



Scottish Disability Sport

Social Media Policy

Reviewed by Board – May 2024

Social media has changed the way Scottish Disability Sport (SDS) communicates.

This policy is designed to offer practical guidance for responsible and constructive communications via social media platforms for representatives of Scottish Disability Sport (SDS).

The proper focus of this policy relates to activities in or outside of SDS that impact the performance of others, our business interests, membership, or public perception of the organisation and/or those representing SDS.

This policy has been developed to inform our community about using social media so people feel enabled to participate, while being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations. In particular, this policy provides practical guidance allowing all parties to benefit from the use of social media, while minimising potential risks and protecting those involved.

This policy assists to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all online activities related to SDS.

This policy contains SDS's guidelines for the SDS community to engage in social media use. It also includes details of breaches of the policy.

Policy Objectives

- To establish practical, reasonable, and enforceable guidelines to conduct responsible, constructive social media engagement in both official and unofficial capacities.
- To promote a safe and positive environment to share subject matter and expertise that is not proprietary and earns recognition for the outstanding use of social media for business and the promotion of our sport.
- To prepare SDS to utilise social media channels to help each other, the wider organisation and the communities we serve.

Coverage

This policy applies to all persons who are involved with the activities of SDS, whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity and including:

- persons appointed or elected to SDS boards, committees and sub-committees;
- employees of SDS;
- SDS staff;
- support personnel, including managers, physiotherapists, psychologists, carers and others;
- coaches and assistant coaches;
- athletes, participants and their families;

- referees, umpires and other officials;
- member Branches
- any individual using an SDS social platform or replying to an SDS social media post

Underlying principles

The essence of this policy is underpinned by SDS's core values of:

- Inclusion
- Respect
- Integrity
- Ambition

Scope

Social media provides us with the opportunity to connect and communicate directly with our community in a digital capacity. SDS uses social media as:

- A method of amplifying our external communications; to promote opportunities and raise awareness whilst simultaneously challenging misconceptions, stigma and stereotypes about disability held within society
- Direct communication and collaboration with our athletes, volunteers, stakeholders and partners
- A method of accessing and engaging new audiences and encouraging them to engage with physical activity, sport and each other
- A vehicle for keeping up to date on current issues relevant to SDS and our work
- A relationship building tool to help communicate and showcase information for our partners and for the good of sport
- A platform to launch campaigns and join conversations to support the improvement of disability rights within Scotland
- A way of interacting and communicating with the public as a source of information

Social media

Social media refers to any online tools or functions that allow people to communicate, interact and/or share content involving sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests via the internet.

This social media policy applies to platforms including, but not limited to:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, X, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, Yammer, Zoom, Slack etc)
- Video and photo sharing websites or apps (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Flickr, Vine, etc)
- Blogs, vlogs and micro-blogging platforms (e.g. Tumblr, Wordpress, Blogger, etc)
- Review sites (e.g. Yelp, Urban Spoon, etc)
- Live broadcasting apps (e.g. Periscope, Meerkat, Facebook Mentions, etc)
- Podcasting (e.g. iTunes, Stitcher, Sound cloud, etc)
- Geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare, etc)
- Online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia, etc)
- Instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Skype, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc)
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second life, Xbox Live, etc)

- Online voting or polls
- Public and private online forums and discussion boards
- Any other online technologies that allow individual users to upload and share content.

This policy is applicable in the following circumstances:

- Interacting/engaging with SDS's content on our social media platforms
- Representing SDS on social media; and
- If posting content on social media in relation to SDS that might affect SDS's business, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

NOTE: This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media where it is not related to or there is no reference to SDS or its business, competitions, teams, participants, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation. However, any misuse of social media in a manner that does not directly refer to SDS may still be regulated by other policies, rules or regulations of SDS.

Accessing social media at work

As a part of SDS's community you are an extension of the SDS brand.

