



RGU SPORTS CLUBS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1.0 Overview

As an RGU Sports Club and RGU Sports Club member, we encourage you to engage, collaborate and innovate, using the wealth of social media opportunities that are available to you. However, and wherever you do this, we want you to be aware of your actions and engagements - their potential impact on both yourself and the university you represent.

2.0 Personal Participation in Social Media

2.1 Personal Responsibility

Clubs are constituted to RGU Union and are under The Robert Gordon University banner and as such you have a responsibility not to bring either organisation into disrepute. Maintaining the reputation of the University, its projects, services and clubs plays a crucial part in ensuring the continuing success of the organisation.

Comments, particularly those with a strongly negative or unprofessional tone, can have serious unintended consequences. It is therefore important to remember that what you say about your Club, even in personal social media profiles, can reflect upon the University. It is also important to remember that when responding in the comment sections of posts, whether that be on your own posts or other's posts, that you maintain a kind tone; how you act may be taken as a reflection on your club, and the University.

Please exercise discretion over whether or not the space you are posting to (whether your own, another student's or the club's post) is an appropriate space for discussion of Club-related matters.

Please do not comment about University matters in any social media space which could be construed as offensive or illegal.

2.2 What Material Can be Posted

It is usually appropriate to mention and refer your readers to published or public material. Adding your own comments and discussion of this type of public information is acceptable but you should always be respectful in tone, and it should be clear that your views are your own.

You must not post any commercially confidential information, this may include:

- Indications of forthcoming developments or funding bids
- Data or software code
- Information about colleagues or personnel matters
- Unresolved grievances
- Non-public or not-yet-approved documents or minutes, news or information.

If you are in any doubt about whether it is appropriate to post a comment on/about a specific topic, please seek clarification from the President of Sport and Physical Activity.

Your personal social media profile should not be the first point of publication for any official reports or announcements. Official materials should always appear first on an official RGU Union space - usually the Union website or social media or the Club's own social media.



2.3 Comments about The University on Club Social Media

It is up to you if/how you moderate comments on your own social media channels. However, we suggest that you agree a mechanism for handling any questions or notable comments within your own committee.

2.4 Personal Comments Made on Other Social Media Channels

If you are commenting on other projects, services, or personal/professional channels or profiles in a personal capacity please be aware of how your comments may reflect upon the University, RGU:Union, RGU Sports Clubs, or the Sports Club with which you are associated.

Whilst an open discussion of ideas is encouraged, you should also remember that your personal identity might well be associated with your professional role in many social media contexts.

2.5 Legal Considerations

Check the Terms & Conditions and/or Usage Policy of any service to which you subscribe for your own use and for that of your Club.

Be mindful of your responsibilities under Data Protection legislation - do not disclose other people's personal information without prior permission. Be aware that any posts you make in a professional capacity (even private posts) are subject to data protection and freedom of information and may need to be disclosed.

3.0 Building an Official Page/Profile

3.1 Introduction

Club social media should showcase club activity including, but not limited to, performance, recreational activity, fundraising events and club news and opportunities.

3.2 Set-up

Approval

- Consult with the President of Sport and Physical Activity and obtain their approval for any new social media profile.

Contact

- Appoint a member of the Club to be the main contact point for your profile. These individuals will also be responsible for the confidential storing of log-in details.
- This person/s will be responsible for maintaining a common editorial line and regularly moderating comments.

Branding and Identity

- Use RGU Sports Club logos and colours.
- Ensure that users are aware that your profile is hosted by a third party and not directly by the University. It is important to ensure the social media identity relates back to the appropriate club or team.

3.3 Posting

Tone and Authenticity

- Be appropriate and professional in presentation and tone.
- Use any necessary disclaimers (for example, if your page does not necessarily represent the views of all Club Members).
- Remember to show the best side of the club, some behaviour may not be deemed appropriate to publicly share as a representation of club activity. For example, a club “night out” post explaining the plan for the night and if there may be a theme would be acceptable, however following that post with another containing images of questionable behaviour, or things that may be considered rude or offensive would not be acceptable as it could damage the club’s reputation. That, in turn, could reflect poorly on the University.

Frequency

- By setting up a social media profile you are committing to maintain it by publishing and updating regularly
- If a social media profile is not being updated regularly, the best course of action may be to:
 - Formally cease updating it and publish a final post that indicates it will no longer be active and updated.
 - Take a copy of your posts for archiving and, in some cases, subsequently remove the profile.

3.4 Accessibility

When communicating via social media networks, we need to be prepared to offer a similar level of service to members of our audiences who find these technologies inaccessible, when they request it.

This might include:

- Summarising online dialogue via email and facilitating contributions.
- Providing subtitles or transcripts to video or audio footage.
- Providing alternative text for images.

3.5 Freedom of Information Requests

Any recorded request for information is a freedom of information (FOI) request. Some enquirers may use social media to submit a request, for example, they might use X, the comments section of a social media post, or by private message (DM’s) like on Instagram..



If your social media page receives a request for information, remember:

- Contact the President of Sport and Physical Activity immediately, let them know if you want to refuse any part of the request, are unsure about any aspect of the request, or if it does not relate to your area of work.
- You have a maximum of 20 working days to answer the request.
- If the request concerns your area of work and the information can be released, avoid complications by following the procedures.

3.6 Exit Strategy

If the service (club/team) that the social media page represents ceases to operate, it is important that this is clear. Change headlining information to clearly reflect that the club no longer operates, and direct people to an alternative contact.

Disable comments if possible. If you cannot disable comments, make sure you continue to keep an eye on the page or notify the Sports Union so they may keep an eye out - disused social media pages can become breeding grounds for spam and 'troll' comments.