Gosport Darts Academy

Social Media Policy

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members, so they can participate in darts in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Gosport Darts Academy recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities that social media presents. We actively use social media to engage with Members and the general public, to celebrate success, communicate and enhance the Academy's profile online. We recognise that social media is now a huge part of everyone's everyday lives.

However, despite the opportunities presented by social media, there are risks.

Social media allows individuals to communicate either in their name or anonymously with a potentially huge audience, and sometimes its informality can encourage us to be less cautious than we would be using other more traditional methods of communication and interaction. Inappropriate use of social media can be damaging to the reputation of the academy, potentially misrepresent the views of The GDA as well as have a negative impact on Members, volunteers and our sponsors.

Scope

This policy is for Gosport Darts Academy Members and provides information on the appropriate use of social media when connected, or linked in some way, to their status as a member of the Academy, or when directly or indirectly referencing the Academy in any way.

This policy works alongside the following separate policies including but not limited to:

- Code of Conduct
- Being a Student Member
- Anti-bullying and harassment policy
- Child protection and safeguarding process
- Unacceptable Behaviour Policy
- Disciplinary policy

The principles of freedom of expression apply to the use of social media; however, the Academy requires responsible and legal use.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'Social Media' is used to describe virtual channels dedicated to live streamed or scheduled uploads, community-based input, interactions, content sharing and collaboration through the building of virtual networks and communities. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation and wikis are among the different types of social media. It also includes any other means of communicating on the internet where members of the public (including volunteers or Members) may reasonably access the communication.

They currently include, but are not limited to, Facebook (and Messenger), Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, TikTok, X, LinkedIn, Reddit, YouTube, Steam, Flickr, Pinterest, Clubhouse, WeChat, Weibo, Doujin and Discord.

This policy applies to all social media communications made both on public and private forums, by Members (even when not explicitly identifying themselves as a GDA member) including those communications which directly or indirectly reference the Academy.

This policy applies to social media uploaded anywhere including off site and on personal devices whether to an individual, group or the world. While posts added to public forums can be seen by any member of the public from the date of publication, Members are asked to remember that posts added to private forums (including private messages between two parties) can also be shared publicly by others.

Members may be subjected to disciplinary action where they have failed to meet the guidelines in the Student Code of Conduct and all relevant policies referred to previously, in the communication they have posted, even when they believe the forum to be private. There have been a number of high-profile cases in recent years where Members across the country have been disciplined after offensive comments, made on private messaging services such as WhatsApp, were captured and subsequently shared.

With this in mind, Members should remember that action can be taken by the Academy if behaviour failing to meet policy guidelines is identified either publicly or privately.

Members' responsibilities

Members are encouraged to be mindful of how their identity, statements or views appear online and are reminded that current and future employers, and industry contacts may view social media profiles when recruiting to gain information about a candidate's character, personality or employability.

Members should therefore bear in mind that any content they publish online may have an impact on future opportunities. Members registered on professionally accredited programmes should be aware that unacceptable online behaviour may breach the code of conduct.

Sharing confidential information online can have the potential to be more damaging than sharing it verbally due to the speed at which it can be shared and the size of the potential audience. It is important to remember that although some information may not directly breach an individual's right to confidentiality when anonymised, people may still be identifiable, and this behaviour may breach the Data Protection Act 2018.

It is the responsibility of all Members to read and act in accordance with the principles of these guidelines, and regularly check the Academy's policies for any minor uGDAtes to documents.

In addition, it is recommended that Members read and act in accordance with the rules and guidelines set out by individual social media companies and providers. Members should check the

terms and conditions of a social media account and/or website before uploading material to it; by posting material to social media accounts and/or websites, ownership rights and control of the content may be released. For this reason, it is important to exercise caution in sharing all information, especially where the information, expressly or by implication or innuendo, identifies a third party.

Members should seek permission to share information that could identify any third party before doing so.

Members must be aware of the potential impact and permanence of anything posted online. Even if your settings are set to private, other people may share information you have shared with them or there may be information out there from before your settings were changed. Therefore, Members should avoid posting anything they do not wish to be in the public domain.

