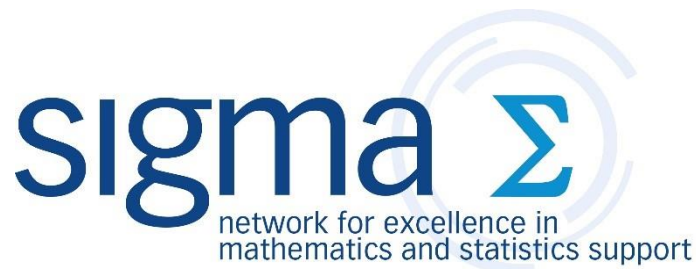


SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

Using social media to connect with your students, and beyond

Author: Cheryl Voake-Jones, Mathematics Resources Centre, University of Bath
Contributors: Emma Collins-Jones, Lynn Luong & Inès Righi



INTRODUCTION AND CONTENTS

This guide was completed as part of a **sigma**-funded project entitled 'A student-centred approach to promoting a mathematics support centre'. The work was completed by the Mathematics Resources Centre at the University of Bath, alongside three student interns. The Mathematics Resources Centre, more commonly known as MASH (Mathematics & Statistics Help), provides mathematical and statistical support to all students at the University of Bath via daily drop-ins, appointments, service teaching, workshops, etc. Via research and student input, it quickly became apparent throughout the course of the project that social media is a powerful promotional tool, but that the majority of Mathematics and/or Statistics Support Centres (henceforth, MSCs) at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the **sigma** network are not active on social media.

Prior to undertaking this work, MASH activity on social media was sporadic and ineffective. Working with student interns over the 2015 summer vacation and the academic year 2015-16, MASH social media profiles were developed. This guide has been written based upon research undertaken and the knowledge acquired throughout the duration of the project; information is current for the time period previously mentioned. It is primarily aimed at those looking to use social media to promote MSCs at HEIs, though other support services and academic departments will still find much of the information relevant.

The two social media platforms explored in detail are Facebook and Twitter. The main features and functionalities of each platform are described, but it should be noted that this guide is not exhaustive, though it does include the main options available for each platform.

Before you start, it is important to know what you want to achieve via using social media. It is a very powerful tool to connect with students, but users should be clear on what benefits they hope to see or what impact they expect it to have. Undertaking a social media audit is recommended, whereby its use and purpose are scrutinised. Some issues that you may wish to consider are what you hope to achieve by being active on social media, who will take responsibility for the management of your social media profiles, and the metrics you will use for evaluation. Creating and maintaining social media profiles are not tasks to be taken light-heartedly. Social medias are competitive and busy; you need to be committed to developing your online presence.

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To find MASH on social media, go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/mash.bath>

<https://www.facebook.com/BathMASH>

<https://twitter.com/BathMASH>

COMMONLY USED SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Below are listed some of the most commonly used social medias in the United Kingdom, particularly those used by academics and students. This guide in particular focusses on Facebook and Twitter, two of the most popular social networking platforms worldwide, though much of the general advice is applicable to all platforms.



Facebook: A social network service and website. Users may make a personal profile, while other options include Groups and Pages.

www.facebook.com



Twitter: A social networking and microblogging service. Messages are known as “tweets” and are limited to 140 characters. Generally more public than Facebook.

Vine and Periscope are two popular services owned by Twitter; Vine is a video sharing service and Periscope is a video streaming platform.

www.twitter.com



Instagram: An online photo and video sharing social networking service. Users can apply digital filters and share with followers. Videos are limited to 15 seconds.

www.instagram.com



Google+: Google’s social networking website. Features include “circles”, where users can organise contacts into groups, “hangouts” for group video chats, and messaging.

<https://plus.google.com>



Pinterest: A photo sharing website. Users can upload, save, sort and manage images (“pins”) through collections known as pinboards.

www.pinterest.com



LinkedIn: A social networking website for people in professional jobs. Users can make connections with previous and current colleagues and post their work experience and skills. It is also used to both look for jobs and look for workers.

www.linkedin.com



YikYak: A location-based social network, more suited to smartphones than a computer. It allows users to anonymously post comments and images, which other users can up/down vote, reply to, and share.

www.yikyak.com



Tumblr: A microblogging and social networking website, owned by Yahoo! Users can post multimedia and other content to a blog, follow other users’ blogs and make blogs private.

www.tumblr.com



There are three main features of **Facebook**: Profiles, Pages and Groups. Each have their own purpose and the choice of which to use will depend upon the aims of your use of social media.

Personal profile:

A Facebook profile is for non-commercial use and is meant to represent a single individual.

Users can personalise their profiles using photos, personal information and work history. A connection or link on Facebook is known as a 'friend'. You can add friends, or they can add you. The connection is not made until a friend request is accepted.

There is additionally the option to follow other profiles, which allows you to see public updates from people that you are not friends with.

Group:

A Facebook Group allows specific sets of people with a shared interest to connect.

Group members can post comments, ask/answer questions, and send mass messages directly to the group members' inboxes.

There are three privacy options:

- Open: Anyone can join the Group, or be added or invited by a member
- Closed: Anyone can ask to join the Group, or be added or invited by a member
- Secret: Anyone can join the Group, but they must be added or invited by a member

Page:

A Facebook Page is like a profile but for an organisation, business or public figure.

By 'liking' a Page, you will see updates from the Page in your Newsfeed.

Profile owners can manage multiple Pages, and Pages can have multiple administrators to help with Page management. Pages come with a set of features that are unavailable for profiles and groups. These include options on how to manage notifications and the functionality to schedule posts. Insights are also available, to monitor the activity on your Page.

Setting up an account

Go to www.facebook.com. Fill in the required information and click the **Create an account** button. Facebook will send you a confirmation email; you will need to click the link contained within that email in order to complete the set up of your account. Date of birth is requested as users must be a minimum of 13 years old. On your profile, you can hide the year to protect your age.

At the bottom, there is the option to **Create a Page** for a celebrity, band or business.

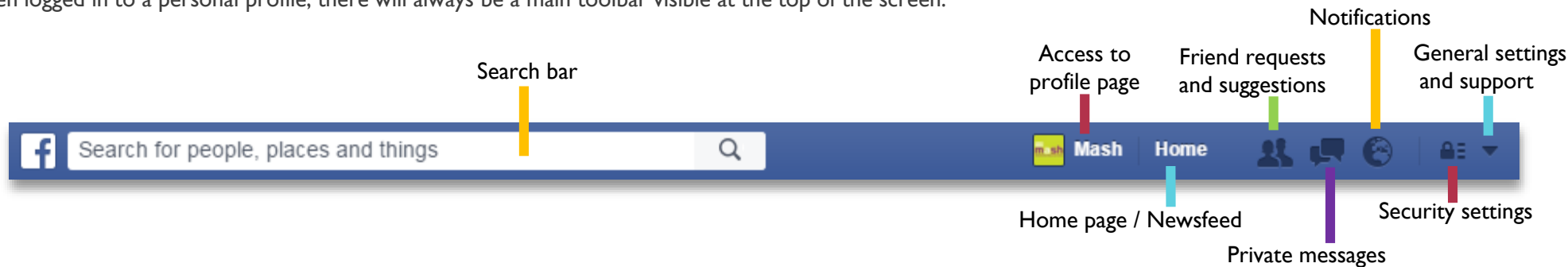
Pages are free, but functionality will be restricted if you have a Page only. For example, logging in to Facebook with a Page only (and no personal profile) will mean that there is no search functionality. It may be difficult to get students to like your page, if you cannot add them as friends.

FACEBOOK: PERSONAL PROFILES

A Facebook **personal profile** is for non-commercial use and is meant to represent a single individual. Profiles can be personalised to include a plethora of information, including work and education history, contact information, family connections and relationship status, hobbies, interests, photos, videos, ...and so on.

