Best Practices for Using Hashtags

What is a hashtag?

A hashtag is a way to organize topics within a social network, or across multiple networks, by using a word or words. They always start with a pound sign (#) and cannot contain spaces or special characters (e.g. !, @, $, %, ^, &, *, ., +). Hashtags make it easy to search for similar content and for others to join in a conversation.

When should you use a hashtag?

- Ongoing events
- A unique type of post
- Special campaigns
- Group visit events
- To organize content being posted by other users

When should you not use a hashtag?

- One-time event or post
- Single words not associated with an event, campaign, or brand lens
- If it is already in use for content not related to Manchester University (e.g. #MU)

Facebook Hashtags

Hashtags are rarely used on Facebook. They are best used for unique types of posts or special events when used across multiple social networks. Examples could include #ThrowbackThursday, #MotivationMonday, #HuManU, #MUWelcomeWeek or #MUSpartanDay. There is little advantage to using Facebook hashtags and the feature is rarely used when posting content.

Twitter Hashtags

Hashtags are a great resource to either organize content on Twitter or join conversations already going on, such as #DecisionDay or #Iditarod. You should not use more than 2 hashtags in a post though, and even then only rarely would you want to use two. If you are using two hashtags, one should be more general with the other more specific. Usually used at the end of the post unless it fits in the sentence conversationally. For example: *Don't forget to file your #FAFSA before March 10!*

Instagram Hashtags

Hashtags on Instagram are used as a way of cataloguing images. All images/videos of Manchester content should use #ManchesterUniversity as well as any hashtags to describe the image, event or campaign. There is no limit to the number that you can use, but the list of hashtags should not be longer than the caption itself. The hashtags help other users find relevant information and learn more about Manchester by searching for program or visuals related to colleges or education in general.

Best Practices and General Tips

- Keep hashtags short and specific when possible.

- They do not always need to be branded, but if not be sure to search them first to ensure they are not being used.
- Using Manchester is preferable to MU unless it is for a specific Manchester event with a different name than what would be used at other colleges. For example, #MUSpartanDay refers to a specific Manchester event, but is unique to Manchester. #MUGraduation and #MUHomecoming are events all other schools with the initials MU share, so #ManchesterGraduation and #ManchesterHomecoming are preferable.
- Don't hashtag every post. Use them strategically when contributing to a campaign or conversation. An exception would be on Instagram.
- Only use hashtags relevant to the content, not just to be included in a conversation or to show up in searches.

General

#ManchesterUniversity – All things Manchester University

#FutureSpartans – Incoming student updates

#GnomeKevin – Kevin the Gnome photos

#HuManU – Humans of Manchester University

#librariesarentjustforbooks – Additional services Funderburg Library offers

#ManchesterGraduation – Graduation and commencement

#ManchesterHomecoming – Homecoming photos

#MascotManny – Photos of Manny the Spartan mascot

#MUCommunity – What makes the Manchester community

#MUFlag – Photos with the Manchester flag students receive when they deposit

#MUPharmacy –Pharmacy Program info

#MUSpectrum – Spectrum Literary Arts Magazine content

#MUSpartansAbroad – Study abroad

#MulticulturalMeansYouToo – Office of Multicultural Affairs

#ReadyChetGo – Prospective students' unboxings and events leading up to deposit deadline day

#SpartanEDUC – Education Department info

#SpartansCare – Volunteer services

#TheChet – Casual references to campus

#WhereHungryMindsGather – Chartwells tagline

Special Events

#ManchesterJSD – Manchester Junior Scholars Day event

#ManchesterHalloween – Halloween events

#MUJuly4 – 4th of July events

#MUMayDay – May Day events

#MUWelcomeWeek – Welcome Week news

#Manchester2017 – Class of 2017

#Manchester2018 – Class of 2018

#Manchester2019 – Class of 2019

#Manchester2020 – Class of 2020

#OntheMUve – Photos of local area businesses and attractions

#MUJanTerm – Jan Term photos

Athletics

#HCAC – Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference

#MUSpartans – Athletics updates

#MUSpartanPride – Athletics updates

#MUGolf – Golf

#MUBaseball – Baseball

#MUHoops – Basketball

#MUFB – Football

#MUVB - Volleyball

#SpartanShow – Spartan Show photos