



PURPOSE

To protect and preserve the Buddha Dhamma as set out in First and Second Objectives of the BVOQLD constitution

OBJECTIVES

The Social Media Policy outlines protocols for using social media to communicate BVOQLD activity and provides guidance to Members of Sanga, Committee Members, Sub Committee members, Members, Volunteers, Participants in BVOQLD programs / events and member of the public who chooses to avail themselves of the facilities / services offered by BVOQLD (collectively referred to as **Stakeholders**) in their official and personal use of social media.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS

- BVOQLD takes all reasonable measures to establish that members of the Sanga invited to present sermon's at BVOQLD are practitioner of the Buddha's teachings in accordance with the constitution. BVOQLD does not verify the accuracy of each sermon.
- **It is the responsibility of each person** listening or reading the Buddha Dhamma to clarify their understanding of the content of any program presented by BVOQLD. Also see **Clarification** below.
- It is the responsibility of all **Stakeholders to abide by this policy.**
- Failure to abide by this policy may result in a **Stakeholder** losing some or all of their privileges and access to BVOQLD and its programs / activity as determined at the sole discretion of the Management Committee.
- Where BVOQLD believes it has suffered reputational damage BVOQLD reserves the right to pursue legal relief.
- If in doubt obtain consent from the Management committee before proceeding. You may do so via email to secretary@bvoqld.org

POLICY STATEMENT

BVOQLD is committed to ensuring **Stakeholders** understand the Social Media Policy and expectations of them when making public comment both in the course of their official duties and as a private citizen.

It has been developed to assist the **Stakeholders** to use social media and feel empowered to participate in public debates, while being mindful of their obligations and responsibilities to BVOQLD, to the general public and under relevant legislation.

The same high standards of conduct and behaviour generally expected of **Stakeholders** also apply when participating online through social media. Online participation should reflect and uphold the values, integrity and reputation of BVOQLD.

Note, the Australian Public Service Commission guidance for personal behaviour on social media sets out the rationale to extend obligations to the private social media space.

<https://www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/integrity/integrity-resources>

This policy adopts a similar approach in safeguarding the integrity of BVOQLD as an institution.

In instances where there is conflict or lack of clarity, guidance may be pursued from the teachings of the Lord Buddha as set out in the constitution and as guided by the Incumbent Chief member of Sanga of BVOQLD.

SOCIAL MEDIA - DEFINITION

For the purpose of this Policy, social media refers to any online social network, digital platform, application, website, file sharing platform and any other suchlike that permits / allows a user to record, create, share, store content online. For example, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Signal, YouTube, Dropbox, Google Drive, or any other suchlike storage mechanism or facility.

CONTENT - DEFINITION

For the purpose of this Policy, Content means any and all content, including but not limited to posts, tweets, articles, copy, content, videos, photographs, and any other suchlike created by any **Stakeholder** in the course of interacting with BVOQLD, its programs, its activities or its **Stakeholders**.

OFFICIAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

BVOQLD Management Committee manages and authorizes the use of all official BVOQLD social media accounts. Approved Program / Activity Leads are responsible for engaging online with stakeholders and the general public in an official capacity.

Program Leads may be a combination of members of Sanga, Committee members, Members as determined by the Management Committee on a case-by-case basis. Non- members cannot be an Approved Program / Activity Lead.

BVOQLD's IT officer will always have root control of all social media and will execute and permit operation of social media as directed by the Management Committee.

POWERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE IN MANAGING SOCIAL MEDIA

These powers are derived from the management committee's responsibility to uphold and protect the First and Second Objectives of the constitution.

- To determine who is a fit and proper person to be a participant in an official Social Media Channel.
- To remove persons deemed not suitable from the official Social Media. The Management Committee is not bound to provide reasons or explanations.

- To monitor social media in general to ensure BVOQLD is not brought to disrepute or misrepresented.
- To monitor Official Social Media to ensure content meets with the BVOQLD Objectives as stated in the constitution.
- The powers are only limited by the BVOQLD constitution and relevant law.

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

IMPORTANT - All **Stakeholders** need to be familiar with, and apply the following key principles when using Social Media:

Administration – all official BVOQLD social media accounts must be administered by

- The President or Vice President
- The Spiritual Leader of BVOQLD
- And One management committee member
- And one Program / Activity Lead under the guidance of the Management Committee
- And BVOQLD IT Officer

Any one of these persons can be contacted via the secretary at secretary@bvoqld.org

Aim of Social Media Group – A social media group is a group of individuals who have consented to being a member of a social media group that pushes content to individuals. Each group must have a stated aim congruent with the BVOQLD objectives. Once a group is established the aims of the group should not be changed without the consent of the group members. It would be prudent to have the stated aims of each group published on the BVOQLD web site with an application form requesting to join the group. This will help deliver the administrative outcomes required in this policy.

Approved activity – before commencing a social media initiative / channel / broadcast, it must be supported in writing by a needs assessment and a fit for Purpose evaluation which has been approved by the Management Committee.

BVOQLD Members who wish to request for new social media activity must do so in writing to the Secretary (secretary@bvoqld.org) with adequate time for the management committee to assess the request and enable authorisation of such activity. A minimum 6 weeks' notice is required.