A connection on Facebook is known as a 'friend'. You can add friends, or they can add you. The connection is not made until a friend request is accepted. Once a profile is created, security settings can be changed such that it is public (all users can see your profile) or private (only friends can see your profile). Additionally, the audience can be limited by area or organisation.

When logged in to a personal profile, there will always be a main toolbar visible at the top of the screen:



Profile pages, the Home page (also known as the newsfeed) and a number of other options are covered later.

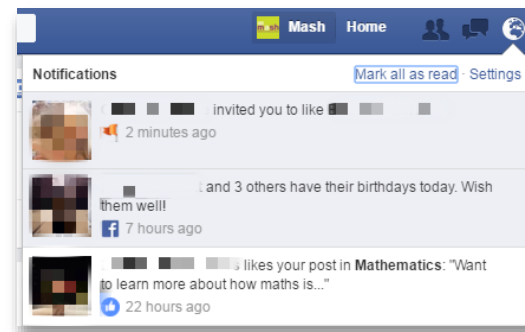
Private messages are only visible to you and the other user(s) involved the message. A useful feature of private messages is the indication of who has read the message.

If there is a new friend request or approved friend request, private message or notification that you have not yet seen / dealt with, this will be indicated on the main toolbar.

An example of the indication of a new notification is shown:



Simply click to view the notification:



Unread/unclicked notifications will remain grey. Read/clicked notifications will be white.

There is the option to mark all notifications as read, as well as a wide variety of notification settings that can be changed to ensure that you are only informed of content that you care about.

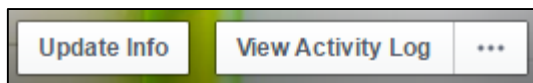
FACEBOOK: PERSONAL PROFILES

Your **profile page** is your personal page; all individual Facebook users have a profile page. See example below. You can personalise your page with images and information, post updates or other media, and see a list of your friends.

The screenshot shows a Facebook profile for 'Joblink Bath'. The profile picture is a blue and white logo. The cover photo is a banner with text about a survey and a cash prize. The profile information section shows the user's name, location, and education. The friends list shows 34 mutual friends. The timeline shows a post from 'Joblink Bath' about a job vacancy. Annotations with colored lines point to various parts of the page:

- Profile picture – click to change**: Points to the profile picture.
- Indicator of friendship with this user**: Points to the 'Friends' button.
- Indicator that we are following this friend. Following a friend means that they will appear in your Newsfeed.**: Points to the 'Following' button.
- This whole area is the timeline, sometimes also known as the wall. This is a friend's timeline; we can post directly onto their timeline, including uploading photos and videos (if their security settings allow it).**: Points to the timeline area.
- List of this user's friends, including indication of the number of mutual friends**: Points to the friends list.

Directly beneath the user's name and cover photo is a tool bar. The same toolbar will also appear on your own personal profile. The options placed over the cover photo in your personal profile will differ slightly; instead of the Friends, Following and Message buttons, you will instead see buttons for Update Info and View Activity Log:



The Activity Log allows you to view all of your Facebook activity to date. The button with three dots provides additional options and settings relating to your profile.

FACEBOOK: PERSONAL PROFILES

Writing posts on your own personal profile is your way of interacting with your friends. Generally, Facebook users post about their activities that day, a link to an interesting news article or event, and/or upload a photo or video. There is more on ideas of what to post on page 21. To write a post, also known as a status update, go to your profile page and there will be space to write at the top of your timeline:

Add a photo or video to your post; this can also be achieved by clicking the camera icon at the bottom of the post

Life Events indicate important occurrences/events in your own life, such as starting a new job or moving house

Write text here; try to keep it succinct and informal

Once you have finished, click Post. Don't worry if you make a mistake, you can edit, hide and delete posts by clicking the downwards arrow on the top right of a posted status:

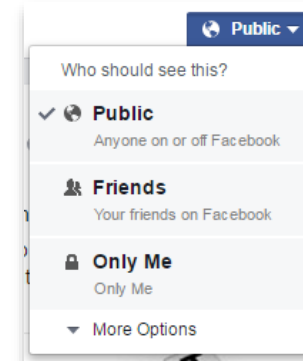
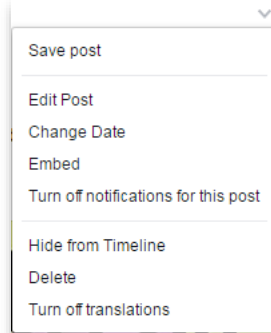
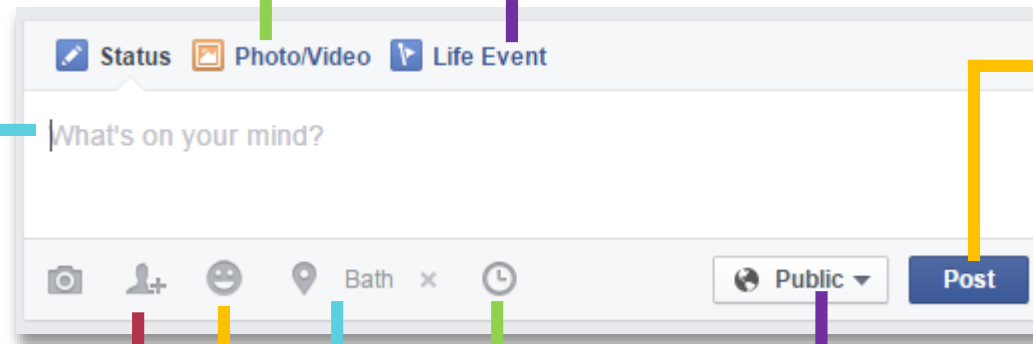
Tag friends in your post. They will then appear at the end of your post, or can be tagged within the text. Often suggestions will appear if you start typing the name of a friend, or alternatively use "@" to indicate to Facebook that you are tagging a friend.

Add what you are doing or how you are feeling to your post. This is a great way to add a personal touch to a post. There are a wide variety of inbuilt categories, actions and feelings to choose from, as well as a number of suggested events relating to the time of the year.

Add the date and time of your post. This is NOT a scheduler. It can only be used to backdate posts.

