

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. Purpose of the Policy

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by employees, contracted service providers and scholarship holders (athletes) of the Victorian Institute of Sport (VIS). For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation, blogs, wiki's, social networking sites such as FaceBook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. This policy is in addition to, and complements existing employee and athlete codes of conduct.

2. Understanding

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest to create, share or consume content. Globally the interest and participation in social media is growing at phenomenal rates and extends to corporations who are now recognising the benefits.

The VIS understands that social media can be a valid marketing tool and encourages staff and athletes alike to use social media as part of their daily environment. In doing so, this social media policy will assist to guide and protect you, the VIS, our sponsors and industry associations.

VIS employees are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. VIS employees who choose to identify themselves as an employee of the VIS MUST include the following statement in their profile:

"All views expressed here are my own and not those of the VIS."

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

3. Remember the Three R's

- Be clear about who you are **representing** at all times, including in the evenings and on weekends;
- Take **responsibility** for ensuring that any references to the VIS are factually correct and accurate and do not breach confidentiality requirements;
- Show **respect** at all times for the individuals and community with which you interact.

3.1 Representation

You must ensure you do not imply that you are authorised to speak on behalf of the VIS unless your role is management of the organisation's social media accounts. You may only disclose VIS-related information that is publicly available. You must NOT comment on or disclose confidential VIS information (such as financial information, marketing and business plans, athlete services information, etc). If you require clarification about what VIS information is in the public domain, you should refer material to your line manager. Be mindful of the importance of not damaging the reputation of the VIS, commercial interests and/or bringing the VIS into disrepute.

3.2 Responsibility

Ensure you are not the first to make any VIS announcements, unless you have clearance from the Communications & Marketing Manager and/or CEO. You may only offer advice, support or comment on topics that fall within your area of responsibility at the VIS. Ensure you do NOT post material that is a political comment, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity, including the VIS, its employees, its contractors, its partners and sponsors including the State and Federal Governments, its competitors and/or other business related individuals or organisations.

3.3 Respect

You must be polite and respectful of others' opinions, even in times of heated discussion and debate; NEVER lose your temper and NEVER start a fight. You must conform to the cultural and behavioural norms of the social media platform being used and respect copyright, privacy, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms.

4. **Breach of Policy**

As is the case with all of the VIS company policies, if you do not comply with this Social Media Policy you may face disciplinary action under the employee or athlete codes of conduct. This disciplinary action may involve a verbal or written warning, or in serious cases, termination of your employment, scholarship or engagement with the VIS. The VIS may recover from you any costs incurred as a result of a breach of this Social Media Policy. If you break the law, you may also be personally liable.

5. **Getting Started**

If you require assistance and/or training to set up social media accounts, please consult the Communications & Marketing Team and this can be arranged.

6. **Protect Your Privacy**

Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the VIS website. Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you don't want the public, your employer OR YOUR GRANDMA to see!

VIS athletes should be fully aware of how easily postings and photos can be taken out of context and end up front page news, leading to loss of reputation, sponsorship or income.

7. **Be the First to Respond to your Own Mistakes**

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper, deal with it quickly and in consultation with a VIS staff member.

8. **Think about the Consequences**

Think before pressing 'ok' or 'send'. "What are the likely consequences of my actions here?"

Don't forget your day job – spending work time using social media for purposes that are NOT work related will not be tolerated.

9. TIPS!

- The best way to be interesting, stay out of trouble, and have fun is to write about what you know. There is a good chance of being embarrassed by a real expert, or of being boring if you write about topics you are not knowledgeable about.
- Quality matters. Use a spell-checker. If you're not design-oriented, ask someone who is whether your blog or FaceBook page looks decent and take their advice on how to improve it.
- The speed of being able to publish your thoughts is both a great feature and a great downfall of social media. The time to edit or reflect must be self-imposed. When in doubt, DON'T POST.
- Be a scout for compliments and criticism. You don't have to respond but instead, forward it to the Communications & Marketing Team.
- Give credit where credit is due by referencing a RT (ReTweet) with a Twitter handle and crediting FaceBook Fan Pages where possible.
- Be aware your personal and professional lives will mix in social media.
- Keep records of your online activity by using SocialOomph to keep track of your Twitter accounts.
- Google remembers EVERYTHING!
- Have fun, but use commonsense.