Policy Name:	Web & Digital Content
Originating/Responsible Department:	Department of University Communications
Approval Authority:	Senior Management Committee
Date of Original Policy:	June 2008
Last Updated:	April 2024
Mandatory Revision Date:	April 2029
Contact:	Assistant Director, Digital Communications

Policy Statement:

The Web & Digital Content Policy is the joint responsibility of the Department of University Communications (DUC) and the Department of Information Technology Services (ITS). The Policy complements existing University policies and guidelines. Digital content delivered via Carleton University websites, social media accounts and other digital mediums is consumed by external visitors, students, staff, and faculty to receive relevant timely information. The accuracy and timeliness of information directly impacts the integrity and reputation of the University. Carleton University is committed to providing accurate, timely and accessible digital content to our audiences and the public. All digital content must be in compliance with all applicable policies, laws and regulations, including but not limited to accessibility, anti-spam, privacy, defamation, human rights, harassment and copyright laws.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Web & Digital Content Policy is to define the University's position with respect to acceptable and accessible digital content. This policy addresses the requirements for digital content and the development of that content to ensure that it is of high quality, accurate, timely and accessible. This policy also aims to protect Carleton University's reputation and to comply with its legal obligations regarding digital content publication.

Scope:

This Policy applies to all digital content created, published, or distributed by Carleton University, including, but not limited to, web content, social media content, mass email content, and multimedia content. The Policy applies to any or all individuals who are responsible for content published on a website in the Carleton University domain whose address ends in carleton.ca; any individuals creating or distributing content on a Carleton University branded or Carleton University affiliated social media channel/account, or any or all individuals who are responsible for sending email communications that have embedded URLs within the email communication. The policy applies to all employees, students, and affiliates of Carleton University who create, curate, publish, or distribute digital content on behalf of Carleton University and any of its operating units or departments.

Content includes but is not limited to: text, layout, imagery, hyperlinks, video, audio and graphics.

Procedure:
Members of the Carleton community involved with digital publishing to a Carleton University website, Carleton University owned social channel/account, or as otherwise defined in the "Scope" are responsible for ensuring that digital content is compliant with this Policy and other related University policies.

Those managing content on digital channels should contact the Department of University Communications for Carleton's digital publishing procedures and best practices.

- **Account Ownership**

  All domain names, web hosting accounts, social media channels/accounts, and other digital accounts governed by this policy created or used on behalf of Carleton University or any of its units are the property of Carleton University.

  Carleton University accounts must be created using Carleton University credentials and contact information. Carleton University employees and contractors who create an account governed by this policy must provide all usernames and passwords to their responsible supervisor.

- **Accessibility and Browsers and Mobile Devices**

  Website templates and digital content must be compliant with current the Carleton University Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities policy, as well as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 as outlined in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). This currently requires a rating of level AA or higher but may be subject to change from time to time. Producers of digital content must first complete the provided Carleton University accessibility training before publishing digital content to ensure they are aware of and compliant with accessibility laws and guidelines. Digital content should be tested for accessibility compliance using automated and manual tools in accordance with WCAG 2.0 AA standards. Issues with accessibility identified during testing must be addressed before content publication. Web pages and digital content must be easily rendered by a wide variety of web browsers and devices.

- **Brand Guidelines**

  All digital content created, published, or distributed by Carleton University or on its behalf must adhere to the brand guidelines.

- **Copyright**

  Content on Carleton University-owned websites, social media channels/accounts, and other digital platforms must conform to copyright laws as expressed in the *Copyright Act* and the University's Copyright Guidelines. Unless fair dealing or another copyright exception applies (see the *Fair Dealing Policy*), written permission is required from the

owner of copyrighted content before any copyright-protected information, content, or images can be placed on a University website or social media account. All digital content must include proper attribution for any third-party materials used and have appropriate authorization.

Subject to the terms of any Carleton University contract or applicable collective agreement(s), Carleton University owns the copyright to any content created for Carleton University-owned websites, social media channels/accounts, and other digital platforms.

- **Duplication of Official Content & Duplicate Content**

    For the purpose of this Policy, "official" refers to digital content that is central to the Carleton's mission, and has University-wide implications. The Department of University Communications will liaise with managers when questions are raised about the posting of unofficial content on the university's website, social media or other digital platforms.

    Official content, such as course listings, must not be replicated from its original location.

- **Advertising and Fundraising**

    Content on any Carleton digital platform must be for information purposes or related to the teaching, learning and research mission of the University. Advertising for profit purposes, or content posted in exchange for financial gain, is strictly prohibited and any content or messages must comply with all legal requirements including but not limited to fundraising, charitable and anti-spam requirements. The Advertising and Brand Identity policies apply to all content on the Carleton University domain and social media platforms.