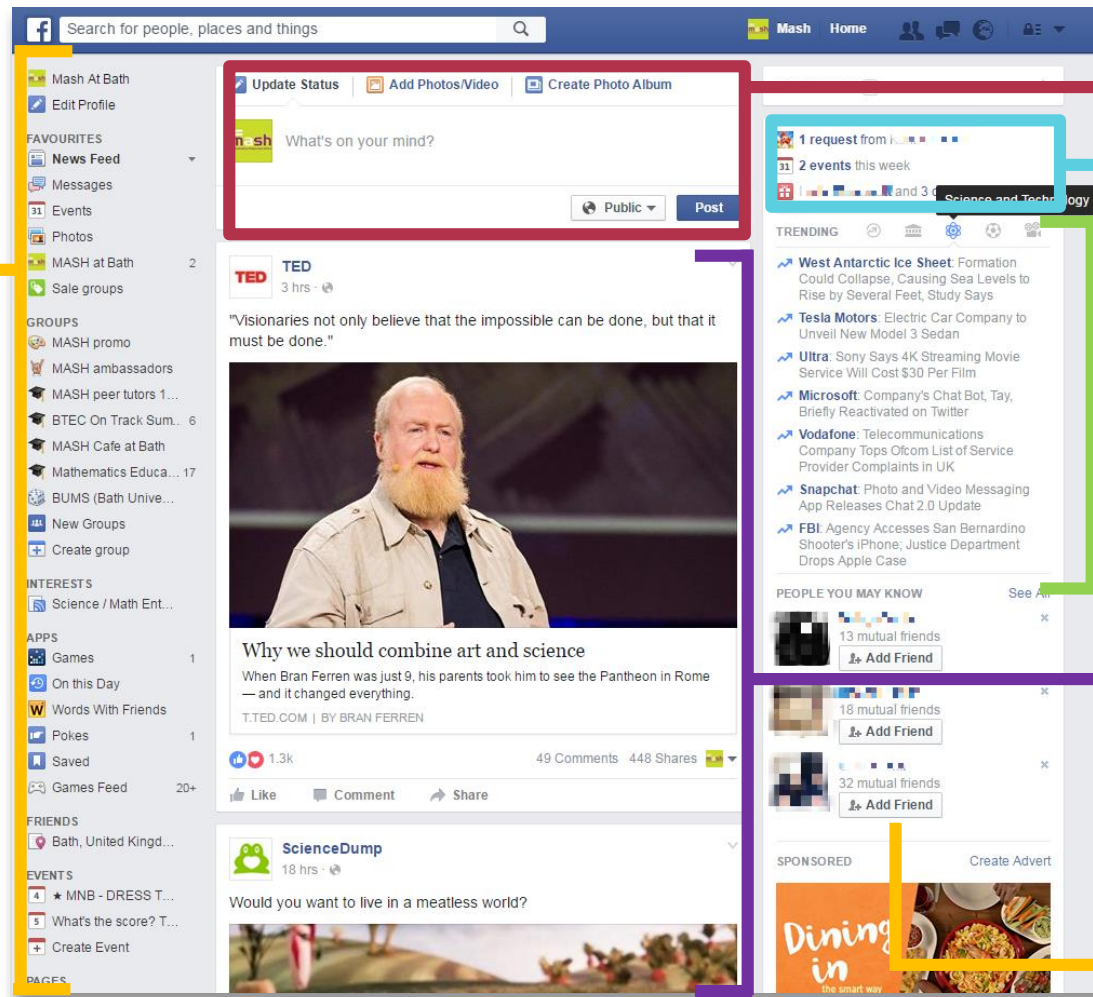
Add (or remove) the location from your post. Recently used locations will appear or you can add or search for a new location. If you are using a device with GPS capability, there will be nearby options to choose from available here.

Control the privacy settings of the post; click the downwards arrow to explore alternative options:



FACEBOOK: PERSONAL PROFILES

The **Home page**, accessed via clicking Home on the top toolbar, provides an up-to-date feed of posts from your friends, updates from your Groups and Pages, adverts, ...and so on. It also has a variety of other features:



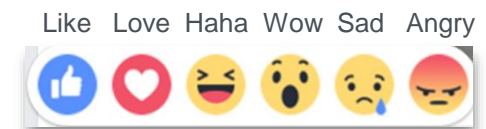
Update your status directly from the Home page without having to access your profile page

App requests, Page invites, upcoming events and today's birthdays from your friends list. Adding events on Facebook is a great way to publicise any workshops, conferences, etc. that you are hosting.

Trending news articles. News articles are 'trending' if they are attracting a lot of interest on social media, through comments and shares, for example. Here the Science and Technology category is selected; there are also categories for Top Trends, Politics, Sport, and Entertainment.

This is the main newsfeed. You can interact with posts by showing an emotion under the Like button, commenting via Comment, or using Share to share the post to your own timeline.

Emotions available are



Friend suggestions; click Add Friend to send a friend request

FACEBOOK: GROUPS

A **Facebook Group** allows specific sets of people with a shared interest to connect. Group members can post comments, ask/answer questions, and send mass messages directly to the group members' inboxes. They can be particularly useful when dealing with pre-determined student groups, such as MSC tutors.

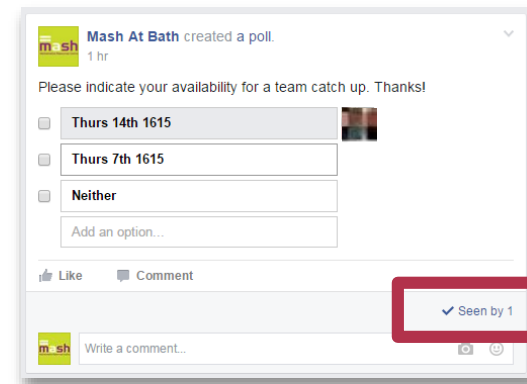


On the left is an example of a Group profile page. A Group profile looks similar to an individual personal profile, and shares some similar functionality in terms of writing posts and adding photos/videos.

On the top bar, the group name and supplementary information can be seen. There are options to change the notifications received relating to this group, as well as a search panel.

Writing a post is similar to writing a post on a personal profile, but the options are slightly different. There are additional options which are useful when writing a post in a Group, namely creating polls and adding files. This enables easy scheduling (see example below) and avoids clogging inboxes with attachments.

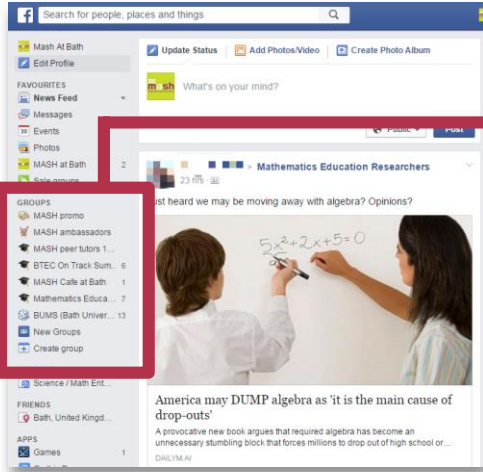
Example of a poll used within a group; in this case to schedule a meeting. Members can select multiple options, although this can be disabled.



Number of group members who have seen post so far

The list of current members can be seen, with the additional functionality of inviting new members, messaging all current members or starting a group chat. Posts by other members feature on the group's wall, where there is the opportunity to like, comment and share posts.

FACEBOOK: GROUPS



There are many groups which you can join, or request to join, or you can create your own. Individual users are members of Groups, so you must have a personal profile in order to join and interact with Groups.

From the Home page, you can see a shortened list of Groups that you are a member of in the list on the left-hand toolbar.

Clicking the header GROUPS allows you to see all groups that you are a member of, under the Your Groups tab, rather than the shortened list seen from the Home page.

There are other tabs which are worthwhile exploring too, particularly after you have joined some group and receive suggestions based on your current group memberships under Suggested Groups (shown here).

You can also view:

Friends' groups – groups most commonly joined by your friends;

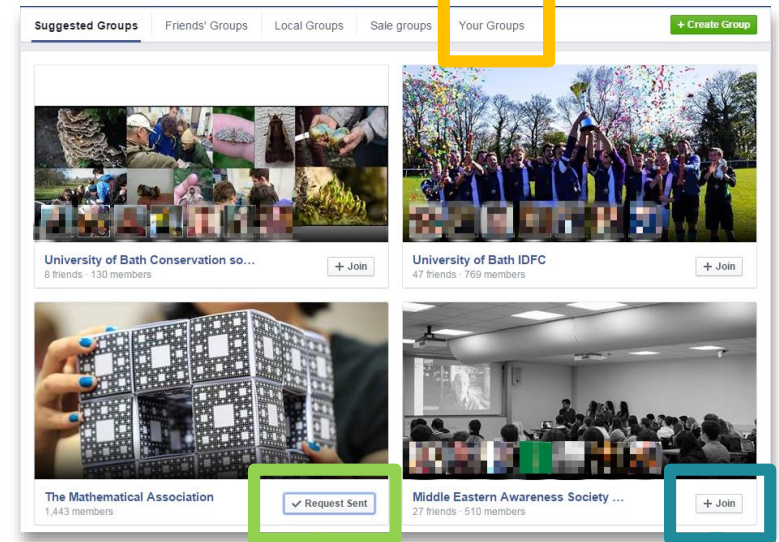
Local groups – groups near to you based on location (based on your personal profile); and

Sale groups – local groups that are specifically for buying and selling.

