

GUERNSEY RUGBY ACADEMY

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



Introduction

This policy has been developed to inform our members about social media usage (Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and all other social networking sites and forums) so they feel enabled to participate, while being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations. This policy provides practical guidance allowing all parties to benefit from the use of social media, while minimising potential risks and protecting those involved. It should be considered an extension of our Safeguarding and Code of Conduct Policies and complies with the [RFU Safeguarding section's Cyber Guidance](#) within the Safeguarding Toolkit.

Members of the Academy enjoy the opportunities and rewards of a community-based sports club. It is therefore expected that members will uphold the ethos of the Academy in all social media interactions. Members should not act in such a way that the image of the Academy is brought into disrepute nor in a way that harms its immediate and wider rugby community. This is especially important from a safeguarding point of view.

Consistency / Safeguarding / Reputation protection

Defining Social Media

The Academy currently administers one website and several official social media accounts as listed below;

- <https://www.guernseyrugbyacademy.com/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/raidersrugbyacademy>
- <https://www.instagram.com/guernseyrugbyacademy/>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/guernsey-rugby-academy/>
- WhatsApp Community with separate groups for committee, board & age groups

For internal communications, each Academy Age Group team is permitted to host one of the following;

1. a separate Facebook group (please note - not a Facebook page) provided the coaches or team manager are the only administrators, and they are DBS checked. Players under the age of 13 are not permitted to be part of these groups. These accounts should be set as private or closed groups; or
2. a separate WhatsApp account administered by the DBS checked coaches or team manager. This is typical for communication to parents/players. Players under the age of 18 are not permitted to be part of these groups unless a parent is also included; and/or
3. A separate WhatsApp account administered by a minimum of **3** DBS checked coaches or team managers for communication with players. It is expected that all WhatsApp groups should be part of the Academy's WhatsApp community; or
4. a separate Spond account administered by the coaches or team manager; or
5. a group e-mail to parents - always use BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) when emailing to protect privacy and contact information.

All communicative options listed above should follow the [Social Media Admin Checklist](#).

Other than above, the Academy does not permit social media accounts using the name of the Academy, including our logo or branding.

The Academy retains ownership of all media accounts and reserves the right to place a nominated representative on any channel to moderate language and behaviour.

Social Media Officer

The Academy's Board will appoint a nominated media officer. The accuracy of all official posts will be the responsibility of the media officer. If there is the slightest doubt as to a content suitability, they should not permit it to be posted, or should remove it if already posted, and defer the decision to the Board as the final arbiter, which is ultimately responsible for the content of the Academy's online presence.

Articles for print media should be submitted to the Social Media Officer, either through the WhatsApp Coaches & Managers Group or directly through e-mail.

TEAMWORK | RESPECT | ENJOYMENT | DISCIPLINE | SPORTSMANSHIP

Content

While the Academy positively encourages social media use among members using their personal social media accounts, we are mindful of the need to ensure that all content is suitable for publication and does not breach any laws, common decency or the Academy's Safeguarding Policy.

It is not acceptable for any member of the Academy, whether they are an adult or under 18 to post, amongst others, items that may include reference to a person's ethnic origin, colour, race, nationality, faith, gender, sexual orientation or disability, and any member found to have posted such items will be subject to disciplinary action.

Comments of this nature may attract civil or criminal action against the author(s). In addition, any abuse of match officials, opposition etc may be deemed by the RFU to bring the game into disrepute and lead to disciplinary sanctions against both the author and/or the Academy. Participants should be aware that comments which bring the game into disrepute, or are threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting, may lead to disciplinary action.

Periodic Review

- Annual review of all social media accounts
- Written acknowledgement from admins that they've read and understood this policy

General Guidance

Social media and the internet as a whole is a public forum. Be mindful of your behaviour and attitudes to others while using social media. Members are expected to show respect to others, including other members of the Academy, members of opposition teams and the wider rugby community.

Please always act within the core values of rugby and in accordance with the Code of Conduct Policy. Individuals and organisations are wholly responsible for any posting on their account(s). Respect the rights and confidentiality of others. Re-posting or sharing inappropriate content represents an endorsement of that content and can be actionable. Do not use abusive, derogatory, vulgar or sexual language. Do not criticise or imply bias towards match officials. At all times, exercise discretion and respect for clubs, players, fans and the game's partners.

Safeguarding

In the same way that the Academy has a responsibility for the physical safety of our young people at training or match days, we must also ensure that there is nothing on our on-line media platforms, which could harm a child, directly or indirectly. The Academy is wholly responsible for this content.

Social media content, which can be commented on by all members and the wider public, will be moderated to ensure inappropriate content is removed. All reports of social media misuse will be investigated fully and sanctions may arise.

When posting on social media there are key risks to guard against:

- Disclosing personal information about a child on social media: this could be the child's name, address, or any information about a child's life, interests or activities which would help a stranger target a child, or engage that child in conversation.
- Abusive or inappropriate content (photos, video or text), on social media: this includes material which criticises or humiliates a child. This can be peer to peer, or adult to child.

Policy breach

Academy members who breach this policy (and other related policies) will face a warning in the first instance, persistent breaches will be dealt with through our disciplinary policy. Any breaches of a safeguarding nature will be addressed through our safeguarding policy. Whilst the Academy will try to moderate social media posts, if you do have any concerns or would like to make a complaint please contact the Academy's safeguarding Officer.

Useful contacts

Social Media Officer – Claire Wakefield
Email memberships@guernseyrugbyacademy.com

Safeguarding Officer – Vicki Tennant
Email safeguarding@guernseyraiders.com