

# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES



England Netball has developed a 'Best Practice: Social Media & Electronic Communications policy' which can be found on the website for your information – [www.EnglandNetball.co.uk](http://www.EnglandNetball.co.uk). You are bound to this policy and any breach of this will result in a disciplinary offence.

The following guidelines have been designed by **UK Sport**, the **BOA** and **BPA** and **EIS**; they do not form part of EN's policy but they do provide helpful, practical advice on using social media effectively for athletes, coaches and support staff on a World Class or High Performance programme.

## The world we live in ....

To set the parameters for these social media guidelines, we should keep in mind three things:

1. We live in a society that promotes free speech and freedom of expression; it is generally expected that elite athletes should reflect the values of the society it represents.
2. Social networking is continuing to grow and it is in our interest to sensibly and proactively embrace it.
3. England Netball has embraced social media and actively encourages its use.

<b>DO's</b>	<b>DON'T</b>
<p><b>DO...Show your personality.</b></p> <p>Being yourself and letting your personality shine will make it more enjoyable for you. Throwing in a few smiley faces and LOL's (if you are that way inclined) will make you seem approachable and encourage more people to talk and ask you questions. Use tasteful humour when appropriate.</p>	<p><b>DON'T.....Talk negatively about other competitors, countries, organisations or brands.</b></p> <p>Any gossip or slanderous comments can be easily highlighted and taken the wrong way. Remember that you are an ambassador for your sport.</p>
<p><b>DO...Remember everyone can see you</b></p> <p>Before you write anything, remember that it is public and anyone can take your words and put them in the newspaper, on a website or the TV. Media will be monitoring social media and will use your words for quotes. Pause and think carefully before you mention embarrassing stories about you or other athletes.</p>	<p><b>DON'T...Forget your rivals may be reading.</b></p> <p>Other competitors may gain confidence if they read any comments you make about poor form in training, feeling tired, upset or low in confidence.</p> <p>E.g. a gold medallist was given the belief that she could win a medal against one of her competitors by reading a rival's blog: "from the blog I got the impression that she was not some untouchable superstar. She had worries and demons like everyone else. She was beatable."</p>
<p><b>DO....Be responsible</b></p> <p>You are personally responsible for the content you provide and how you behave online. Be careful and if you're in doubt, don't post it.</p>	<p><b>Don't.... Swear</b></p> <p>Even suggestions of foul or abusive language by replacing letters with symbols e.g. s@t should be avoided. Similarly don't get into disputes with your audience – instead show that you have listened and be responsive in a positive manner.</p>
<p><b>DO...Share your sports performances and achievements</b></p> <p>Take your fans with you on a journey. Let them know what it requires to be a High Performance Netball Athlete</p>	<p><b>DON'T....Assume anything you delete will completely disappear</b></p> <p>It's almost impossible to completely remove information on social networking even if you remove/delete it from the original source. There is</p>

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	no way of knowing where it may have been reposted. So think before you post.
<p><b>DO...Answer people's questions with "real" life stories</b>                  People want more than just facts about sports – providing them with your personal experiences and emotional stories will be really valuable to them. Feel free to also talk about your interests and life away from sport if appropriate.</p>	<p><b>DON'T....Give out any personal information or encourage a user to do so.</b>                  It's ok to share broad information e.g.: what town people live in. However, exact locations, names of schools and employers etc. should not be encouraged.</p>
<p><b>DO....Be honest</b>                  Always tell the truth and correct any mistakes you make as quickly as possible. Don't alter older posts without indicating that you have done so.</p>	<p><b>DON'T....Forget about spelling and grammar</b>                  While it is good to talk like a normal Facebook user you should try to use correct spelling and grammar where possible, most of your interactions will be with young people so you should look to set a good example.</p>
<p><b>DO....Post regular comments</b>                  The more you interact with and reply to fans, the better relationship you will build with them, and the more frequently they will come back to the site and check out your page.</p>	<p><b>DON'T....Link to any unsuitable content</b>                  Make sure that any links you give are sending users to appropriate content and following guidelines stated above.</p>
<p><b>DO...Report anything that concerns you</b>                  If you see any comments or photos that concern you or you feel in the course of a conversation that somebody may need help or be in danger, report it to the relevant authority.</p>	<p><b>DON'T....Moan about the position you are in.</b>                  The public like to know that you are grateful for the support (including their financial contributions)</p>
	<p><b>DON'T....Over post.</b>                  You may lose followers if you are constantly tweeting, as this fills up followers' feeds.</p>
	<p><b>DON'T....Comment on controversy.</b>                  Anything that could provoke a passionate response from other users is best avoided.</p>

## Important hints and Tips:

### Privacy Settings

Review the privacy settings of the social networking site you are using. Choose social sites and appropriate settings depending upon the content you are posting. Any information that you post should be considered public, regardless of your privacy settings since your postings could be reposted elsewhere and may be viewed other than your intended audience.

### Facebook Accounts

We suggest you create (or keep) a private account through which you only accept and communicate with your close friends and family.

### Twitter – Direct Messaging

Learn the difference between the general tweet and a direct message and how to use them appropriately.

(Reference BOA source 2012)