Joining a group

To join a group, simply click on the **+ Join** button if in the view shown above right, or on the **+ Join group** button if you have already selected the group within Facebook. Due to the three different group types available (Open, Closed, Secret) plus other privacy and security options, your request to join a group may remain pending until approved by a group administrator.

Depending on the group's settings, you can also be added to a group by a friend who's already a member. You will then receive a notification.



Pending invite; request to join group has been sent but not yet approved

Click to join group

FACEBOOK: GROUPS

Creating a Group

To create a Group, you must be logged in to your individual personal profile. There are several ways to create a Group. One way is from the Home page, go to GROUPS on the left-hand toolbar, and select Create Group. Enter the required information relating to your new Group in the relevant boxes.

Create New Group

Create Group: Within Bath University

Group name:

Members:

Favourites: ☐ Add this group to your favourites.

Privacy: ☒ Open
Anyone can find the group and see who's in it.
Anyone in Bath University can see posts.

☒ Closed
Anyone can find the group and see who's in it. Only members can see posts.

☐ Secret
Only members can find the group and see posts.


[Learn more about groups privacy](#)

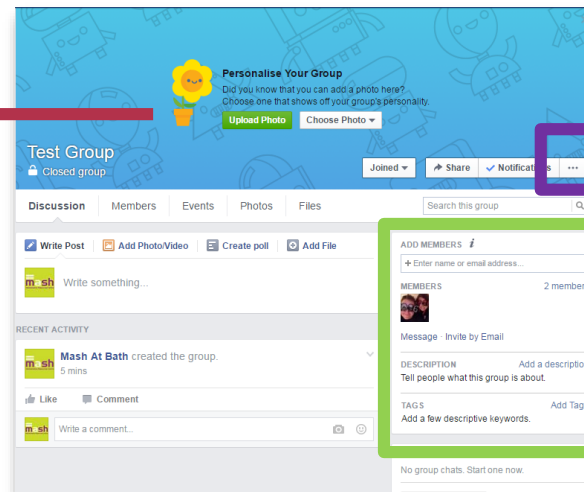
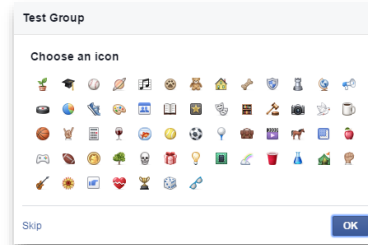
Once created, personalise your Group with a photo. You can upload a new photo or select one from your personal profile.

You may be given the option to create a Group within your university only. This depends on how your personal profile is set up and whether it was created using a ...ac.uk email address. If it was, then your university should feature here, as long as your profile is set up correctly.

An advantage of doing this is that it ensures all members also have a ...ac.uk email address from your university, guaranteeing that no Facebook users from outside your university can see the Group. However, be aware that this can be a disadvantage too; not all of your students will set up their Facebook accounts using their university email address (in fact, many are likely to have set up their accounts prior to coming to university). In that case, they will be required to link their Facebook account to their university email address, and will not be able to join groups that are defined as 'within' their university until they do this.

Once this setting has been decided, it cannot be later changed.

You then have the option to choose a Group icon (see right). If you skip this step, the default of  is chosen.



There are plenty of other options to explore relating to how you manage your Group; see the button next to Notifications.

Start adding members and add a description to your group here. Members can be added either by name from your current friend list, or by email address.

Make sure the description is meaningful and includes website/contact information if appropriate.

FACEBOOK: PAGES

A **Facebook Page** is like a personal profile but for an organisation, business or public figure. Pages look similar to personal profiles, but offer extra tools such as insights into who is looking at your Page, the ability to schedule posts, and advertising options. There are five different roles for users who manage Pages: Admin, Editor, Moderator, Advertiser and Analyst. These roles are listed in order of the level of access and responsibilities assigned to each role, from highest to lowest. Pages are therefore useful if you require multiple people managing one account. If you create a Page, you automatically become Admin for that Page. As Admin, you can also assign roles to other users on your Page. There is no limit to the number of roles, and anybody can create a Page. Below is an example:

On the top bar, the page name, photo, cover photo and category can be seen.
All Pages belong to a category from a defined list (more later).

The number of people who like this Page can be seen.
You can also invite friends to like a Page, including Pages that you manage.

Information about the Page; usually includes contact details and an overview of the organisation



This Page has been 'Liked', meaning that the personal user who liked the Page will receive updates from YERME in their newsfeed.

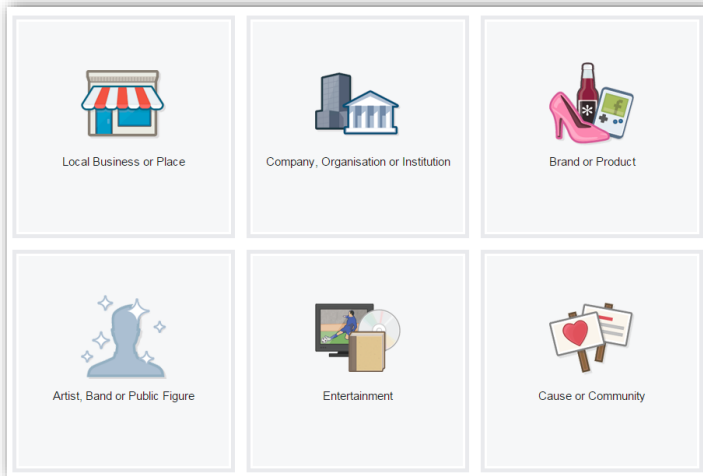
The timeline. Any updates by YERME will appear here. Only users with certain roles on the Page can post to its timeline, so this timeline will only feature posts from YERME. You can like, comment and share Page posts to your own personal profile.

Visitors can post to a Page, as long as visitor posts are not disabled. Visitor posts appear on the left side of a Page. You can additionally enable/disable other people from publishing photos and videos to your Page. If you allow them, they will appear in your Page's photo and video lists.

FACEBOOK: PAGES

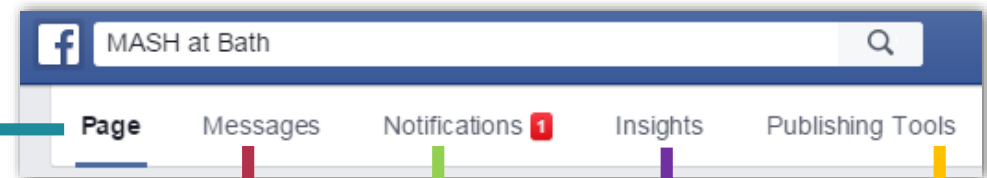
Creating a Page

To create a Page, you do not necessarily need to be logged in to an individual personal profile. However, it is advised to set up a Page as an existing user in order to maintain full functionality, such as access to the search bar. There are several ways to create a Page. One way is from the Home page, go to PAGES on the left-hand toolbar, and select **Create Page**. You will then need to choose from one of the following categories:




Select a category and then a sub-category from the drop-down menu that will appear.

Fill out the required information and click **Getting Started**, then follow the on-screen instructions to enter information, upload a photo and cover photo, etc. Once your Page is created, a toolbar will be visible at the top of the screen:



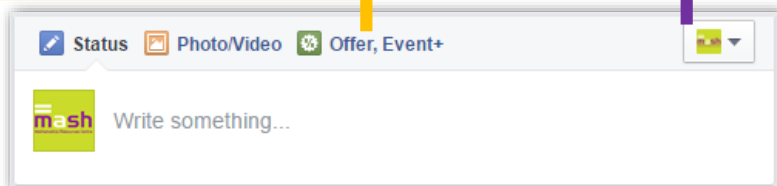
Private messages; similar to an email inbox for your Page.

