



Safeguarding: Social Media Policy

Social media (including personal and professional websites, blogs, chat rooms and bulletin boards; social networks, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram; video-sharing sites such as YouTube & TikTok) are a common means of communication and self-expression.

It's essential that coaches, volunteers and athletes make informed decisions about how they use the internet, mobile phone and email communications to protect our organisation and our members.

Everyone involved in our organisation has the responsibility to safeguard both in and outside of the gym when it comes to communications. The following policies should be adhered to:

1. Refrain from publishing comments about other organisation, clubs, athletes or referees and any controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects.
2. Avoid hostile or harassing communications in any posts or other online communications. Harassment is any offensive conduct based on a person's race, sex, gender identity, national origin, colour, disability, age sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, religion or any other status protected by law.
3. WAKO GB coaches and athletes should identify all copyrighted or borrowed material with citations and links. When publishing direct paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos or videos, give credit to the original publisher or author.
4. With respect to official WAKO GB social media channels, the executive will be responsible for reviewing official announcements and responses to online posts and resolving any concerns before they are posted.
5. Whilst not strictly prohibited, it is poor practise for coaches to communicate on a one to one basis with athletes under the age of 18. It is recommended therefore that you steer clear of direct messaging and try to copy third parties on all communications i.e. parents or relevant welfare officers.
6. Where it is necessary to communicate with under 18's, coaches are advised to keep a record of what has been said and to seek parent's approval.
7. Coaches should think carefully before accepting under 18's as "friends" on



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their social networking account. It is recommended that business pages are used for young people to follow or if this is not possible, get parental approval and ensure they are aware and approve of the request first.

8. Coaches are advised not to follow or initiate contact with any under 18 and should stay clear of any private messaging.
9. In the event of an athlete showing a coach content that is inappropriate for a child to have, the coach must inform their appropriate welfare/safeguarding officer. Anything that constitutes cyber bullying or anything sexual in nature is highly inappropriate and must be reported.
10. Whilst it is not required that coaches block young athletes from their sites, coaches must be mindful that what they are posting is visible to these athletes and to the wider world.

(Last reviewed February 2021)