

# Newcastle Vikings Handball Club

## Social Media Policy Season 2025-2026

Newcastle Vikings Handball Club recognises and embraces the benefits and opportunities that social media can bring as a tool. For the purposes of this policy, social media is defined as a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes online social forums, anonymous apps, blogs, video-and image-sharing websites and similar facilities. It can be used to share news, information and successes, keep coaches, volunteers and members up to date with important developments and promote the club's activities.

There is, however, an inherent risk involved in using social media, in that, it is an instantaneous and far reaching form of communication and inappropriate use can impact upon coaches, volunteers, members and the reputation of the club. The club encourages its members to engage, collaborate and innovate through social media; however, wherever and whenever the members does this, they must be aware of the potential impact on both themselves and the club.

### Purpose of policy

This policy is intended to minimise the risks of social media which can impact on the wellbeing of members and coaches and the reputation of the club, so that members and coaches can enjoy the benefits of social networking whilst understanding the standards of conduct expected by the club.

### Who does this apply to?

This policy relates to all members and volunteers who create or contribute to blogs, wikis, social networks, apps, forums, virtual worlds, or any other kind of social media. It should be applied to all use and all forms of social media where there is potential impact on the club, whether for club-related or personal use, whether during 'working hours' or otherwise, whether social media is accessed using equipment belongs to members of the club or any other third party.

### Principles

- Coaches, volunteers and members should only comment within their own area of expertise to provide individual perspectives on non-confidential activities in the club.
- Coaches, volunteers and members should never represent themselves or the club in a false or misleading way. All statements must be true and not misleading; all claims must be substantiated.
- Use common sense and common courtesy. Coaches, volunteers and members should ask permission to publish or report conversations that are meant to be private or internal to the club. The club's privacy, confidentiality and legal guidelines for external communication should not be violated by coaches, volunteers and members efforts to be transparent.
- Where appropriate, the club reserves the right to monitor use of social media platforms and take appropriate action to protect against any misuse that may be harmful to the club.



- Coaches, volunteers and members should seek guidance before participating in social media when the topic being discussed may be considered sensitive (e.g. a crisis situation, intellectual property, issues which may impact on the club's reputation, commercially sensitive material). Social media activity around sensitive topics should be referred to the Social Media Officers.
- If coaches, volunteers and members use of social media is considered to be derogatory, discriminatory, bullying, threatening, defamatory, offensive, intimidating, harassing, creating legal liability for the club, bringing the club into disrepute, then the club may take action. This may include comments, videos, or photographs, which have been posted on social media sites about the club, coaches, volunteers and members.
- The club's response to any misuse of social media in a personal capacity will be reasonable and proportionate to the perceived offence; the nature of the postings/comments made and the impact or potential impact on the club.
- Social networking sites may be referred to when investigating possible misconduct/gross misconduct.
- Coaches, volunteers and members should be aware of security threats and be on guard for social engineering and phishing attempts. Social networks can also be used to distribute spam and malware.
- The club may require coaches, volunteers and members to remove social media postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of these standards and failure to comply with such a request may, in itself, result in disciplinary action.

## Responsibilities

Coaches, volunteers and members should be transparent and state that they are members of Newcastle Vikings Handball Club if they are posting about the club. If you are writing about the club or a competitor, use your real name, identify that you are a club member, and be clear about your role. The club discourages coaches, volunteers and members from posting online anonymously or using pseudonyms. You should never impersonate another individual.

Board Members are responsible for addressing any concerns and/or questions arising out of the use of social media.

Coaches, volunteers and members are responsible for their words and actions in an online environment and are therefore advised to consider whether any comment, photograph or video they are about to post on a social networking site, is something that they would want other members of the University, their board or people outside the club to read.

Marketing Officers are responsible for giving specialist advice on the use of social media for club business.

