



# **Social Media Policy & Guidelines**

**Revision 1a**

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# Social Media Policy & Guidelines



## 1.0 Introduction

This document has been issued by the WHUA Executive and it outlines the social media policy and guidelines for all members of WHUA as well as those non-members who, on occasions, represent the WHUA. It provides guidance on the use of social media and the disciplinary process that may be instigated should a breach of this policy occur.

For the purposes of this policy, social media includes, but is not exclusively limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Websites and Internet Forums. It also covers any further activities where in a personal opinion can be view or obtained via public means either now or in the future.

## 2.0 Policy

The use of social media has many advantages as we are not looking to discourage the use of such a platform to promote umpiring and officiating in Wales. However, WHUA members need to be aware of the pitfalls and dangers of using such a platform. As a result, when using social media all WHUA members are expected to behave in a manor that is consistent and appropriate to their role as ambassadors for, and representative of WHUA and Hockey Wales (HW). Any contribution, posting, message or associated conduct that is considered to be in contravention of the policy could lead to the instigation of disciplinary proceedings.

## 3.0 Guidelines

### 3.1 Be responsive

Respond to players, coaches and colleagues and engage with your audience. Remember that not everyone who follows you or reads your posts will be supportive and that your posts may be available to a very wide-ranging audience. Don't engage in online disputes about hockey issues with your audience or allow others (including friends and family) to argue on your behalf. Don't take up issues on behalf of colleague. You may come into contact online with those who are under 18, familiarise yourself with WHUA / Hockey Wales's Safeguarding policies in order to ensure that contact with these younger members is appropriate.

### 3.2 Be aware

What you say could have an impact on the image of the sport, your colleagues and on the WHUA / HW as a whole. Banter amongst colleagues is fine but be aware of using 'private jokes'. It is important to be aware of the context in which comments made may be interpreted. Consider how the public, the media and other users will view your comments. Also be aware that when sending private messages or posting in what you consider to be closed groups, what other members of the group do with your comments.

### 3.3 Think

Pause and think before you post or send a message. If you are in any doubt about posting something, ask a colleague or simply don't post it. Remember you are personally responsible for everything that you post – *if in doubt leave it out*.

### 3.4 Treat as a quote

Don't write anything on social media that you wouldn't feel comfortable seeing in a newspaper or hearing on TV.

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## **3.5 Negativity**

Don't talk negatively about players, teams, officials or colleagues. More general comments around matches are fine for example comments about your own personal performance, information about results etc. However, you should NEVER comment or post ANYTHING about disciplinary issues that have arisen before, during or after a game or tournament. Even the most vaguely expressed comments are open to misinterpretation by readers and may compromise any WHUA / HW disciplinary processes that arise from the incident.

## **3.6 Reputation**

Don't post images, comments or other content that are not in keeping with the image and conduct required of all umpires or officials irrespective of level of umpiring, or that could damage the reputation of the sport, the WHUA or HW.

## **4.0 Match Day Use**

For stand alone matches e.g. single games on weekends, the use of social media by members to comment on any hockey-related matter is prohibited for a duration of 1 hour before the game to two hours after the game has been completed.

During multi-game events, the use of social media by members during their downtime is permissible, providing the integrity of the event is maintained. Those appointed to the event should not be posting to social media for a duration of 1 hour before their appointed game(s) to two hours after their appointed game(s).

At no time should any derogatory comments about governing bodies, appointing associations, colleagues, players, officials, performances or any other participant be made.

## **5.0 EHF & FIH & other Appointments**

Members accepting appointments from other appointing bodies should be aware of the appropriate social media policies issued by these organisations. However, WHUA reserve the right to instigate disciplinary proceedings should these guidelines be breached by members during such events.

## **6.0 Breaches**

Breaches of the social media policy will be considered under the WHUA's disciplinary procedure which is outlined in the Disciplinary Policy document.

*Note:*

*Any person who is taking appointments from WHUA (or other appointing bodies) can be removed from any appointment at the discretion of the Appointments Secretary, and not receive appointments to any future events, until the outcome of any disciplinary case has been concluded.*