



Social Media Policy

Approved: August 2024

Review Due: 2027

1. Introduction

Weightlifting Wales recognises that technology provides unique opportunities to enhance the organisation in many ways, particularly through the use of being able to listen, learn, and engage with Weightlifting Wales wider stakeholders on a variety of social media channels. However, how we as a national governing body utilise social media and what we say will have the potential to affect the external reputation of Weightlifting Wales and/or exposure of the organisation – including any associated business/legal issues.

Whilst we recognise the benefits which may be gained from appropriate use of social media, it is also important to be aware that it poses significant risks to Weightlifting Wales. These risks include: disclosure of confidential information’ and intellectual property; damage to the organisation’s reputation; and the risk of legal claims.

Therefore, every individual with an association to the workings of Weightlifting Wales has a personal responsibility to be familiar with and comply with what is set out in the Weightlifting Wales social media policy.

This policy is designed to reflect the governing body’s purpose, values, principles, and legal requirements.

2. Scope

The Weightlifting Wales social media policy covers all forms of social media platforms, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, X, Wikipedia, Whisper, Instagram, WhatsApp, Tik Tok, YouTube and all other social networking sites, internet postings and blogs. It applies to the use of social media for business purposes as well as personal use that may affect the organisation in any way. The policy applies both when the Weightlifting Wales social media accounts are accessed using either the organisation’s own equipment or software, or whether it’s through the devices

belonging to the employees of Weightlifting Wales themselves.

3. Policy Statement

Although many individuals may consider their personal comments and discussions posted on social media channels/social networking sites to be private, these communications have the potential to be frequently available to a larger audience than initially realised. As a result, any online communication that directly or indirectly refers to Weightlifting Wales, the sport of Weightlifting itself, any team members or athletes of the governing body, or other work-related issues, has the possibility of impacting upon the interests of Weightlifting Wales. Where possible, privacy settings on private social media platforms should be set to limit access. You should also be cautious about disclosing your personal details on social media. The privacy settings on social media apps and websites should give you control over how your personal information is used. All individuals associated with Weightlifting Wales who use social media are advised to check their privacy settings before using a particular service and to review them regularly, particularly after any new settings are introduced.

Wherever practical, include a prominent disclaimer stating who you work for or are affiliated with (e.g. employee of Weightlifting Wales) 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 a legal effect.

When participating in social media in a personal capacity, individuals involved within Weightlifting Wales must:

- Not disclose any confidential information, proprietary or sensitive information associated with Weightlifting Wales. Information is considered confidential when it is not readily available to the wider public. If there is any doubt as to whether certain

known information is confidential or not, refer to the employee/athlete code of conduct and/or ask your line manager or athlete representative group.

- Not use the Weightlifting Wales logo or branding on any social media platform without prior approval from the strategy and development manager/business support officer.
- Not communicate anything that might damage Weightlifting Wales's reputation, governing body image, competition interests, or the confidence of members.
- Not represent online on behalf of Weightlifting Wales in the public domain without prior approval from the strategy and development manager/business support officer.
- Not post any material that would directly or indirectly defame, harass, discriminate against or bully any Weightlifting Wales stakeholder.
- Make sure when identifying themselves (or when they may be identified) as an associated person to Weightlifting Wales, that their social media communications are lawful and comply with all other Weightlifting Wales policies and procedures.

4. Responsible use of Social Media

Social media is a powerful force that sporting governing bodies can harness to increase membership, inspire loyalty, communicate a key message, create awareness and so much more. As such, in order for Weightlifting Wales to effectively utilise the power that social media can have, there are key guidelines that this policy sets out for individuals in charge outputting content on official Weightlifting Wales accounts to follow. These are:

- Ensuring all posts are relevant the organisation's activities;
- Maintaining a professional, respectful, and positive tone in all communications;

- Verifying the accuracy of all content that is to be posted – correcting any errors promptly;
- Respond to comments and messages in a timely and courteous manner.
- Be respectful, polite, and patient when engaging in conversations online on the governing body's behalf. There should be extra careful when making declarations or promises towards Weightlifting Wales members and other stakeholders.
- Avoid speaking on matters outside of your field of expertise when possible. Everyone should be careful not to answer questions or make statements that fall under somebody else's responsibility.

A consideration of note to reaffirm that if any member of the Weightlifting Wales team is subject to harassment or derogatory comments via social media or through any other related internet platform while they are performing their role with the governing body, they should bring this to the attention of their line manager, or even a director of the Weightlifting Wales board as appropriate.

Unreasonable use of social media for personal matters is not permitted during working hours or by means of Weightlifting Wales devices, networks and other IT resources and communications systems. This could potentially lead to disciplinary action. However, it is recognised that employees may wish to monitor relevant social media channels for work purposes via a personal account, for example following the Instagram feeds or LinkedIn postings of other national governing bodies/sports organisations for content inspiration. This can provide the organisation with useful insight into how Weightlifting Wales platforms compare with similar governing bodies, and how the organisation can positively develop its social media engagement.

Such monitoring must be relevant to Weightlifting Wales and must not compromise any other activities undertaken by the role you have been set out to perform for the organisation. It

must not negatively impact on the time you spend on your regular duties or be a mask for personal use of social media in work time. If you become aware of matters which are relevant to Weightlifting Wales through social media monitoring, you should raise the issue with your line manager and/or any relevant team members.

