



Social Media Policy

Introduction

What is social media?

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Why do we use social media?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating Linlithgow Rugby Club's work. It is important for some staff and volunteers to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of Linlithgow Rugby Club.

Why do we need a social media policy?

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you are discussing issues relating to Linlithgow Rugby Club's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all staff, volunteers and board members (henceforth referred to as individuals).

Before engaging in organisation-related social media activity, all individuals involved must read this policy.

Setting out the social media policy

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the promotion of Linlithgow Rugby Club, and the use of social media by individuals in both a professional and personal capacity. It highlights what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help individuals support and expand our official social media platforms, while protecting the charity and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

Point of contact for social media

Our Media Team is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media platforms. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these platforms, speak to a member of the Media Team. No other individual can post content on Linlithgow Rugby Club's official platforms without the permission of the Media Team.

Which social media platforms do we use?

Linlithgow Rugby Club uses the following social media platforms:

- **Website:** www.linlithgowrugbyclub.co.uk , also accessed through www.lrfc.club
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/LinlithgowRugbyClub (Linlithgow Rugby Club), with associated group Linlithgow Rugby Club Member's Zone
- **Instagram:** @linlithgowrfc

Guidelines

Using Linlithgow Rugby Club's social media platforms — appropriate conduct

1. The Media Team is responsible for managing Linlithgow Rugby Club's social media platforms. Only those authorised to do so by the Media Team or by the Board of Directors will have access to these accounts.
2. Be an ambassador for our brand. Individuals should ensure they reflect Linlithgow Rugby Club's values in what they post, and that all social media content has a value, a purpose and a benefit. Engage with our audience in a positive manner.
3. Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Also check the quality of images.
4. Always pause and think before posting. Consider the language you are using. Always check facts. Individuals should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.

5. Be honest. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it or ask for help to correct it.
6. Individuals shouldn't post content about supporters or service users without their express permission. If using any images, including but not limited to videos or photos, that clearly identify a child or young person under the age of 18, individuals must ensure that they have the written consent of a parent or guardian in advance. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy and consent records for more information.
7. Individuals should refrain from offering personal opinions via Linlithgow Rugby Club's media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about Linlithgow Rugby Club's position on a particular issue, please speak to the Club President.
8. It is vital that Linlithgow Rugby Club does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, for example a video of a stunt. Individuals should not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material and relevant accreditation made.
9. Individuals should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Instagram accounts, Twitter accounts or any other media platforms on behalf of Linlithgow Rugby Club without permission from the Media Team. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official media accounts in place, the Media Team can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.
10. Linlithgow Rugby Club is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties.
11. The Media Team regularly monitors our media spaces for mentions of Linlithgow Rugby Club so we can identify any problems or complaints early. If an individual outside of the Media Team becomes aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to cause issue, whether on Linlithgow Rugby Club's media platforms or elsewhere, they should contact a member of the Media Team immediately. If they are not available, then the individual should contact the Club President directly. Issues arising on media forums can escalate quickly and therefore should be reported at the first opportunity. Not acting can be detrimental to the organisation.
12. If individuals outside of the Media Team wish to contribute content, they should speak to a member of the Media Team regarding this.

Use of personal media accounts — appropriate conduct

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead highlights areas in which conflicts might arise. Individuals associated with Linlithgow Rugby Club are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with Linlithgow Rugby Club's values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive Linlithgow Rugby Club. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Linlithgow Rugby Club.
2. Individuals who have a personal account, blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at or are associated with Linlithgow Rugby Club should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their manager or the Club President. Those in senior management or in specialist roles where they are well known in their field of expertise must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing Linlithgow Rugby Club's view.
3. Use common sense and good judgement. Consider your personal content carefully. Be aware of your association with Linlithgow Rugby Club. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.
4. Linlithgow Rugby Club is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing Linlithgow Rugby Club, staff and volunteers are expected to hold Linlithgow Rugby Club's position of neutrality. Individuals who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from Linlithgow Rugby Club and to understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
5. We encourage individuals to share posts and content that we have published. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support Linlithgow Rugby Club and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage individuals to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. If the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the Media Team who will respond as appropriate.

Further Guidelines

Defamation

Defamation is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether individuals are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring Linlithgow Rugby Club into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

Copyright Law

It is critical that all individuals abide by the laws governing copyright. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, even where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

Discrimination and Harassment

Individuals should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Linlithgow Rugby Club media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief,
- using social media to bully another individual,
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content.

Under 18s and Vulnerable People

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

When communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, individuals should ensure the online relationship is appropriate and follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship.

Individuals should ensure that, where appropriate, young people and their parents/guardians have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online, and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary.

Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy for further information.

Responsibilities and Breach of Policy

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of Linlithgow Rugby Club is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For staff, breaches of policy may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue. Staff members who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from their manager.

Jean McKeown
Chair / President

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