Detailed insights into activity and engagement relating to your Page. Only available once the Page has received 30 likes.

Page notifications, such as new Page likes, likes/comments/shares of your posts, etc. The  indicates one unread notification.

Tools allowing you to draft, edit, review and schedule posts. The reach and interactions of previous posts can also be seen.

Access to your Page, including to the timeline to write a post. The options are similar to that of a personal profile/Group post, with the added option of adding an offer, event, milestone or note. If logged in using a personal profile, you can also choose between posting as the Page or as the personal profile by clicking the arrow and selecting from the dropdown.



Additional settings and support can be accessed via the options on the right of the toolbar at the top of the screen. Under Settings, you can assign roles, change the security settings, edit your notifications, etc.





Twitter is designed to help friends, family, colleagues and organisations stay connected via 'tweets'. A tweet is a post which can contain a maximum of 140 characters. Tweets can contain photos, videos and links, but these consume some of the character allowance. Twitter is generally simpler than Facebook, with fewer options. There is only one type of profile/account, though users can personalise their accounts and control security and privacy settings. However, Twitter is seen as a more public forum than Facebook. You do not even have to have an account to see other people's profiles (unless they are private, which is rare).

Connections are made via following other accounts. Following an account means that you have chosen to subscribe to their Twitter updates, which will appear on your Home page. Likewise, your updates will appear in the Home page of anyone that follows you.

Tweets are public by default, and it is recommended to keep them public unless there is a good reason otherwise. If you do not want them to be publicly visible, you can protect your tweets, so that they are only visible to your Twitter followers. If your tweets are protected, you will also receive a request whenever somebody new wants to follow you.

Setting up an account

Go to <https://twitter.com>. Fill in the required information and click **Sign up for Twitter**. Twitter will send you a confirmation email; you will need to click the link contained within that email in order to complete the set up of your account. Follow the step-by-step instructions, adding relevant information to your account. This includes options to upload a profile photo and import contacts.

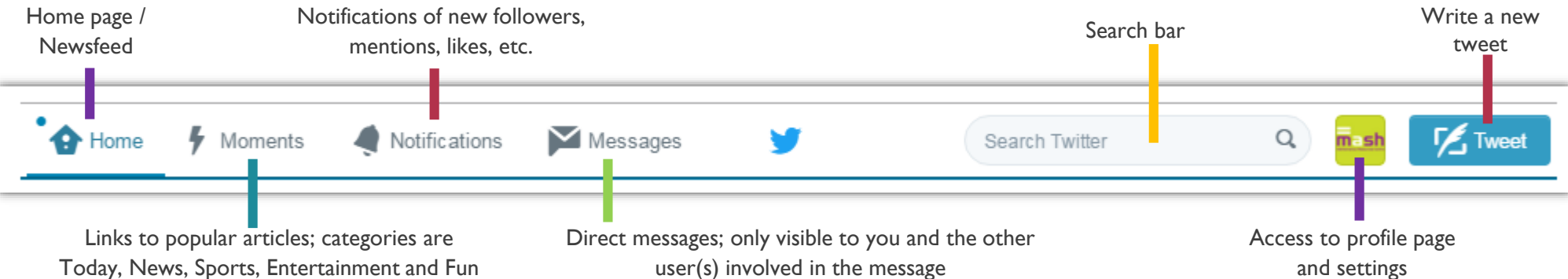



The username is also known as a Twitter handle. It is very important to choose an appropriate and meaningful username, as it can be seen on your Twitter profile and is what is used primarily for others to find you. If another user mentions you in a tweet, your username will be visible. Because of the strict character limit, it is also advisable to keep your username short. Others are less likely to mention you in a tweet if you take up too many characters. Usernames can be changed, but this should be avoided once an account is established.



TWITTER

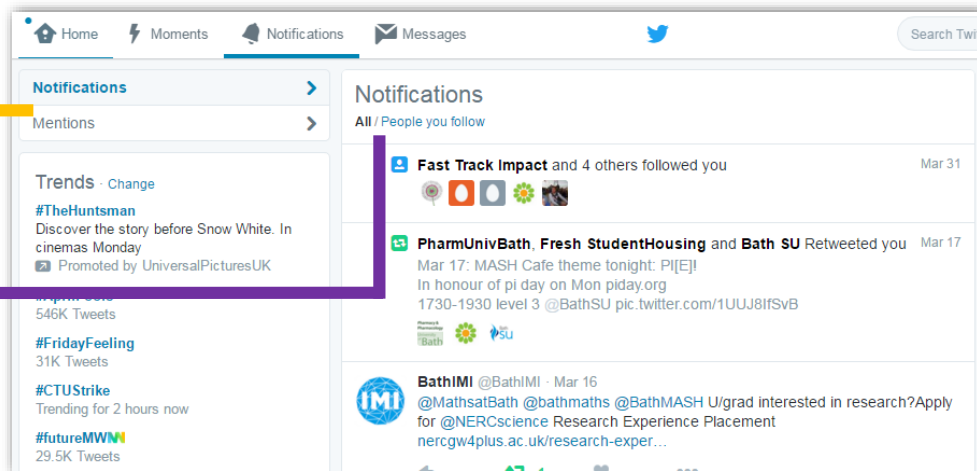
When logged in to Twitter, there will always be a **main toolbar** visible at the top of the screen:



The small dot next to the Home icon indicates that there are new unread tweets on the Home page. This only happens when the Home page is selected. New notifications and messages are indicated by a small number next to the icon indicating the number of unread notifications/messages:  Simply click to view.

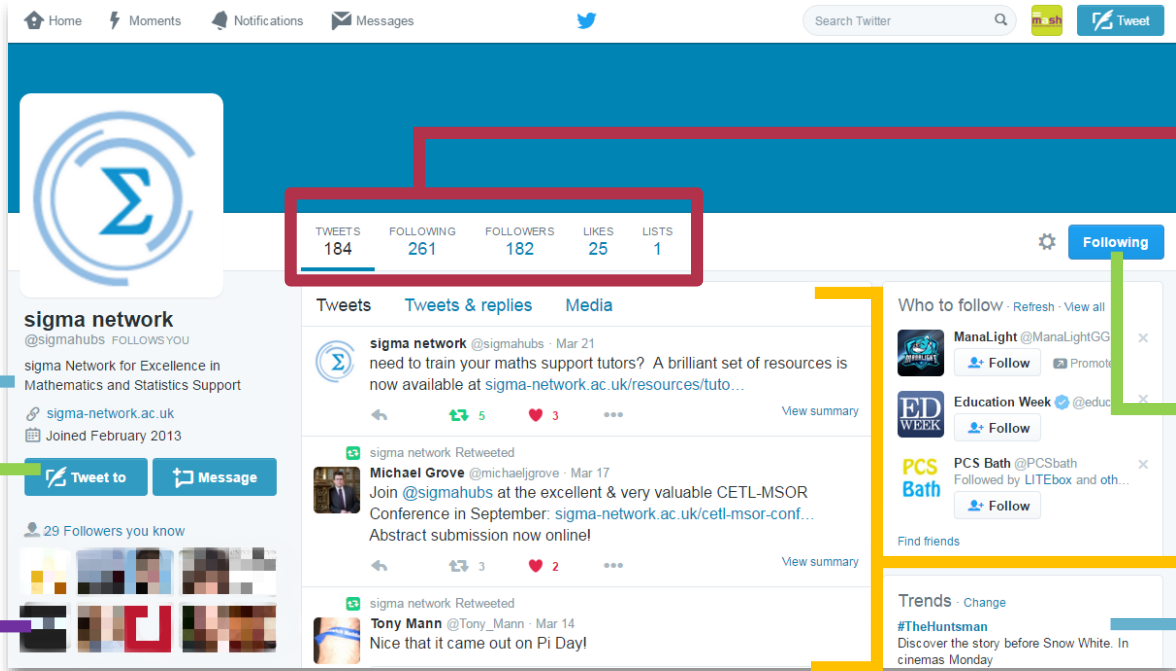
Within the Notifications tab, there is the option to view all notifications or just when you have been mentioned

You can also choose to view updates from all people or people that you follow



TWITTER

Your **profile page** is your personal page. See example below of the **sigma** Twitter page. You can personalise your page with images and information.

