



Social Media Policy & Guidelines

This document is issued by jointly Devon Hockey Association and Devon Hockey Umpires Association and outlines the social media policy and guidelines for **all** members of Devon Hockey including clubs, players, coaches and match officials. It provides guidance on use of social media and the disciplinary process that may be instigated should any breach of policy arise.

For the purposes of this policy, social media includes, but is not exclusively limited to, Facebook, Twitter, any internet forums, websites and also covers activities wherein a personal opinion can be viewed in or obtained via public means, whether already in existence or in the future.

1. Policy

When using and contributing to social media, Devon Hockey members are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent and appropriate to their role as ambassadors for and representatives of Devon Hockey. Any contribution, posting, message or associated conduct that is deemed to be in contravention of the policy could lead to the instigation of disciplinary proceedings.

2. Social media content guidelines for members

Be responsive – respond to players, coaches and colleagues and engage with your audience. Remember though, that not all followers / viewers will be supportive and that your posts may well be visible to a very wide audience. Don't engage in online disputes about hockey issues with your audience or allow others (including family & friends) to argue on your behalf. Don't take up issues on behalf of colleagues. You may come into contact online with under 18s. Familiarise yourself with the EHB's 'Proud to Protect' safeguarding regulations in relation to engaging with under 18s.

Be aware – what you say can have an impact on the image of the sport, on your colleagues and Devon Hockey as a whole. Banter amongst colleagues is good but beware of using 'private jokes'. It is important to be aware of the context in which comments made may be interpreted. Consider how the public, the media and other users will view your comments.

Think – pause and think before you post or send a message. If you're in doubt about posting something, ask a colleague or simply don't post it. Remember, you are personally responsible for everything that you post. "*If in doubt, leave it out*" is a useful approach to take when engaged in social media.

Treat it as a quote – Don't write anything on social media that you wouldn't feel comfortable seeing in a newspaper or hearing on TV or the radio.

Don't talk negatively about players, team officials, match officials or colleagues.

More general comments around matches are of course fine, for example, pleasure with performances, information about results etc. However, you should **NEVER** post anything about disciplinary issues that have arisen before, during or after a game or tournament. Even the most vaguely expressed comments are open to misinterpretation by readers and may compromise any disciplinary process arising from the incidents in question.

Remember reputation – don't post images, comments or other content that are not in keeping with the image and conduct of all, irrespective of the level of a game, or that could damage the reputation of the sport or Devon Hockey.

3. Breaches of the social media policy and guidelines, and disciplinary process

Breaches of the social media policy will be considered under England Hockey's [Code of Ethics and Behaviour](#) and may result in disciplinary proceedings.

February 2014