

COLLEGE POLICY

POLICY TYPE:	Administrative
POLICY TITLE:	External Communications
POLICY NO.:	ADMIN-219
RESPONSIBILITY:	Executive Director, Communications and Marketing Chief Administrative Officer
APPROVED BY:	Durham College Leadership Team
EFFECTIVE DATE:	September 2017
REVISED:	
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1. Introduction

The Communications and Marketing department (C+M) collaborates with Durham College (DC) employees to ensure quality, consistency and accuracy in written and digital print materials developed for the College community and other external audiences. This includes the media, which acts as a conduit to reach these audiences.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for ensuring that a strong, positive Brand image, which is consistent with DC's mission, vision, and values and is pro-actively communicated to all external audiences.

3. Definitions

3.1. Media

Media refers to any print, broadcast (radio or television) or online source (website or social media site) that provides news and information to the general public or specific audiences.

3.2. Brand

A Brand is the unique visual, verbal and written attributes, or a combination of these, employed by an organization. Our Brand is the promise of what DC delivers and reflects the College's mission, vision and values and is the foundation upon which business is conducted.

Brands have three primary functions: to help consumers choose from an array of options; to communicate the intrinsic quality of a product or service and reassure customers that they have made the right decision; and to use distinctive imagery, language and associations to encourage customers to identify with the Brand.

3.3. Brand guidelines

DC's Brand guidelines outline the appropriate use of the College's Brand positioning and identity in all visual and written materials and reflects DC's values and beliefs as an institution. The Brand guidelines are an operating manual for looking, speaking, and acting as DC and offer information on when where and how to use the Brand in a wide range of documents.

3.4. Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL)

Federal legislation that is, in part, intended to prevent the receipt of unwanted commercial electronic communication such as promotional emails, text messages, images or sounds.

3.5. Commercial Electronic Message

A commercial electronic message is a message that, having regard to the content of the message, the hyperlinks in the message to content on a website or other database, or the contract information contained in the message, it would be reasonable to conclude has as its purpose, or one of its purposes, to encourage participation in a commercial activity, including an electronic message that:

- a) offers to purchase, sell, barter or lease a product, goods, as service, land or an interest or right in land;
- b) offers to provide a business, investment or gaming opportunity;
- c) advertises or promotes anything referred to in paragraph (a) or (b); or
- d) promotes a person including the public image of a person as being a person who does anything referred to in any of paragraphs (a) to (c), or who intends to do so.¹

3.6. College community

All College stakeholders.

¹ <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/E-1.6/page-1.html#h-2>

3.7. Target audiences

The particular group of people identified as the intended recipient of the information sent via the College's communication channels.

3.8. Issue

An issue refers to a topic (for the purposes of this policy) that has been deemed sensitive by the College.

3.9. Student(s)

Full-time, part-time, all programs (post-secondary, continuing education, apprenticeship, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program). Full-time student refers to a student who is registered in more than 70 per cent of the credit hours or 66.6 per cent of the courses in a program in a semester.

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. All external communications are guided by DC's mission, vision, values and Brand. C+M follows the College Brand guidelines to maintain the quality and consistency of all written and visual materials used to communicate with Target audiences.
- 4.2. C+M responds in a timely and professional manner to any issues that arise on campus requiring a communications presence. Issues that arise are handled with confidentiality and communicated strategically and effectively to all internal and external stakeholders.
- 4.3. C+M provides the media with accurate information about news and events on campus in a timely manner. It is C+M's responsibility to maintain positive relationships with the media.
- 4.4. The DC website is considered a key communication and marketing tool to enhance Brand recognition and promote the College's programs and services to Students and other Target audiences. It is the responsibility of C+M to maintain all content and images on the core institutional pages of the DC website in accordance with the College's Brand guidelines. C+M also oversees other content and images on the website as they relate to DC. This includes both internal and external sources.
- 4.5. All external commercial electronic messages must comply with the requirements of CASL.

5. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) considerations

- 5.1. DC's commitment to accessibility and AODA standards has been considered in the development of this procedure, which adheres to the principles outlined in the AODA standards and the Durham College Accessibility Policy (ADMIN-203).
- 5.2. C+M is responsible for ensuring that the College's website is compliant with current AODA standards.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1. The executive director, Communications and Marketing is responsible for overseeing the strategic development and execution of DC external communications. This includes, but is not limited to, media relations, advertising and marketing, web, photography, video, events and crisis communication.
- 6.2. The executive director, Communications and Marketing is responsible for enhancing stakeholder relations between DC and the community at large.
- 6.3. The executive director, Communications and Marketing is responsible for ensuring DC's Brand standards are consistently followed and delivered in all written and visual materials.
- 6.4. The Durham College Leadership Team (DCLT) is responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of CASL for external commercial electronic messages sent within their respective areas of responsibility.
- 6.5. All employees in C+M are required to uphold the confidentiality of any and all information pertaining to DC.

7. Non-compliance implications

Non-compliance with this policy could negatively impact the current and prospective College community with both external stakeholders and the media, which could lead to significant financial loss and damage to the College's reputation.

8. Communications plan

The executive director, Communications and Marketing, will communicate any changes to this or related policies and procedures and/or renewals by posting an announcement to ICE; or through the student communications vehicles as outlined in the student communication matrix, as appropriate.

9. Related policies, procedures and directives

- Durham College Alumni Relations procedure ADMIN-219.1
- Durham College Community Outreach procedure ADMIN-219.6
- Durham College Emergency Communications procedure ADMIN-220.7
- Durham College Events Management procedure ADMIN-219.7
- Durham College Internal Communications policy ADMIN-220
- Durham College Marketing and Advertising procedure ADMIN-219.2.
- Durham College Media Relations procedure ADMIN-219.3
- Durham College Poster procedure ADMIN-220.6
- Durham College Photography and Videography procedure ADMIN-219.4
- Durham College Social Media procedure ADMIN-219.X
- Durham College Website procedure ADMIN-219.5