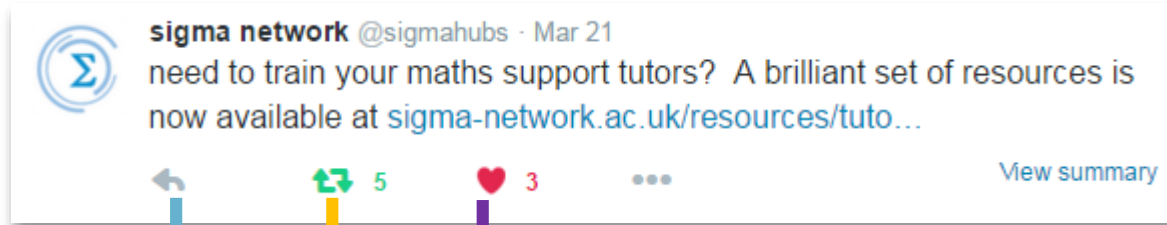


The screenshot shows the Twitter profile of 'sigma network' (@sigmahubs). The profile header includes a blue banner, a profile picture (a blue sigma symbol), and a bio: 'sigma Network for Excellence in Mathematics and Statistics Support'. Below the bio is the website 'sigma-network.ac.uk' and the date 'Joined February 2013'. To the right of the bio is a 'Following' button. Below the bio is a section '29 Followers you know' with a grid of profile pictures. The main content area shows a list of tweets. The first tweet is from 'sigma network' (@sigmahubs) dated Mar 21, with 5 retweets and 3 likes. The second tweet is a retweet from 'Michael Grove' (@michaelgrove) dated Mar 17, with 2 likes. The third tweet is a retweet from 'Tony Mann' (@Tony_Mann) dated Mar 14. To the right of the tweets is a 'Who to follow' section with suggestions like 'ManaLight' and 'Education Week'. At the bottom right is a 'Trends' section with the hashtag '#TheHuntsman'.

Annotations on the screenshot:

- Description, contact information and date user joined Twitter:** Points to the bio and 'Joined February 2013' text.
- Click to 'Tweet to' to start a tweet with that person's username:** Points to the 'Tweet to' button.
- Followers known to current user:** Points to the '29 Followers you know' section.
- Number of tweets, number of other accounts followed, number of followers, number of likes and lists (if subscribed to any). A list is a group of Twitter accounts; you can subscribe to existing lists or create your own.** Points to the statistics bar (Tweets: 184, Following: 261, Followers: 182, Likes: 25, Lists: 1).
- Indication that user currently logged in is following @sigmahubs; there is also an indication that the current user is followed back, see next to the username on the left:** Points to the 'Following' button and the 'FOLLOWS YOU' text next to the profile name.
- Timeline:** Points to the main list of tweets.
- Trends; stories that a lot of people are currently talking about on Twitter:** Points to the 'Trends' section.

Example of tweet by @sigmahubs:



To interact with other users, you can reply to, retweet and/or like their tweets. The total number of retweets (5) and likes (3) is shown. Replying to a tweet starts a conversation with the person who posted the tweet and anyone else mentioned in the tweet. Retweeting shares the tweet to your timeline, you can also add a comment if you wish. Liking a tweet does not share it to your timeline.

TWITTER

Writing/posting tweets can be difficult due to the character limit; remember that tweets are limited to a maximum of 140 characters. Tweets can be about anything; announcements, interesting news article, advertising events, etc. There is more on ideas of what to post on page 21. To compose a new tweet, type into the box at the top of your Home page or click the Tweet button on the top toolbar:

Known as a “hashtag”, the # symbol is used to mark key words or topics and can be used anywhere within a tweet; searching for a hashtag will show every tweet that has been tagged with that hashtag

To mention another user, use @ in front of their username; they will then see your tweet in their notifications

Click to close; a draft of your tweet will be saved until you log out

Once you have finished, click **Tweet**; tweets cannot be edited after they have been posted, but they can be deleted

Write text here

Add photos or video to your tweet; other users can be tagged in photos using their username

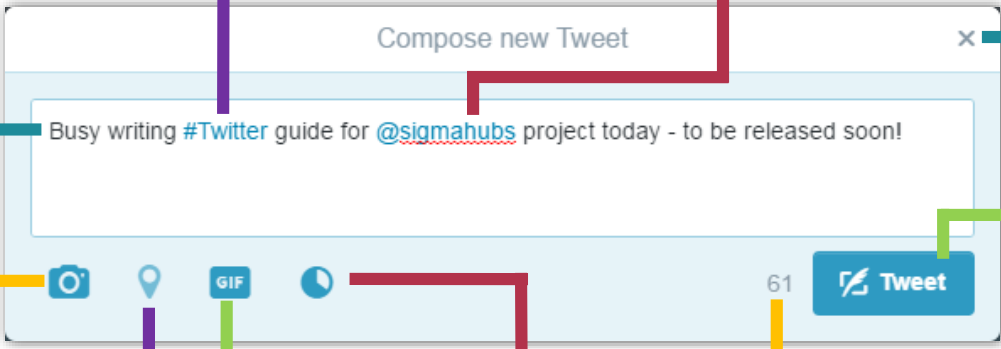
Add your location to your tweet; this can be your current location or you can search for a location

Add a Graphics Interchange Format (GIF) to your tweet; GIFs are images that also support animation

Add a poll to your tweet; this works in a similar fashion to Facebook polls (see page 9)

Number of characters remaining out of 140 character limit; this will display a negative value if over limit:

characters over limit displayed in red



The screenshot shows the 'Compose new Tweet' window. The text input field contains 'Busy writing #Twitter guide for @sigmahubs project today - to be released soon!'. Below the text field are icons for adding photos, location, GIFs, and polls. A character count '61' is shown next to the 'Tweet' button. A callout box on the right shows a character count of '-13' in red, indicating the user has exceeded the 140 character limit.

Photos, videos, GIFs and links are excellent ways to add extra content to your tweet without consuming too many characters. Adding a photo, video or GIF will reduce the character limit by 24. By adding text to a photo before uploading to Twitter, you can display extra textual information that does not count towards the 140 character limit.

Uniform Resource Locator (URL) links reduce the character limit by 23, irrespective of the length of the actual link (longer or shorter). Web links are automatically shortened by Twitter using its t.co service, but still appear in their original form. It is advisable, however, to shorten URLs anyway, as long URLs can be unsightly. There is more information on URL shortening sites on page 18.

TOOLS TO HELP

Hootsuite

Hootsuite is a social media management system, which supports Facebook, Twitter and several other platforms. It allows users to manage multiple social networks via one platform. Scheduling of posts is one of the major benefits, so users can set up posts for the upcoming week, for example. Note that there are other such systems available besides Hootsuite.

<https://hootsuite.com/>



Pablo by Buffer

Buffer (<https://buffer.com/>) is another option for social media management. One of the services that it offers is Pablo, which is available without subscription. Pablo is a simple way to create images that have ideal dimensions for social media platforms. Text can be added to the images, while the images themselves can be contrasted (dulled), blurred or converted to black and white. There are 50,000+ images to choose from, or you can upload your own and reposition it to fit the required dimensions.

An example is shown.

