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United Kingdom



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

National Ice Skating Association (NISA) and Social Media

Social media has become extremely popular because it allows people to connect in the online world instantly to form relationships for personal and business purposes. It can take many different forms, including internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, podcasts, pictures and video.

Social media is becoming very much a part of the way we communicate with various audiences. Regular use of these channels of communication enables NISA to maximise opportunities with dynamic information sources and allow the organisation to market itself to a wider and more diverse audience. However, staff and members' use of social media can pose risks to NISA's confidential and proprietary information, and reputation, and can jeopardise NISA's compliance with legal obligations.

This social media policy is designed to encourage the appropriate and effective use of social media platforms, as well as provide guidelines for staff/members to exercise personal responsibility when using social media.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

Scope of Policy

This policy covers all individuals working at NISA at all levels and grades. It also covers all members of NISA and third parties who have access to NISA's electronic communication systems.

Breach of this policy by NISA staff may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours and regardless of whether NISA equipment or facilities are used.

Breach of this policy by a NISA member may, under NISA's Articles, result in the Board suspending or terminating that member's membership of NISA. The Board may also prevent such member from participating in NISA events and competitions.

Any person suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with NISA's investigations, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.

Staff/members may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy.

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NISA's Social Media Platforms

There are vast array of platforms that the term 'social media' relates to. However, NISA has recognised the key channels most beneficial to the organisation. These are:

- Twitter - a free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read other users' updates known as tweets.
- Facebook – allows users to create a personal profile, add other users as friends and exchange messages, including automatic notifications when they update their profile. Users may also join common interest user groups, organised by workplace, school or other characteristics.

This policy, however, applies to all forms of social media and all internet postings, including blogs.

It applies to the use of social media for both NISA and personal purposes, whether during office hours or otherwise. It applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using out IT facilities and equipment or staff/members' personal equipment.

Appropriate Professional Use of Social Media

NISA engages with social media on a professional level. If any NISA staff/members use social media channels they are asked to follow this policy and any other guidelines which are in place to ensure effective and appropriate usage. When using social media:

You will:

- Engage with social media platforms on a regular basis where appropriate
- Use appropriate language
- Think before you post any information online
- Ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present in respect of your association with NISA
- Make it clear in postings that you are speaking on your own behalf. Write in the first person and use a personal email address when communicating via social media

If you disclose your affiliation with NISA, you must state that your views do not represent those of NISA. For example, you could state, "the views in this posting do not represent the views of NISA."

You will not:

- Upload content deemed disruptive, threatening, abusive, harassing, obscene, libellous or an invasion of another's privacy – this includes text, audio, photographs and video

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- Use NISA's name in a derogatory manner or defame or disparage NISA
- Upload content deemed confidential by NISA
- Infringe the intellectual property of any company/individual – this can create liability for you and NISA
- Use NISA logos, brands, slogans or other trademarks without NISA's prior written consent
- Use inappropriate/irrelevant hashtags on Twitter
- Post personal messages through NISA's pages on any social media platform
- Breach Data Protection requirements (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague/member online)
- Breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements)

Staff/members should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references can be attributed to NISA and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and NISA.

Social media is very much part of NISA's strategy moving forward and we encourage the professional use of the various channels on a regular basis. However, we do not accept employees spending long periods of time using social media during work hours.

NISA does not discourage staff/members from engaging with social media platforms for personal usage. However, guidelines are in place to ensure that you are using them appropriately and are not jeopardising the organisation with inappropriate use of personal profiles.

Negativity on Social Media Platforms

It is important that social media platforms are monitored for negative comments about NISA. If you are aware of negative comments posted on any of our pages, please make sure you speak to the NISA Chief Executive to discuss.

This policy is effective immediately and was last updated July 2011.