Any digital material posted online could reach a wider audience than was expected or intended. Once digital content has been created and shared, there is limited control over its permanence and audience.

Members should note that they have the right of erasure under the data protection legislation, and that they can request that social media companies remove content concerning themselves. It should be noted that there are circumstances where the social media company can refuse to remove content, for example where they might be used as evidence in legal proceedings.

Members should note any personal data uploaded onto social media about themselves is normally regarded as being put into the public domain, and therefore has significantly less protection from the data protection legislation.

Behaviour and conduct on social media

Members are personally responsible for what they communicate on or through social media and they must adhere to the standards of behaviour set out in this policy and any related policies, such as Being a Student Member and the Code of Conduct

Members wishing to raise a complaint or report a crime or an incident should follow established Academy guidance rather than reporting via social media, e.g., by contacting the Academy management team or by contacting the Police. Where necessary, Members should contact the Academy and/or the Police as soon as possible, saving any evidence, e.g screenshots of social media.

Members are advised to bear in mind that sharing details and evidence of a complaint on social media may limit the chances of action taken against any offenders and lead to civil action against the author if the complaint is found to be false.

Use of social media must not infringe on the rights, or privacy, of other Members or volunteers and Members must not make disparaging or defamatory comments or judgements about other Members, Staff or third parties.

We recommend that permission to share third party material from the owners of the material, in line with copyright laws, including all images, photography, text and videos, is sought and recorded before uploading said material to, or sharing via, social media. Furthermore, where permission is obtained, we recommend such materials should be credited appropriately.

Unacceptable material/content

The following non-exhaustive list includes material considered to be of an unacceptable nature that should never be posted:

- Confidential information (which may include information not yet in the public domain, information about fellow Members or volunteers or personal matters, non-public or not yet approved documents or information).
- Personal information about another individual, including contact information, without their express permission.
- Posts made using another person's name or identity without their consent
- Submission of other Members' social media account details
- Inappropriate material, including but not limited to images, that are, or may be perceived to be threatening, harassing, discriminatory, illegal, obscene, indecent, defamatory, or hostile towards any individual, group or entity.
- Records, recordings and/or photographs made without the consent of one or more parties concerned and released without a clear public interest case.
- Recordings or any content from the academy owned by The GDA
- Any other post or material that constitutes, or may constitute, a criminal offence.
- Anything which may bring the Academy into disrepute or compromise the safety or reputation of Members, Staff and those connected with the Academy

Complaints & Proceedings

Careful consideration should be given before sharing details of potential, or actual complaints or legal proceedings, as this can impact the outcome of proceedings and/or the viability of evidence used.

Members should be mindful that statements on social media that cause harm to an individual, including to their reputation, or that interfere with an ongoing disciplinary/legal process may create a potential civil claim against the individual making the statement.

Furthermore, this may extend to the sharing of statements made by others.

Members should also be aware that communications on social media are also subject to legislation, which aim to prevent interference with legal proceedings regardless of intent to do so.

Members, must take particular care not to state or imply that their views are those of The GDA when using social media, nor use the Academy logo at any time without express permission.

Cyber bullying

The Academy will not accept any form of bullying or harassment by or of members of the Academy, Members or stakeholders or visitors. Additional information can be found in GDA Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

The following non-exhaustive list of examples illustrates the types of behaviour, displayed through social media, which the Academy considers to be forms of cyber bullying:

- Maliciously, negligently or recklessly spreading rumours, lies or gossip
- Intimidating or aggressive behaviour, as perceived by those viewing the social media content.
- Offensive or threatening comments or content, as perceived by those viewing the social media content.
- Posting comments/photos etc. deliberately, negligently or recklessly mocking an individual with the potential to harass or humiliate them, as perceived by those viewing the social media.
- Repeatedly posting comments on social media about an individual or group in an unwanted way, and not complying to requests to desist.
- Accessing any third party's social media either directly or through personal contacts, and using this to post comments about an individual.