<https://pablo.buffer.com/>



URL shortening sites

There are various services which enable the shortening of web addresses. Shortened links are often aesthetically better, help save on space and are more convenient for hard copy publications, to save long URLs from being copied out by readers. Twitter shortens URLs automatically using its own t.co service, or you can use an alternative.

Examples include:

TinyURL www.tinyURL.com

TinyURL.com

Bitly www.bitly.com

bitly

Google URL shortener <https://goo.gl/>

Google url shortener

ACRONYMS AND EMOTICONS

Acronyms and emoticons feature heavily on social media. Below are some acronyms (not an exhaustive list) that you may see being used, or may want to consider using. Some are used on social media networks, while others are more common in articles about social media and web publishing. Note that some are more popular than others, so it is advised to familiarise yourself with acronyms commonly used amongst the networks and students you are targeting before using them yourself.

AFAIK	As far as I know
AMA	Ask me anything <i>Example</i> We're doing an online algebra AMA tomorrow at 3pm!
B4	Before
B/c, bc	Because
BTW	By the way
CC	Carbon copy Same usage as in emails. <i>Example</i> Yet another great CETL-MSOR programme http://bit.ly/1pKfWrb cc: @sigmahubs
CMS	Content Management System Software used to organise, edit and publish online content. WordPress is a commonly used CMS for website management.
CTA	Call to action Word/phrase used when telling people what to do. Click here, learn more, etc.
DAE	Does anyone else...? DAE @sigmahubs use Hootsuite?

DM	Direct message Refers to private Twitter inbox, but sometimes also used on Facebook. <i>Example</i> DM me for details!
F2F	Face to face <i>Example</i> Let's discuss this F2F
FB	Facebook
FYI	For your information <i>Example</i> FYI there is webinar tomorrow on Bayesian statistics. Sign up now via the webinar page on our website
G+	Google+
Gr8	Great
HTH	Here to help / happy to help <i>Example</i> Thanks for the great feedback on our calculus resources! HTH
ICYMI	In case you missed it <i>Example</i> ICYMI: video recording of last week's stats seminar is now online
IDK	I don't know

IM	Instant message Instant messaging is a chat facility, similar to old IM apps such as MSN Messenger. Available within Facebook via Facebook Chat.
IMHO	In my humble opinion
IMO	In my opinion
IRL	In real life Used to distinguish between online and real world interactions. <i>Example</i> Huge fan of @ProfBrianCox! We met IRL a few years ago
JK	Just kidding
L8r	Later
LI	LinkedIn
LMAO	Laughing my a** off
LOL	Laughing out loud
MT	Modified tweet Used when retweeting but original tweet is too long to include. <i>Example</i> Great resources here! MT: @sigmahubs need to train your maths support tutors? https://t.co/rLSxpMdTh2
OMG	Oh my God

ACRONYMS AND EMOTICONS

P2P	Person to person, or peer to peer
Similar to F2F, this can refer to a real life meeting as opposed to an online interaction. In business, it can be used to distinguish a type of network or event.	
POTD	Photo of the day
Popular on Twitter and Instagram, often appearing as a hashtag for those wishing to highlight their best photo that day.	
PM	Private message
Similar to DM (direct message), but more commonly used on Facebook. <i>Example</i> Can you PM me the log-in details?	
PPL	People
<i>Example</i> Gr8 to see so many ppl at Maths Café!	
QOTD	Quote of the day
Used to share funny or interesting quotes. Often appears in a hashtag. <i>Example</i> Today's #QOTD: "Imagination is more important than knowledge" – Albert Einstein	
RT	Retweet
Used to indicate that you are resending (hence, "retweeting") someone else's tweet. <i>Example</i> A must read RT @profexample My latest blog post: www.profexample.com/blog/2	
SM	Social media

SMP	Social media platform
TBH	To be honest
<i>Example</i> It's been a great semester, but TBH we're looking forward to the vacation!	
TBT	ThrowBack Thursday
A popular trend on Thursdays. Usually used to share an image from the past, often as a hashtag. <i>Example</i> Wow! Check out this image of campus from 25 years ago! #TBT	
TGIF	Thank goodness it's Friday
<i>Example</i> It's been a very long week. TGIF!	
Thx	Thanks
TIL	Today I learned
<i>Example</i> TIL how to multiply by drawing lines http://www.wimp.com/multiplynumbers/	
TMI	Too much information
Txt	Text
w/	With
WOTD	Word of the day
Used similarly to POTD and QOTD.	
YOLO	You only live once
<i>Example</i> Charity parachute jump today! #YOLO	
YT	YouTube

An **emoticon** is a pictorial representation of a facial or other expression using punctuation, letters and numbers. They are usually used to express a feeling or mood, and are very common on social media. Some examples are included below:

Icon	Meaning
:) :-) :o)	Happy, smiley
:D :-D =D	Laughing, big grin
;) :-) ;o)	Winking
:-P ;~P	Tongue sticking out, indicates cheekiness
:/	Unsure, confused
:O :-O	Surprise, shock
\o/	Cheering
<3	Heart

An **emoji** is a small picture, also very commonly used on social media. Some software will convert emoticons automatically, so that they appear instead as an emoji. Alternatively, a selectable list of emojis may be available. Exact imagery will differ depending upon the social network and the means of access.

Some examples are included below:



IDEAS FOR CONTENT

It can be difficult to get started with social media, particularly if you are a novice. Ideas for new content may be hard to come by, particularly in the early stages of launching a new profile. It is also important to not be put off by lack of friends/followers; other users are less likely to add/follow you if you have an empty profile. Persist with posts in the early stages even if there is a limited audience. You need to be active to create attention. Once you become more active and established on social media, content will find you! You will start to see interesting news articles that you can share, for example.

Below are listed some ideas for posts and content for social media, as well as suggestions of people or organisations to add/follow. These are written with MSCs in mind.

Change to your MSC activities for example, if you need to cancel a drop-in at short notice, or change your drop-in times.

Reminder of day-to-day activities of your MSC such as drop-ins, appointments, workshops, maths café/arcade, A simple call to action can work, such as “Finding the latest maths worksheet tricky? Come along to the MSC for help today 12.30-3pm”

An update on MSC activities to date for example, “Just hit 500 visits to our drop-ins since the start of term!”

Start and end of semesters

Upcoming events such as seminars and one-off lectures

Important events within your university such as graduation, exams, new staff, celebrations, etc.

Mathematics in the news

Birthdays of famous mathematicians; the MacTutor History of Mathematics archive is an excellent resource for this: <http://www-history.mcs.st-and.ac.uk/>

‘Maths dates’ for example pi day on March 14th, see <http://www.piday.org/> for more information.

Other ‘maths dates’ include square root days (such as 04/04/16), e day (celebrated on 2nd July or February 7th, depending on date formatting preferences) and Pythagorean days (such as 06/08/10). A quick search online will reveal many others.

Mathematical and statistical jokes

Local maths/science events such as MathsJam and science festivals

Attendance at external conferences and workshops; make sure you check if the event has a dedicated hashtag too.

Relevant job opportunities

A-level (or equivalent) results day new students are likely to be very active on social media in relation to the university that they have just got accepted for, make sure you are too!

University and departmental open days are another time when prospective students are likely to be active on social media.

People/organisations:

Your university, including the main university accounts, the Students’ Union, academic departments and support services

Staff within your university; find relevant academic and support staff

MSCs, MSC staff and other relevant staff from different universities

Students within your university

sigma

Q-Step centres

The Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA)

HEFCE, HEFCEW and/or similar

The Higher Education Academy (HEA)

Mathematics in Education and Industry (MEI)



Journals

Maths enthusiasts and authors

Educational news sites

... to name but a few!

