

PRACTICE LEARNING HUB

Professional Identity, Social Media and Boundaries

Discussion Pack: Digital Professionalism in Social Work

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| Intended audience | Practitioners, students, ASYE groups, universities and practice educators |
| Estimated time | 45-60 minute group discussion, or individual reflection |
| Sector | All sectors |
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| Website | kayleighroseevans.com/practice-learning-hub.html |
| Version | Version 1.0 Published June 2026 Review due June 2027 |

Intended use

This resource is for learning, reflection and discussion. It is not legal advice and does not replace local policies, statutory guidance or supervision.

Please do not discuss or record identifiable details about people, families, colleagues or live cases when using this resource.

About this resource

Social workers increasingly live and work in public digital spaces. That brings opportunities - connection, learning, advocacy - and risks to boundaries, privacy and professional integrity. This pack supports reflective discussion about what acting safely, respectfully and with professional integrity looks like online.

It is designed to be used alongside the Social Work England podcast episode on Professional Standard 5, which features Kayleigh Rose Evans. Links and the transcript are on the resource page: kayleighroseevans.com/professional-identity.html.

Important framing

This pack supports reflection. It does not provide individual conduct advice, and it does not replace your employer's social media policy or current Social Work England guidance - always check both.

All scenarios below are fictional.

Opening reflection

What does 'professional identity' mean to me - in person and online?

Where do I currently draw the line between my personal and professional online presence?

Fictional scenario cards

For each scenario, discuss: What are the risks and to whom? What would acting with integrity look like? What does your employer's policy say? What support might the worker need?

Scenario A - The friend request

Priya, a social worker, receives a social media friend request from the parent of a child she worked with two years ago. The case is closed and the relationship was positive. Priya does not want to seem rude.

Scenario B - The venting post

After a brutal week, Sam posts in a private group for social workers: 'Some families really make you wonder why you bother. Three no-shows today.' No names, no places. A colleague screenshots it.

Scenario C - The visible advocate

Leah runs a popular social work account sharing practice tips and commentary on sector issues. A person she currently works with discovers the account and starts commenting on her posts.

Scenario D - The old photos

Jordan, a final-year student, is told by a practice educator that families sometimes search workers' names. Jordan's profiles from university years are public and contain content he would not want a family - or a panel - to see.

Our scenario - the risks we identified:

What acting with integrity would look like:

What we would want to check in policy or guidance:

Discussion prompts

1. Can a social worker ever be fully 'off duty' online? Where do we each draw the line?
2. What are the benefits of social workers being visible online - for the profession and the public?
3. What is the difference between healthy venting and something that undermines public trust?
4. How should we respond when a person we work with finds or contacts us online?
5. What would we want a student or NQSW to know about their digital footprint?
6. Kindness and integrity online: what does that look like when we disagree publicly with colleagues or policy?

Personal boundaries check

One thing I will check or change about my own online presence:

One conversation I want to have (with a supervisor, educator or peer):

Professional standards this resource supports

Mapping is indicative, to help you evidence CPD and connect the learning to professional frameworks.

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| Social Work England professional standards | Standard 5 (act safely, respectfully and with professional integrity) - including conduct outside work and online. Also touches Standards 1 and 2. |
| Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) | Professionalism; Values and ethics; Contexts and organisations |
| Employer policy | Always read alongside your organisation's social media, acceptable use and code of conduct policies |

Using this with your team?

If your team, authority or university is using this resource, Kayleigh would love to hear how. Your feedback shapes future materials.

Share feedback: kayleighroseevans@gmail.com

To invite Kayleigh to deliver a live session linked to this resource, visit kayleighroseevans.com and use the speaking enquiry contact.