As such, the boundaries between when you are representing yourself and when you are representing SDS can often be blurred. This becomes even more of an issue as you increase your profile or position within SDS. Therefore, it is important that you represent both yourself and SDS appropriately online at all times.

Guidelines

You must adhere to the following guidelines when using social media related to SDS or its business, products, competitions, teams, participants, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

Use common sense

Whenever you are unsure as to whether or not the content you wish to share is appropriate, seek advice from others before doing so or refrain from sharing the content to be on the safe side.

If in doubt, leave it out and do NOT post a comment on social media which is defamatory, inaccurate, libellous or offensive.

When using social media, the lines between public and private, personal and professional, may be blurred. Remember, you are an ambassador for SDS.

Protecting your privacy

Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy.

When posting content online there is potential for that content to become publicly available through a variety of means, even if it was intended to be shared privately. Therefore, you should refrain from posting any content online that you would not be happy for anyone to see, even if you feel confident that a particular individual would never see it.

Where possible, privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to limit access. You should also be cautious about disclosing your personal details.

Honesty

Your honesty—or dishonesty—may be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading. If you are unsure, check the source and the facts

before uploading or posting anything. SDS recommends erring on the side of caution – if in doubt, do not post or upload.

Do not post anonymously, use pseudonyms or false screen names. Be transparent and honest. Use your real name, be clear about who you are and identify any affiliations you have.

If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. If you make an endorsement or recommendation about something you are affiliated with, or have a close relationship with, you must disclose that affiliation.

The web is not anonymous. You should assume that all information posted online can be traced back to you. You are accountable for your actions both on and offline, including the information you post via your personal social media accounts.

Use of disclaimers

Wherever practical, include a prominent disclaimer stating who you work for, or are affiliated with, and that anything you publish is your personal opinion and that you are not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble — it may not have legal effect.

Reasonable use

If you are an employee of SDS, you must ensure that your personal use of social media does not interfere with your work commitments or productivity.

Respect confidentiality and sensitivity

When using social media, you must maintain the privacy of SDS's confidential information. This includes information that is not publically accessible, widely known, or not expected to be shared outside of SDS.

Remember, if you are online, you are on the record—much of the content posted online is public, searchable and almost impossible to take down once published.

Within the scope of your authorisation by SDS, it is perfectly acceptable to talk about SDS and have a dialogue with the community, but it is not okay to publish confidential information relating to SDS.

When using social media you should be considerate to others and should not post information when you have been asked not to, or where consent has not been sought and given. You must also remove information about another person if that person asks you to do so.

Permission should always be sought if the use or publication of information is not incidental, but directly related to an individual. This is particularly relevant to publishing any information regarding minors. In such circumstances, parental or guardian consent is mandatory.

Gaining permission when publishing a person's identifiable image

You must obtain express permission from an individual to use a direct, clearly identifiable image of that person.

You should also refrain from posting any information or photos of a sensitive nature.

In every instance, you need to have consent of the owner of copyright in the image.

Complying with applicable laws

Do not post or link to content that contains illegal or indecent content, including defamatory, vilifying or misleading and deceptive content.

Abiding by copyright laws

It is critical that you comply with the laws governing copyright in relation to material owned by others and SDS' own copyrights and brands.

You should never quote or use more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and you should always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

Discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying

The public in general, and SDS's employees and members, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view.

You must not post any material that is offensive, harassing, discriminatory, embarrassing, intimidating, sexually explicit, bullying, hateful, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate.

When using social media you are also bound by SDS' Anti Harassment and Bullying Policy, Data Protection Policy, Ethics Statement, Customer Complaints Policy, HR Handbook and Wellbeing and Protection Policy for children and adults at risk Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policies and Procedures.

Misrepresentation

If you see misrepresentations made about SDS in the media, this should be referred to the SDS CEO. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is based on fact and does not discredit or belittle that party.

Dealing with mistakes

If SDS makes an error while posting on social media, be up front about the mistake and address it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses SDS of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), address it promptly and appropriately and if necessary, seek legal advice.

