

Union Stance Towards Anonymous 'Confession' Pages

Introduction

Anonymous 'Confession Pages' are online platforms or spaces where individuals can share their thoughts, feelings, secrets, or experiences without revealing their identity. These pages typically allow for people to submit content anonymously, and are subsequently posted onto the platform for anyone to read.

Confessions pages are becoming increasingly popular amongst University communities, with Instagram often being the platform of choice for Irish HEI's (Higher Education Institutions). TU Dublin, in particular, has seen multiple iterations in the last 3-4 years. They are often popularised by fellow students who share what they perceive to be 'interesting' content; this inherently creates a space where 'shock value' confessions are preferred.

Major Concerns

These pages typically begin with relative 'innocence' but quickly become vectors for racism, xenophobia, classism, sexism, harassment, and bullying. There have already been several iterations of 'TU Dublin' related pages because previous versions have been shut down for 'confessions' that were deemed highly offensive to a significant number of people.

These pages are often used to target specific people (using names, job titles, and other clearly defining criteria), can be easily used to spread false information (given there is no way to verify the accuracy of the information shared), can have a negative impact on an individual's mental health (people can often fear being targeted, or be upset by the extremist views / racist content portrayed on a platform which allegedly represents their University population), and reinforces a lack of accountability amongst students.

Stance of TU Dublin SU

These pages will continue to operate, and future iterations will likely flourish on different and new platforms. While the Union cannot 'prevent' this, it can at least mandate its representatives to not platform or engage with them, given the innumerable complaints received by the Union from students about such pages over the past few years.

Full- and Part-Time Officers therefore will not platform (i.e. post, share, follow, or otherwise promote) any 'Confessions Pages' associated in any way with TU Dublin or TU Dublin SU.

Full- and Part-Time Officers will also discourage other Union representatives (i.e. Student Councillors, Class Representatives, etc) from platforming these pages, given their tendency towards far-right rhetoric, extremism, racism, sexism, classism and xenophobia.

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