



## Social Media Guidelines

The following information has been adapted from the following resources:

The Office for Recreation and Sport - V-Star Club Handbook  
<https://www.recsport.sa.gov.au/v-star/club-handbook/index.php>

The University of Adelaide (UofA) - Social Media Policies and Guidelines  
<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/technology/policies/best-practice/social-media/>

Play by the Rules – Social Media Toolkit  
<http://www.playbytherules.net.au/toolkits/social-media-toolkit>

### A Guide to Using Social Media

We live in a society where Social Media is the norm, with Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Pinterest entwined into our daily vocabulary and actions. It is an increasingly prevalent and powerful means of communication.

Adelaide University Sport (AU Sport) encourages staff, board, committee members and club members to use these tools as a way of staying in touch with members and promoting and sharing messages, news, events and AU Sport as a whole. There are, however, guidelines and expectations expected with this use.

#### Social Media Platforms

Currently one of the best ways to use Social Media is to create a free Facebook Group and/or Page for your club.

A Facebook Group can be Closed or Open (*refer to Open versus Closed Groups for more information*) and is particularly useful for financial members to share announcements and receive comments. People can be invited to join the Group or can request to be added by the admin (*see under Admins for more information*). AU Sport staff should be added to these groups as a quick way to communicate AU Sport matters.

A Facebook Page is more public and can be used like a website, as it allows for greater information storage and sharing. Anyone can 'Like' a page on Facebook. A Facebook Page can also be added to your club page on the AU Sport website, whereas a Group cannot. This means that your Club Page at [www.theblacks.com.au](http://www.theblacks.com.au) can show your news feed and a link to

your Club's Facebook Page. AU Sport staff should also 'Like' Club Pages through the AU Sport Facebook account<sup>1</sup>.

In addition to Facebook, some clubs might have a Twitter account to make short announcements, Pinterest and Instagram for sharing photos and/or YouTube for videos.

Using multiple social platforms can create extra work however, therefore AU Sport recommends just using Facebook – at least until you have that mastered! For this reason, the following information relates mostly to Facebook.

### **Admins**

Social Media can be very time consuming. It is busy, instant and public, where everything happens *now*. Ideally, you would have a couple of 'admins' to manage your social media to ensure the information is up to date and relevant and that messages/comments and requests are responded to.

The admins need to constantly monitor the Social Media platform and respond carefully and respectfully to positive comments and take action on anything negative (*refer to General Principles for Using Social Media for further information*). It is recommended that the admins check the account at least every two days to ensure posts are responded to appropriately. The admins must also remember to keep the admin privileges up to date, with those no longer in admin duties removed and new admins assigned.

### **Open and Closed Facebook 'Groups'**

If you set your Club Group to 'Open', all of the friends connected to each member within that group can also see the group's activity, including posts, photos and documents. The Open nature means many more people are likely to see your information and potentially take interest in the club.

In Closed Group, all the announcements, Likes, posts, photos etc. are only seen by the members of the group, which are approved by the admin. A Closed Group is best if you want to share partially sensitive information only with club members, or if you want to provide a safer 'members only' forum for club members to discuss topics.

A good strategy might be to create a Closed Group for financial club members only and an Open Group or Page to advertise your club to the public. You may need to monitor who is allowed in the Closed Group (i.e. if it is for financial members only).

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<sup>1</sup> AU Sport has a Facebook Page, *Adelaide University Sport – The Blacks*, with the current AU Sport staff given admin rights through their personal accounts.

### **Sensitive Information**

Whether you create a Group or Page, be aware Facebook reserves the right to change rules without warning. It is important to understand the privacy settings throughout Facebook, to minimise the chances of accidentally sharing private information wider than intended.

For these reasons, it is good practice to use Social Media mostly to promote your open, public information and use more secure means for private information. When information is particularly sensitive, a phone call or private face-to-face conversation can be the safest and most thoughtful way to discuss it.

### **Creating and Managing a Facebook Group and/or Page**

Facebook has instructions on creating a Group and Page via the following links:

Group - <https://www.facebook.com/help/162866443847527/>

Page - <https://www.facebook.com/pages/create/>

You then need to:

1. Invite all club members to join the Group or Like the Page
2. Post vibrant comments and photos\* of club activities. Short posts once or twice per week can be a good balance so people don't forget you but also don't feel you have too many posts to annoy them (spam).
3. Encourage club members to 'Like', 'Comment' on, 'Share' announcements and 'Tag' photos.
4. The more popular the posts or photos are, the more likely Facebook will put them at the top of a user's 'news feed'.

\*You should consider obtaining permission from club members before posting any photo or personal details about them. AU Sport highly recommends seeking written permission from parents/guardians for use of junior members' photos and information.