Cyber bullying may also take place via other means of electronic communication such as email, text, instant message, video, audio or images – edited or otherwise.

Members should be aware that some cases of the above may constitute criminal acts under the Criminal Justice Act (2015), the Communications Act (2003), the Malicious Communications Act (1988) or the Protection from Harassment Act (1997).

Breach of the policy

If a Student is found to have acted in breach of this policy this may lead to consideration of disciplinary action being taken against them in accordance with the GDA Disciplinary policy.

Any individual suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to cooperate with any investigation in accordance with the disciplinary procedure. Non-cooperation may lead to further disciplinary action.

Any individual may be required to remove internet or social media content which is found by the Academy to be in breach of the policy.

Failure to comply with such a request may result in further disciplinary action.

Any breach of this policy must be reported in line with The GDA 's Student Complaints Procedure in the first instance. Breaches must be brought to the attention of the The GDA management team where appropriate by email to coach@Gosportdartsacademy.co.uk.

Monitoring

The Academy will:

• Ensure this policy, and any changes, is accessible to volunteers and Members

• On occasion, provide guidance for Members on how to stay safe online when using social media..
• Monitor references to the Academy on social media and the internet and respond to complaints regarding Member conduct on social media

• Take disciplinary action where inappropriate behaviour is exhibited that affects Members, Staff, the Academy or members of public in accordance with this policy

• Annually review and uGDAte this policy, where appropriate, and any
other associated policy and guidelines and publish details of any changes

Annex A   How to use social media

Tips and hints on staying safe and managing your reputation

We all recognise the enormous benefits and opportunities that social media presents and we actively encourage our Members to use social media to communicate and keep in touch with latest news.

Despite the opportunities, there are risks.

Social media allows individuals to communicate with a potentially large audience, and sometimes its informality can encourage us to be less cautious than we would ordinarily be.

These tips are to help you when you are considering posting on social media. They will help you manage your professional reputation and ensure you follow Academy guidelines and UK law.

• Remember, everything you post online is public.

Once it's out there you lose control of how others might interact with it. Posting anything online (even on closed profiles or private messaging services, like WhatsApp, for example) has the potential to become public, even without your knowledge or consent.

• Think before you post.

It is important to realise that even the strictest privacy settings have limitations. Once something is online, it can be copied and redistributed. Would you be happy for your family, coach or future employer to see it? If not, then it's probably not a good idea to post it.

• Consider how the content of your messages may appear to others.

Offensive materials, including text, images and video, have the potential to cause serious upset and severely damage your professional and personal reputation. Consider how others may perceive your content. How could a potential employer view the content? Employers are increasingly checking the digital footprint of potential employees. This means looking at old tweets, posts and comments on forums. Will sharing the content result in you falling short of expected standards at the Academy and the law? If so, it could result in the Academy taking disciplinary action. Don't forget, it can be hard to take something back once it has been shared, copied, or redistributed.

• Check your privacy settings.

Protect your personal information and that of others that could be misused. Think about who can see your address, telephone number, date of birth and email address. And, definitely don't share your bank details online. Also remember that while you may be sharing the content privately (on your own private profile or in a private forum) others can share that content publicly if it is available.

• Use Secure Passwords.

Remember to use a secure password and current advice for this is to use a pass phrase of three or more words that you can picture in your head. Never re-use passwords across different websites.

Where possible use second factor authentication methods, which may include sites sending an SMS or an authenticator app on your phone.

• Be aware of sharing third-party materials.

Do you need permission to share the materials or should you, as a matter of courtesy, contact the party? Make sure you check before posting as infringement of rules could break copyright and/or intellectual property laws.

• Do not use the internet or social media to incite or facilitate cheating. To do so is a breach of this Policy and a disciplinary offence.

• Finally, question everything you read online.

Not everything you read might be completely accurate. Who wrote it? Where did it come from? Do you know the source of any imagery or other materials included? Writing and distributing inaccurate statements about people and organisations can be unlawful and lead to legal action.