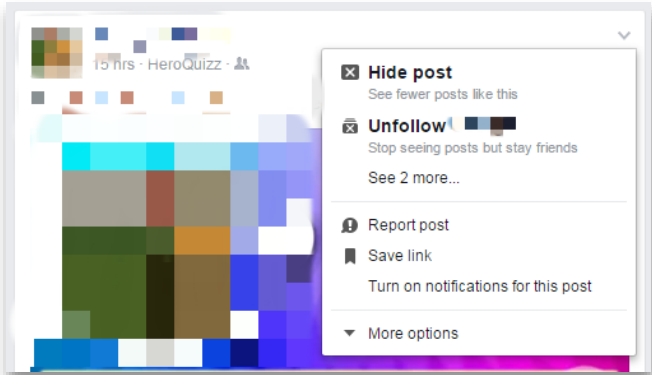
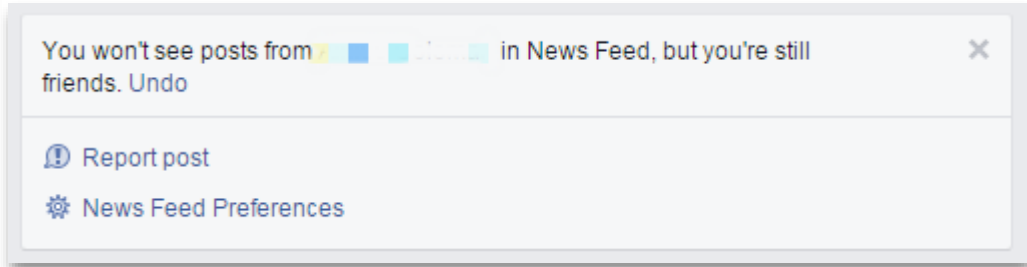
TOP TIPS! A-Z OF HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF SOCIAL MEDIA

A	Audit	Perform a social media audit to determine what you want to achieve; think about the content you want to publish, results you expect and how you will measure the success of your social media activity.
B	Blue ticks	<p>The addition of a blue tick alongside a Facebook or Twitter profile indicates that the account has been officially verified. The relevant platform has confirmed that it is the authentic account of the associated institution or person:</p> <p>Facebook Page example:</p>  <p>Twitter example:</p> 
C	Consistency	Be consistent across all platforms. Not everyone will be active on every social media platform, so it makes sense to post similar updates across all platforms. As your social media presence evolves, you may find certain types of posts more relevant to a particular platform.
D	Dive in	The best way to learn about social media is to use social media! Dive in and start playing around. Set up test accounts if you aren't sure or aren't feeling too confident.
E	Emotions	Be emotional; emotions bring a human quality to what can be a faceless social media account. For example, consider "Excited to be attending a sigma workshop on social media today! 😊 Looking forward to learning lots #sigmasocial" as opposed to simply "Attending a sigma workshop on social media today".
F	Frequency	Think about how often you should be posting and try to find a balance. Make sure you aren't cluttering newsfeeds. People will become tired of your posts if they see you every time they access social media. Once per day is probably sufficient for an MSC or other similar student support service.
G	GIFs	GIF stands for Graphics Interchange Format. A GIF is a bitmap image format which supports animations. They are very commonly used on social media. Twitter has a variety of in-built GIFs to choose from when posting a status update.




TOP TIPS! A-Z OF HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF SOCIAL MEDIA

H	Hashtag	A hashtag is a label or tag used on social media. The # symbol is used to mark key words or topics in a tweet, and so is used as a way to categorise messages. Clicking on a hashtag will display all posts that have used it. For examples, try #sigmasocial and #cetlmsor15 on Twitter.
I	Images	An image is much more appealing than text. Overlay text onto images, or use a picture alongside your text to create a more visually appealing post and get yourself noticed.
J	Join in!	Like and share posts, write comments and show appreciation to your audience. Take an interest in the social media network at your university. Don't just post updates and ignore the social side of a social network! Ignoring the audience will give the impression of an automated machine.
K	Keep in touch	Keep in touch with student groups using social media. For example, create a Facebook Group for your MSC tutors.
L	Link all platforms	Link all social media platforms and use them to promote each other; for example, promote your Facebook page on Twitter. Be consistent between platforms where possible too.
M	Managing your social media	Look into effective ways to manage your social media. A calendar of upcoming posts is useful, particularly if you have several people managing one account. There are also ways for several users to access the same profiles, using Facebook Pages for example. Consider a social media management system, such as Hootsuite (others are available).
N	Newsfeed	Your newsfeed is where you will see updates from your network. The algorithms used to determine what features on your newsfeed are closely guarded secrets; make sure you interact (like, comment, share, retweet, ...) with posts that you find interesting to ensure that your newsfeed contains information that interests you.
O	Office hours	If your social media profiles really take off, consider posting office hours in the section containing information about you. Students are used to using social media to get instantaneous responses, so you need to be mindful that monitoring social media does not become a burden.
P	Proofread	It only takes a few seconds, but a senseless post or misspelt word looks unprofessional.
Q	Questions	Ask questions; it can stimulate a response, particularly if posted at the end of a status. Adding "Anyone else?", "Excited yet?", "Did you see...?", etc., entices interaction.

TOP TIPS! A-Z OF HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF SOCIAL MEDIA

R	Research	This guide is an introduction; there are other functionalities of Facebook and Twitter that are not covered here, and of course there are a wide variety of other social media platforms to choose from. There are also many online tools which can help you to create an effective and professional online presence. Don't start without a plan and don't start until you know what you are doing!
S	Settings	Publicise your settings. Think about relaxing your privacy settings so that posts are visible publicly. That way, people can see what you are about before deciding to friend/follow you, which is less likely to happen if your profiles are inaccessible.
T	Topical; timely	<p>Be topical, timely and relevant. Keep up with events going on around your university and locally, that are still relevant to your MSC. By keeping up to date with departments and services within your institution, there should be plenty of relevant content to post about.</p> <p>Consider what your target audience would want to read, instead of what you might want to say. A journal paper on mathematics education might be interesting to you, but sharing it with the wider student body might not be too popular.</p> <p>Think also about when students are most likely to be browsing the web. Evenings are generally good, but mornings can also work well too – social media is a great way to while away a boring journey to lectures! Between classes and during lunchtime are other popular options.</p> <p>An excellent way to make sure that you are topical, timely and relevant is to involve students in the management of your social media profiles. Use your target audience! Students know what works in term of interesting posts, language to use, and when is best to post.</p>
U	Unfollow students	<p>Student activity on Facebook will clog your newsfeed. Students are also more likely to want to be friends with you on Facebook if they know that you do not follow them. Keep your newsfeed relevant to you by unfollowing students. You can do this either directly from their profile, or via the newsfeed itself; click on the downwards arrow on the right of a post, and select Unfollow <Name>:</p>  

TOP TIPS! A-Z OF HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF SOCIAL MEDIA

V	Visual	Be visual; focus on the visual element when it comes to social media. Making a site look more visually appealing will help to attract traffic.	
W	Web 2.0	Web 2.0 describes internet sites that emphasise user-generated content. It describes the current state of online technology, characterised by greater user interactivity and collaboration. Examples of Web 2.0 sites include social media, blogs and wikis.	
X	TEDx	TEDx are independent TED-like events run locally. TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) itself is a global set of conferences, which focuses on scientific, cultural and academic topics, while TEDx events are often run by or associated with universities. Search on social media to see if your university runs TEDx events.	
Y	YouTube	YouTube is a video sharing website that allows users to upload, view, share, rate and comment on videos. Educational videos are popular, so if you already have some, it would be worth uploading them to YouTube. Videos are a popular option used by students to support learning and for most students, YouTube is the first place to search.	
Z	Zotero	Zotero is a free and open-source bibliographic tool; it allows users to manage references online and also helps users to share resources.	

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For more information about this work or relating to the wider project that it was a part of, please contact mash@bath.ac.uk or C.Voake-Jones@bath.ac.uk. Or, find us and interact with us on social media!

Good luck!