### **Online Behaviour**

AU Sport encourages social media use (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.) by its staff, board, committee members and club members and seeks to engage through it with the broader UofA and sporting communities. As social media blurs the lines between people's personal and professional expression, users must think carefully about their online conduct in order to preserve and protect individual reputations and the reputation of AU Sport and the UofA.

The same laws, policies, professional expectations and guidelines for interacting within and outside the AU Sport and UofA community apply online. AU Sport staff, board, committee

members and club members are responsible for their own actions and need to follow the same behavioural standards.

AU Sport staff, board, committee members and club members breaching these expectations through social media use will face the same consequences under the **AU Sport Code of Conduct**.

AU Sport staff, board, committee members and club members are also entitled to enjoy the same protections and rights online as in the off-line world, such as general freedom of expression. If it would normally be acceptable to express an opinion about something off-line, it is equally acceptable online. However, it is important to remember that the permanence, visibility and connectivity of social media sites can result in communications having a far wider and more permanent audience and impact than in the off-line world, making it even more important to act and express thoughts and opinions rationally, respectfully and appropriately.

While AU Sport will moderate its own official social media sites, AU Sport will not monitor or sanitise (censor or alter) content posted externally by its staff, board, committee members and club members at large, absent reasonable complaints and evidence, or alleged breaches of law or AU Sport and University policy. Ultimately, staff, board, committee members and club members are responsible for their own conduct - but where staff, board, committee members and club members use any devices, services or technology provided by AU Sport (and the University), or specifically relating to AU Sport personnel or activities, all content will be open to scrutiny, moderation and consequences.

## **General Principles for Using Social Media**

Remember that the same standards apply online as in real life - including laws, AU Sport and UofA policies, behavioural expectations and the rules of common courtesy - and so do the same consequences for breaching them. In addition, while the benefits are compelling, there are a number of dangers to be aware of so you can manage your social media safely. The following principles provide some additional guidance specifically relevant to social media use:

- Be respectful, genuine and credible.
- Post appropriate content.
- If you make a mistake, fix it quickly.
- Maintain your online presence with updated and responsive content.
- Keep your password secure and log out of Facebook if you are on shared device.
- Maintain confidentiality. Don't share any confidential, private or sensitive information and gain consent before publicly posting people's names, photos, whereabouts and other details.
- Make sure you fully understand the privacy settings you have for limiting who can see your information or posts.
- Be aware of liability. You are responsible for your own posts, and they are almost impossible to erase.

- Think about how your posts might affect other people. If you write something negative or inflammatory about someone on a social media site, the whole community can see it - so it may have a much greater impact on others.
- Look out for negative personal comments (bullying). What might start as harmless teasing online can escalate and lead to ongoing harassment. If necessary, remove comments instantly and counsel and warn the offenders. If people continue to post negative comments, you can block them from your club's Facebook page, or in extreme cases consider further disciplinary action, such as suspending the offenders from club activities.

When using social media in an AU Sport capacity, please keep the following in mind:

- Distinguish between your personal and professional capacity. Make it clear when you are not speaking on behalf of AU Sport. If an issue relates to your AU Sport role and you are commenting on it, you should identify yourself and your connection to AU Sport.
- Act within your authority. Just as you need authority to speak on behalf of AU Sport to the media or outside entities, you need authority to speak as an AU Sport representative on social media sites.
- Use your online presence to promote AU Sport and not to damage it.
- Something posted on a social media site is still a written communication, so the same legal ramifications can flow, such as defamation, trade practices/fair trading violations or breach of privacy or confidentiality - and because it's written in a permanent forum, it has the same evidentiary value as a more formal, hard copy communication.
- Respect AU Sport and the UofA branding in a way that complies with the AU Sport logo use and the UofA Branding & Visual Identity Policy.

## **AU Sport Expectations for Social Media Use**

It is expected that those using social media on behalf of AU Sport or an AU Sport Club will conduct themselves appropriately and be guided by the following principles, in conjunction with the preceding information:

- All social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets are treated as public 'comment'.
- Postings (written, photos or videos) will feature positive club news and events.
- Personal information about members will not be disclosed.
- No statements will be made that are misleading, false or likely to injure a person's reputation.
- No statements will be made that might bring AU Sport or the UofA into disrepute.
- Abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements will not be tolerated. Offending posts will be removed and those responsible will be blocked from the site and/or AU Sport activities.

### **Non-Compliance**

AU Sport staff, board, committee members and club members may face disciplinary action for sending inappropriate electronic communication or posting online content or comments that harass, offend, intimidate or humiliate another member, as outlined in the **AU Sport Code of Conduct**.

Under certain circumstances, cyber bullying is a criminal offence that can be reported to the police. In addition, members who publish false or misleading comments about another person in the public domain (e.g., Facebook, YouTube or Twitter) may be liable for defamation.