Conscientious behaviour and awareness of the consequences

Keep in mind that what you write is your responsibility, and failure to abide by these guidelines could put your employment at risk.

You should always follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites in which you participate.

Removal of posts

On occasion, we will exercise the right to delete posts, and on rare occasions ban users. We reserve the right to delete posts that violate these terms, and to block users who repeatedly violate the principles, or otherwise abuse the forum. This includes and is not limited to posts that are:

- Racist, sexist, disablist, homophobic or transphobic, or that is otherwise discriminatory or hate speech.
- Contains abusive, obscene, indecent, or offensive language, or links to obscene or offensive material.
- Contains abusive language towards an individual involved in the thread, or other organisations.
- Contains swear words or other sorts of profanity.
- Is libellous, false or contains inaccurate accusations.
- Is spam (for instance, promotions, sales, self-promotion, repeated posts with the same messages and so on).

- Breach of any of the terms of any of the social media platforms themselves: X, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok and YouTube.
- Personal or organisational attacks or threats.
- Inclusion of personal and/or contact details, including but not limited to names, telephone numbers and postal or email addresses.
- Abusive language directed towards participants, athletes, staff, volunteers, partners and stakeholders.

SDS branding and intellectual property

You must not use any of SDS' intellectual property or imagery on your personal social media without prior approval from your line manager.

SDS' intellectual property includes but is not limited to:

- trademarks
- logos
- publications
- imagery
- footage
- photographs
- any material which has been posted on the SDS official social media sites or website.

You must not create either an official or unofficial SDS presence using the organisation's trademarks or name.

You must not imply that you are authorised to speak on behalf of SDS.

Where permission has been granted to create or administer an official social media presence for SDS, you must adhere to the SDS Branding Guidelines.

Policy Breaches

Breaches of this policy includes but are not limited to:

- Using SDS' name and/or logo in a way that would result in a negative impact for the organisation.
- Posting or sharing any content that is abusive, harassing, threatening, demeaning, defamatory or libellous.
- Posting or sharing any content that includes insulting, obscene, offensive, provocative or hateful language.
- Posting or sharing any content in breach of SDS' anti-discrimination, racial discrimination, sexual harassment or other similar policy.
- Posting or sharing any content that is a breach of any state law.
- Posting or sharing any material to our social media channels that infringes the intellectual property rights of others.
- Posting or sharing material that brings, or risks bringing, SDS, its affiliates, its sport, its officials, members or sponsors into disrepute. In this context, bringing a person or organisation into disrepute is to lower the reputation of that person or organisation in the eyes of the ordinary members of the public.

Reporting a breach

If you notice inappropriate or unlawful content online relating to SDS or any of its members, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy, you should report the circumstances immediately to the SDS CEO.

Disciplinary process, consequences and appeals

Depending on the circumstances, breaches of this policy may be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedure contained in the SDS HR Handbook.

Employees of SDS who breach this policy may face disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment in accordance with the SDS Disciplinary Procedure or any other relevant policy.

Where it is considered necessary, SDS may report a breach of this social media policy to the police.

Appeals

Any person who is sanctioned under a disciplinary process for breach of this policy may have a right of appeal under section 5 of the SDS HR Handbook.

Related policies

- Code of Conduct
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Customer Complaints Policy
- Wellbeing and Protection Policy for children and adults at risk Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policies and Procedures
- Equality Policy
- Ethics Statement
- Fraud Policy
- Information Communications Technology (ICT) Policy
- Data Protection Privacy Policy, including opt-in consents
- HR Handbook

Other legal considerations that may be applicable include but are not limited to:

- Defamation
- Intellectual property laws, including copyright and trade mark laws, Privacy, confidentiality and information security laws
- Anti-discrimination laws
- Employment laws
- Advertising standards
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Information Privacy Act 2000
- Equal opportunity laws
- Contempt of Court
- Gaming laws