The Administrators of BVOQLD social media accounts, will delete, remove, amend, edit content posted by program participants where such content is deemed inappropriate by the Administrator. This is to ensure content posted on BVOQLD social media is fit for Purpose.

Be accurate – make sure the information published is correct and cite sources where appropriate. Refer to the appropriate social media Administrator to ensure content is fit for Purpose before posting content. See **Approved activity**.

Be aware - that content published on BVOQLD Official Social Media may become publicly available. Once posted on the internet it can never be removed or erased. Content published on the internet can remain public indefinitely. Content can also be replicated and shared

beyond the original intended audience who may view it out of context or use it for an unintended purpose with unintended consequences

Be impartial – avoid statements that advocate or criticise policies of government or political parties. Avoid conflicts of interest through endorsement or criticism of third-party providers, partners, products or services. Personal opinion must not be expressed. Avoid statements / posts from other religious organisations of any faith. Exception is where a particular content from another source is considered directly relevant to the task or activity.

Be Respectful – be courteous and polite. Do not post obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful content.

Be Relevant - Social Media can be distracting and waste the time of many if not used effectively. The content posted should be solely focussed on the intended Program / Activity outcome. Therefore, the following practices are strongly discouraged:

- Posting of emojis
- Posting images irrelevant to the outcome
- Posting of appreciative comments
- Acknowledging receipt of message except where specifically requested by author

Where such practices occur the Administrator/ Program Lead is to privately inform the person concerned to desist. Repeated offending will see the person removed from the Social Media channel.

Clarification – Any person who listens to or reads Buddha Dhamma teachings presented by BVOQLD and requires clarification of such content can do so in the following manner;

- a. Firstly, refer your clarification directly to the member of the Sanga presenting the content.
- b. Secondly, direct your clarification in writing to dhamma.query@bvoql.org
- c. Clarifications to the above mailbox will be responded to only where appropriate and at a time when the member of Sanga has free time from his other commitments.

Consent – BVOQLD must seek consent from each individual before including them in any Social Media group. If the individual is not an adult, then consent must be obtained from the parents or legal guardian. Consent to be included in one Social Media group does not automatically imply consent to join other social media groups. The aims of the particular social media group must be provided to the individuals before seeking their consent.

Intellectual property – BVOQLD claims all intellectual property rights and copyrights of all social media content produced, recorded, collected or stored by any **Stakeholders** that shows, refers, depicts in any manner, any program / activity conducted by BVOQLD either on its own premises or outside. All such BVOQLD content should be made available for consumption ONLY and Directly via official social media channels of BVOQLD. No exceptions to this rule are permitted.

The BVOQLD logo may only be used for official BVOQLD social media channels operated by BVOQLD. All **Stakeholders** must always respect others copyrights and always get permission to use words, images or materials from other sources.

Identity and authenticity – BVOQLD’s Social Media are unique and stands on its own. BVOQLD must always use its own organisation name when publishing content. Wherever possible use BVOQLD Logo on all official social media. Wherever possible use BVOQLD Logo on all official social media.

The correct way to name a group is - The description of the activity preceded by the organisation name E.g. *BVOQLD Sunday Abhidhamma Class*.

Only use accounts identified as BVOQLD when publishing any BVOQLD content. (E.g. social media platforms, YouTube, telecom, etc)

Important see **Sharing** below.

Make a record - keep records of all persons permitted to join an official media channel where access is controlled. E.g.; Each official WhatsApp group must have a register of permitted participants with adequate identification to ensure the person is aligned with the Objectives of BVOQLD.

Privacy - Personal information about individuals cannot be provided to third-parties without their consent. The email address of **Stakeholders** and other identifiable information must be treated with discretion and care.

Protect and respect privacy – check the account privacy settings are appropriate for the scope of engagement. Protect privacy and personal information. Don’t share the private details of others. Don’t disclose details of private conversations unless explicit consent from the relevant parties has been obtained.

Record Keeping - Social media platforms are often provided by third-party providers and are not official recordkeeping systems. In managing content in BVOQLD social media accounts, Program Leads must keep records in the designated BVOQLD cloud storage. Ensuring appropriate records such as content published, register of participants, key management decisions regarding the Program or Activity are all important to the integrity and longevity of the Program.

Retrospective – The implementation of this policy must be retrospective, limited only by the extent permitted by law and technical feasibility. Special attention should be drawn to historical content currently available in non-official social media, where such content is brought under the governance of this policy. Where such content cannot be brought under the purview of this policy all possible legal means must be pursued to have the content removed permanently from social media and the internet.

Sharing – The correct and only way to share any BVOQLD program / activity is by providing only the BVOQLD official social media URL. No comments or personal views should be attached to the URL. Under no circumstance should content be copied in any manner shape

or form. Even a 'screen shot' is not permitted. The purpose of this stringent policy is to avoid the possible distortion of the Buddha Dhamma as taught by the Buddha himself.

Never co-brand or share BVOQLD Content with any other organization, association, social media channel, social media platform, public or private social media entity. The intent is to clearly ensure that BVOQLD has no relationship or association with any other entity nor that it is so perceived.

Think first – review content before publishing. ***If in doubt, leave it out!***

Violations / Complaints / Breaches – Any member of the public can report violations of this policy, breaches of this policy and complaints against BVOQLD and its Social Media policies to the Secretary at secretary@bvoql.org

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