

SYFA Limited (SYFA)

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE POLICY



A POLICY FOR SYFA PLAYERS, OFFICIALS, CLUBS, LEAGUES AND REGIONS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 SYFA Limited (“SYFA”) wishes to ensure, as practically as possible, that all internet and social media postings are acceptable. To achieve this requirement all users must access any internet and social media in an acceptable manner.
- 1.2 This policy provides guidance on the procedures that will support and underpin the use of social networking and other online services within member clubs and leagues. It is important that all players, officials, clubs and leagues or anyone working on behalf of them are aware of this policy and agree to the terms.
- 1.3 SYFA accepts that internet and social media have advanced and changed the way people communicate and interact on a daily basis. Officials, clubs, leagues and others involved in providing football under the jurisdiction of SYFA are increasingly using the internet and social media to promote sport and communicate with players, officials, clubs, leagues and the SYFA.
- 1.4 Social media provides unique opportunities to engage and develop relationships with people in a creative and dynamic forum where users are active participants. It is widely used to promote activities, campaigns and events. It is also used to communicate with coaches, officials, and participants (including young people) regarding club news.
- 1.5 Although these forms of social media and communication can provide benefits for those involved, they also pose potential risks to players, officials, clubs and leagues. The Child Protection in Sport Unit has produced guidance to ensure that sports clubs are doing all they can to ensure children and young people are safeguarded from harm when using internet and social media
- 1.6 All players, officials, clubs and leagues should be aware that a breach of this Policy will be viewed as serious misconduct and will entitle SYFA to take disciplinary action against the relevant player, official, club, league and/or region in accordance with the disciplinary procedures.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all players, officials, clubs, leagues and regions are aware of the general principles and rules surrounding the acceptable use of internet and social media.
- 2.2 This policy provides some guidance on what players, officials, clubs and leagues responsibilities are in order to protect all concerned. Players, officials, clubs, leagues and regions who do not comply with the legal guidelines set down for computer use leave themselves vulnerable to legal actions. It is vital that all within SYFA work together to ensure compliance.

3. Scope

- 3.1 All players, officials, clubs, leagues, regions and other individuals under the jurisdiction of SYFA who use or have access to information systems are covered by this policy and should be familiar with its content.

Clubs, leagues and regions should ensure that everyone involved (including coaches, volunteers, administrators, parents and players) understand and comply with their responsibilities within these policies.

4. Social Networking

4.1 Online social networking e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Flickr enables social interaction between groups of people with similar interests and hobbies.

4.2 Social network users establish an online 'profile' hosting information about themselves, for example personal information, social events, activities, interests, friends and often their photos or videos.

4.3 Social networking services allow users to create their own content and share it with a vast network of individuals sometimes referred to as online communities.

5. Potential Risks

5.1 People should be able to use the internet without worrying about being shown inappropriate material, or being abused or bullied.

5.2 Potential risks can include, but are not limited to:

- 5.2.1 bullying by peers and people they consider 'friends';
- 5.2.2 posting personal information that can identify and locate a child offline;
- 5.2.3 sexual grooming, luring, exploitation and abuse, contact with strangers;
- 5.2.4 sexual, racial and disability harassment and/or bullying;
- 5.2.5 exposure to inappropriate content;
- 5.2.6 exposure to racist or hate material;
- 5.2.7 encouragement to post sexual images and videos of themselves online;
- 5.2.8 encouragement of violent behaviour, such as 'happy slapping';
- 5.2.9 glorifying activities such as drug taking or excessive drinking;
- 5.2.10 physical harm to young people in making video content such as enacting and imitating stunts and risk-taking activities;
- 5.2.11 leaving and running away from home as a result of contacts made online.

6. Considerations

6.1 Players, officials, clubs and leagues must consider the following:

- 6.1.1 how to best present information and activities online;
- 6.1.2 addressing safeguards for using or accessing social networking;
- 6.1.3 the type of content to upload e.g. photos, blogs, video clips, podcasting, discussion groups;
- 6.1.4 advice for users on linking and sharing content from players, officials, clubs and league sites on to their personal webpages/profiles;
- 6.1.5 guidance to ensure that interactions with users take place in an appropriate manner.

7. Good practice guidelines for the safe use of social networking

7.1 The following guidelines contain practical safety measures for players, officials, clubs and leagues and provide a useful starting point for the development of an online safeguarding strategy:

- 7.1.1 Are you clear about what you want to achieve by using social networking websites? For example, is it to:
 - 7.1.1.1 enable two way interaction with users;
 - 7.1.1.2 provide and publish information for users;
 - 7.1.1.3 receive information from users; or
 - 7.1.1.4 a mixture of these.
- 7.1.2 Research available social media platforms and options with particular reference to your planned use and target audience/s;
- 7.1.3 It's important that the club, league or region develops procedures and has specific codes of conduct in place to promote a safe online environment for all.

8. Acceptable behaviour

- 8.1 respectful, polite postings – audience dependent;
- 8.2 anything – audience dependent and irrespective of who had posted but possibly gender dependent;
- 8.3 tolerance of other's postings – depending on who had posted;
- 8.4 professional – audience dependent.

9. Unacceptable behaviour

- 9.1 sending rude, offensive or harassing material;
- 9.2 embarrassing postings e.g. club's posting results from development matches;
- 9.3 coarse language;
- 9.4 too much, too intimate, and too detailed personal information;
- 9.5 unprofessional content – audience dependent;
- 9.6 breaching others' privacy;
- 9.7 randomly requesting friendship;
- 9.8 pestering a friends' friends;
- 9.9 stalking;
- 9.10 setting up or establishing virtual groups which may cause harm or discomfort to any other person;
- 9.11 publishing defamatory and/or knowingly false material;
- 9.12 revealing confidential information about a player, official, club or league including financial information, club/league plans, policies, members and/or internal discussions;
- 9.13 view, create, send or forward illegal material;
- 9.14 view, create, send or forward defamatory material;
- 9.15 view, create, send or forward pornographic or sexually explicit material;
- 9.16 view, create, send or forward material that may cause offence to others, including, but not limited to discriminatory material or material that would violate the dignity of others or create an offensive or degrading environment (whether or not that is intended) including on the grounds of sex, race (including ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability or age.

10. Monitoring, Policies and Legal Issues

- 10.1 The SYFA maintains the right to investigate internet and network traffic in relation to any person under the jurisdiction of SYFA who are subject to any report.

- 10.2 SYFA will only attempt to monitor internet use where there is suspicion of improper use.

- 10.3 SYFA's policies regarding equal opportunities, discrimination and harassment apply to e-mail just as they do to every other aspect of SYFA
- 10.4 E-mail is also subject to national law, in particular the Computer Misuse Act, Copyright Act, Data Protection Act and the law of libel;
- 10.5 The fact that e-mails can so easily and quickly be forwarded to others and that e-mails are not automatically and permanently deleted when wiped from a desktop means that defamation is a real danger. Care should be taken with the content of messages and derogatory remarks about another player, official, club or league.
- 10.6 The same rule applies to indecent, sexist, racist or obscene remarks.