage with you.
Your username must be in the format: RH(relevant subject) eg @RHResearch. If this name has already been taken, use an underscore at the start of the format eg @_RHResearch. For channels that allow more flexibility use the format Royal Holloway (relevant subject) eg Royal Holloway Research. Using the same format, or very close matches, for all Royal Holloway accounts ensures consistency and makes the brand more recognisable on social media.
Your profile image is the first thing most followers will see, so think about what you want the first impression to be when selecting it. Many Royal Holloway accounts use the Coat of Arms (which you can find in the Brand Toolkit), but this is not a requirement if you’d rather use something more specific. The background image also contributes to audience perception, but can be changed regularly to display more timely images.
6. Profile biography

The official twitter feed of the Department of English, Royal Holloway University of London, and home of our renowned Creative Writing UG, MA & PhD programmes.

📍 Egham, Surrey TW20 OEX
🔗 royalholloway.ac.uk/english/

Royal Holloway is one of the UK’s leading research-intensive universities. Based in Surrey, our campus is among the most beautiful in the world.

📍 Egham, Surrey
🔗 royalholloway.ac.uk
📅 Joined March 2009

Geography at Royal Holloway
The Instagram account of Royal Holloway’s Department of Geography - one of the world’s leading centres for geographical research and teaching.

www.royalholloway.ac.uk/geography

The profile biography should be used to give an insight into the sort of content that you share, provide more details about who you are and link to relevant website content.
7. Set aside resources and time

Ensure that you have the resources and time to keep the channel active. It is important to post regularly with engaging and consistent content, whilst also monitoring all channels and checking for messages and engagement. A sample departmental social media schedule can be found on the [intranet digital best practice page](#).
Running a social media channel
When sharing images online it is important that you have relevant permission. You are responsible for seeking permissions from the individuals featured in your photographs. Information about how to notify people that photography or filming is taking place and on gaining individual permissions, can be found in the [Brand Toolkit on the intranet](#).
2. Use good quality images and video

Images and video convey to the audience who you are and what you do, so the better the quality of these, the better the audience’s perception. Ensure that images are not blurry and are the correct dimensions for the platform that you are uploading to, in order to prevent unintended cropping or distortion. There a range of images available from the Royal Holloway image library.
If you don’t hold copyright for a piece of original content (of any format) and it’s not creative commons, or free to use, you need permission before using it in a post. If you infringe copyright you may be putting yourself and the College at risk of legal action.
Monitor the interaction your posts get; this will give you an indication of the types of content that work well with your audience and help you to plan future content. You can see post interactions for most channels by simply viewing the post. For more complex information consider free social media dashboards like Hootsuite and Tweetdeck.
Tips to boost engagement
Posts with multimedia (images, video, audio) get much higher engagement rates than those without. This is because they jump out at people skimming through a social feed and grab their attention.
Where possible upload video directly to the channel, rather than simply including a hyperlink to a YouTube video. People are less likely to click through to the video than if it comes up in their feed and automatically starts playing.
Adding a location increases your chances of engagement, as tagged posts will show up in location searches. This can be done on most of the major social media channels.
Tag @RoyalHolloway to let us know about events, research, news and updates. We will engage with this content and share when possible. Tagging will work on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
Connecting with other channels by tagging them is important for building a network and reaching wider audiences. Accounts will be notified when you tag them and may share your content, if it is relevant and of interest to them, with their followers.
6. Include a call-to-action

Include a call-to-action linking to a relevant page (for example a news story, event listing or course page) in your posts. You can then track how many people use this link with bitly.com.
National awareness days are a good opportunity to become involved in a wider discussion on social media and promote relevant content. You can use hashtags and engage with relevant accounts to increase your reach and engagement.
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