    Private sector or profit-making organizations are prohibited from advertising on any Carleton University website, unless they are recognized sponsors of the University as determined by the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) and such content complies with Commercial and Supplemental Revenue Generating Activities Policy and the Anti-Spam Compliance Policy and all applicable charitable, fundraising and legal requirements.

    Fundraising for non-university programs, organizations or services is prohibited on any website without the expressed written approval of the Chief Advancement Officer.

- **Linking**

    Links on Carleton University digital platforms must serve the mission of the University. Sharing links solely to draw attention to commercial goods and services is prohibited as per the Commercial and Supplemental Revenue Generating Activities Policy and

the Anti-Spam Compliance Policy.

When creating links to Carleton University digital content, URLs should include some form of reference data for analytic and reporting purposes.

Links to external resources where the link is to an external domain that falls out of the defined scope (i.e. – anything other than *.carleton.ca) must be communicated to the audience. Indicate that the link in question leads off the carleton.ca domain.

Links to internal resources where the link is to an internal domain that falls in the defined scope (i.e. – any site suffix ending in *.carleton.ca) must not include circular references (i.e. links that redirect the user back to the same location from which they came).

Bulk emails that contain embedded links must be suffixed by a *.carleton.ca URL address such that when a user either hovers over the embedded link, or clicks on the embedded link it is evident that they are going to be directed to a website that ends in *.carleton.ca. If the goal is to redirect a user to a third party website, then the user must land on a *.carleton.ca website and then be redirected as per the External Linking section above.

- **Prohibited Content**

  Any information and content found on the Carleton domain or University owned channels as defined in the "Scope", must comply with University policies, and with all applicable law.

  Content which, by word or image, falls under the criteria below is prohibited. This list includes, but is not limited to:

  - Displays or promotes pornographic, offensive and/or obscene material.
  - Promotes or incites violence, the use of weapons, illegal activity, hatred, alcohol or illegal drugs.
  - Contains abusive and/or threatening language and/or imagery that targets individuals or groups.
  - Contains personalized attacks or is defamatory.
  - Ridicules or promotes stereotypes, discrimination, intolerance and/or hostility towards any race, sex, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, creed, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, or citizenship.
  - Publishes information, the purpose of which is to cause harm or which would reasonably be known to cause harm.
  - Violates the University's policies and legal requirements.

- **Privacy**

Carleton University complies with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and the *Personal Health Information Protection Act* (PHIPA). The communication of personal information on the web shall be by the applicable provisions of FIPPA and PHIPA. Inquiries regarding privacy and this statement are to be directed to the Privacy Office. All Outbound digital communications and digital advertising sent through email must be compliant with Canada Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL), and in accordance with the Anti-Spam Compliance Policy. All outbound digital communications, digital advertising and tracking, regardless of medium, must be compliant with FIPPA, and in accordance with the Access to Information and Privacy Policy and Personal Health Information Processing Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities:
Anyone responsible for digital content publication and maintenance is responsible for:
- Ensuring that content is delivered in an accessible manner that supports all mainstream internet browsers and devices
- Ensuring that content does not infringe upon copyright
- Ensuring that official university content is not duplicated across multiple sites and/or pages.
- Ensuring that links embedded with content adhere to the contenting linking policy
- Ensuring that content does not contain prohibited content
- Ensuring that content adheres to the various privacy acts with which the university is compliant.
- Ensuring that applicable content is in compliance with the *Carleton University Retention Schedule.*
- Ensuring content complies with applicable University policy and legal requirements.

Individuals sending communications or directing their audience to third party web sites must ensure:

- That URL links to third party websites are redirected via a carleton.ca URL first, such as redirecturl.carleton.ca/redirectpath.
- Email communications that contain embedded links must be redirected via a Carleton.ca URL first, such as redirecturl.carleton.ca/redirectpath.

Contacts:
- For general inquiry: Assistant Director, Digital Communications and Strategy, Department of University Communications
- For technical inquiry: Director, Enterprise Applications, Information Technology Services
- For anti-spam and privacy compliance questions: Manager, Privacy and Access to Information, Privacy Office
- For fair-dealing and copyright: Legal Counsel, Office of the General Counsel

Related Policies:

- Acceptable Use of Information Technology and Email
- Acceptable Use Policy for Information Technology
- Access to Information and Privacy
- Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities
- Advertising
- Anti-Spam Compliance
- [Brand Guidelines](#)
- Brand Identity
- Commercial and Supplemental Revenue-Generating Activities
- Corporate Records and Archives Policy
- Fair Dealing
- Human Rights Policies and Procedures
- Internal Fundraising
- Personal Health Information Processing (PHIP)
- Student Communication Policy