



Social Media Policy

Overview:

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content. As a public-facing organisation, Oxford United Football Club (OUFC) recognises the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement, to communicate with and market promotions to our customers and supporters.

It is important that the reputation of OUFC, as well as its affiliated sponsors and partners, is not tarnished in any way by anyone using social media tools inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that directly references OUFC.

When someone clearly identifies their association with OUFC, or can easily be associated with OUFC through their employment, registration in this type of open forum, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately and in a manner that is consistent with OUFC's media and communications policy.

The purpose of this social media policy is to provide some guiding principles for employees/players of OUFC to follow when using social media. This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media platforms by OUFC staff where no reference is made to OUFC or any associated partners, sponsors or projects.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees/players of OUFC, casual, part-time and full-time.

- This policy covers all forms of social media. Social media includes, but is not limited to, activities such as:
- Maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc)
- Content sharing including using sites such as Flickr (photo sharing) and YouTube (video sharing)
- Commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons
- Leaving product or service reviews on retailer sites or customer review sites.
- Taking part in online votes and polls
- Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards)
- Editing a Wikipedia page The intent of this policy is to include anything posted online where information is shared that might affect employees, players, sponsors, partners, customers, or supporters of OUFC as an organisation and the reputation of both the Club, the Football League or the Football Association and the competitions associated therewith.

Guiding Principles:

The web is not anonymous. OUFC staff should assume that everything they write online, especially in open forums, can be traced back to them. Due to the unique nature of OUFC as a business, the boundaries between personal and professional profiles and any associated opinions and comments can often be blurred.

It is essential that OUFC staff and players clearly acknowledge this ambiguity when posting or re-tweeting anything online and consider at all times their connection to OUFC and, as such, their role as a representative of the Club. When using the internet for professional or personal pursuits, all OUFC staff and players must respect the brands of Oxford United Football Club, our partners, sponsors, the associations to which we are members, such as the Football League and the Football Association, as well as other staff, following the guidelines in place to ensure that the intellectual property of both OUFC and our affiliated associations is not compromised and the organisation is not brought into disrepute.

For all OUFC staff and players using social media, such use:

- Must not contain, or link to, libellous, defamatory or harassing content – this also applies to the use of illustrations or nicknames.
- Must not comment on, or publish information that is confidential in any way.
- Must not bring OUFC or the sport and any affiliated governing bodies into disrepute
- Must not be directly linked with any players aged 18 or below from a personal social networking account.
- Must not upload, post or forward any content belonging to a third party.
- Must not otherwise be in breach of the OUFC Code of Conduct.
- Must not comment on team selection or a team or individual player or colleague's performance: this includes retweeting or republishing of third party messages

For OUFC staff and players using social media, such use must not interfere with work commitments.

Branding & Intellectual Property:

It is important that any trademarks belonging to OUFC or any affiliated competition or governing body, are not used in personal social media applications, except where such use can be considered incidental – (where incidental is taken to mean “happening in subordinate conjunction with something else”)

OUFC, Social Pages & Online Forums:

When creating a new website, social networking page or forum that is in any way or can in any way be judged to be associated with OUFC, care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person is given permission to create the page or forum.

Similarly, appropriate permissions must be obtained for the use of logos or images. Images of children may not be replicated on any site without the permission of the child's parents and/or guardian.

For official OUFC, social pages and online forums:

- Posts must not contain, nor link to, pornographic or indecent content
- Some hosted sites may sell the right to advertise on their sites through “pop up” content, which may be of a questionable nature. This type of hosted site should not be used for online forum or social pages as the nature of “pop up” content cannot be controlled.
- OUFC employees must not use official OUFC pages to promote personal projects.
- All materials published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

Consideration Towards Others When Using Social Networking Sites:

Social networking sites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. OUFC staff must recognise that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos and comments in this way.

For example, there may be an expectation that photographs taken at private OUFC functions will not appear publicly or on the internet. In certain situations, OUFC staff could potentially breach the Privacy Act or inadvertently make OUFC liable for breach of copyright.

OUFC staff should be considerate to others in such circumstances and should not post information when they have been asked not to or consent has not been sought and given.

They must also remove information about another person should they be asked to do so.

Under no circumstances should offensive comments be made about OUFC, Club staff or any affiliated partners or sponsors online.

Breach of Policy:

OUFC will continually monitor online activity in relation to the club and the sport. Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to OUFC.

If detected, a breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action from OUFC under the OUFC disciplinary procedures. A breach of this policy may also amount to breaches of other OUFC documents and policies.

Disciplinary action may involve a verbal or written warning or, in serious cases, termination of employment or engagement with OUFC.

Consultation or Advice: This policy has been developed to provide guidance for OUFC staff in a new area of social interaction. OUFC staff who are unsure of their rights, liabilities or actions online and seek clarification should contact Head of Communication Chris Williams On email: cwilliams@oufc.co.uk or mobile: 07941 607842.

In addition to the existing policy, during the period of Return to Play from COVID-19 the Football Club and Academy have made a number of additions to our welfare, operational and safeguarding procedures. These include, but are not limited too:

- **Logistical process for social distancing at the Training Ground.**
- **Small group training in Phase 1 and Phase 2**
- **Weekly welfare and safeguarding meetings with specific COVID-19 allocated staff**
- **Additional risk assessment planning for all Academy operations**
- **Regular contact between Academy COVID-19 Officer (DH) and Club COVID-19 Officer (NMc)**