5. Crisis Management

Weightlifting Wales will ensure to provide a unified and coordinated response to any social media crisis, either internally or externally.

Any misuse of Weightlifting Wales's official social media accounts should be reported to the relevant member of staff's line manager immediately and in turn to the Chair of the board, which may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the organisation's disciplinary policy and procedure document. Disciplinary sanctions will be as described in the disciplinary policy, up to and including dismissal, depending on the nature of the misconduct identified on Weightlifting Wales social media accounts.

The lines between public and private, personal and professional, may be blurred on social media, so therefore there must be a consideration that you are acting as an ambassador for Weightlifting Wales when performing duties of creating content that will be posted on the organisation's official accounts.

How Weightlifting Wales deals with particular mistakes on official social media accounts will depend on the nature of the error and the connection to your duty within the organisation. You should always inform your line manager and the business support officer if you are at all unsure whether you have made a mistake on social media that may affect the organisation's image and reputation. Your conduct online when dealing with Weightlifting Wales's official social media accounts is subject to the same disciplinary rules and the expectations of the staff code of conduct as your day-to-day nonsocial media conduct. However, immediate steps you

could take are: deleting the post and apologise for the mistake, explaining the material was posted online by mistake, and inform your line manager and the business support officer for advice on best steps to take when an adjustment to the post could still be made.

6. Gaining Permissions

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, the following guidance should be applied when seeking to publish images of minors:

- Images should not be shared on social media without consent from the parent/guardian of the child.
- Only images of children in appropriate sporting attire should be used to reduce the risk of the image being adapted for inappropriate use.
- Sporting action shots should focus on the activity rather than a particular child and should avoid full face and body shots.

More generally, there should also be a consistent refrainment from posting any information or photos of a sensitive nature across Weightlifting Wales platforms. This could include accidents, incidents or controversial behaviour. In these instances, there would need to be consent of the owner of copyright in the image.

It is critical that you comply with the laws governing copyright in relation to material owned by others and Weightlifting Wales's own copyrighted content (i.e. images, videos, and news articles).

Nobody at Weightlifting Wales should ever quote or use more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and you should always attribute such work to the original author/source as required when posting such content on Weightlifting Wales official social media accounts. It is good practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

7. Prohibited Content

Weightlifting Wales would like to point out that you can't be fully anonymous via social media. 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.

A list of prohibited content that you as a representative of Weightlifting Wales **must** not post online on social media platforms include:

- Say anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading. If you are unsure, check the source and the facts before uploading or posting anything. Weightlifting Wales recommends erring on the side of caution – if in doubt, do not post or upload.
- Posting anonymously, using 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.

- Make derogatory comments directly or indirectly or use offensive or inappropriate language in any social media communication.
- Impersonate colleagues or third parties through the use of social media to defame or disparage Weightlifting Wales.
- Post comments about sensitive business-related topics, such as about any negative comments of athlete performances within Weightlifting or do anything to jeopardise legal investigations.
- There shouldn't ever be a time where content on Weightlifting Wales social media channels links to content that contains illegal or indecent content, including defamatory, vilifying or misleading and deceptive content.

8. Compliance and Enforcement

Weightlifting Wales reserves the right to monitor social media use and content related to the organisation. This may be done for legitimate business purposes which include ascertaining and demonstrating that expected standards are being met by those using the systems and for the detection and investigation of unauthorised use of the systems (including where this is necessary to prevent or detect crime).

You may be required to remove any social media content from your own personal account that

we consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action. Nevertheless, Weightlifting Wales won't actively search social media for information posted by members of staff, members, volunteers, athletes, etc on their personal accounts unless information has been received that would require further investigation because it breaches Weightlifting Wales standards of conduct.

Any other breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. All breaches will be investigated in accordance with the Weightlifting Wales Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and the level of disciplinary action to be taken, if any, will be a matter of judgement for the chair of the disciplinary hearing.

Boundaries between professional and private life can become blurred when using social media and as such employee's actions and posts have the ability to affect the organisations brand and reputation. It is important that employees are aware of the impact their posts could have on Weightlifting Wales and should therefore use social media responsibly. Any individual associated to Weightlifting Wales (e.g. employee, volunteer, athlete, member) who feels that they have been harassed or bullied or are offended by material posted or uploaded by a Weightlifting Wales colleague onto a social media platform, should inform the chief operating officer/governance and compliance officer who will then discuss the issue with the Chair of the board.

9. Review and Updates

Weightlifting Wales social media policy assists to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all online activities related to Weightlifting Wales. As part of all employee's inductions, there will be discussions taking place to educate Weightlifting Wales staff, athletes, members, and volunteers about this policy and for online conduct best practices.

In circumstances where guidance about social media issues has not been given in this policy, we suggest you use common sense or seek out advice from those who have approved this policy.

10. Revision of Policy

This policy is not intended to be contractually binding. Weightlifting Wales reserves the right to amend and/or withdraw this policy from time to time for any reason, including without limitation, to take account of changes in the law, best practice and/or operational requirements. The document will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness.