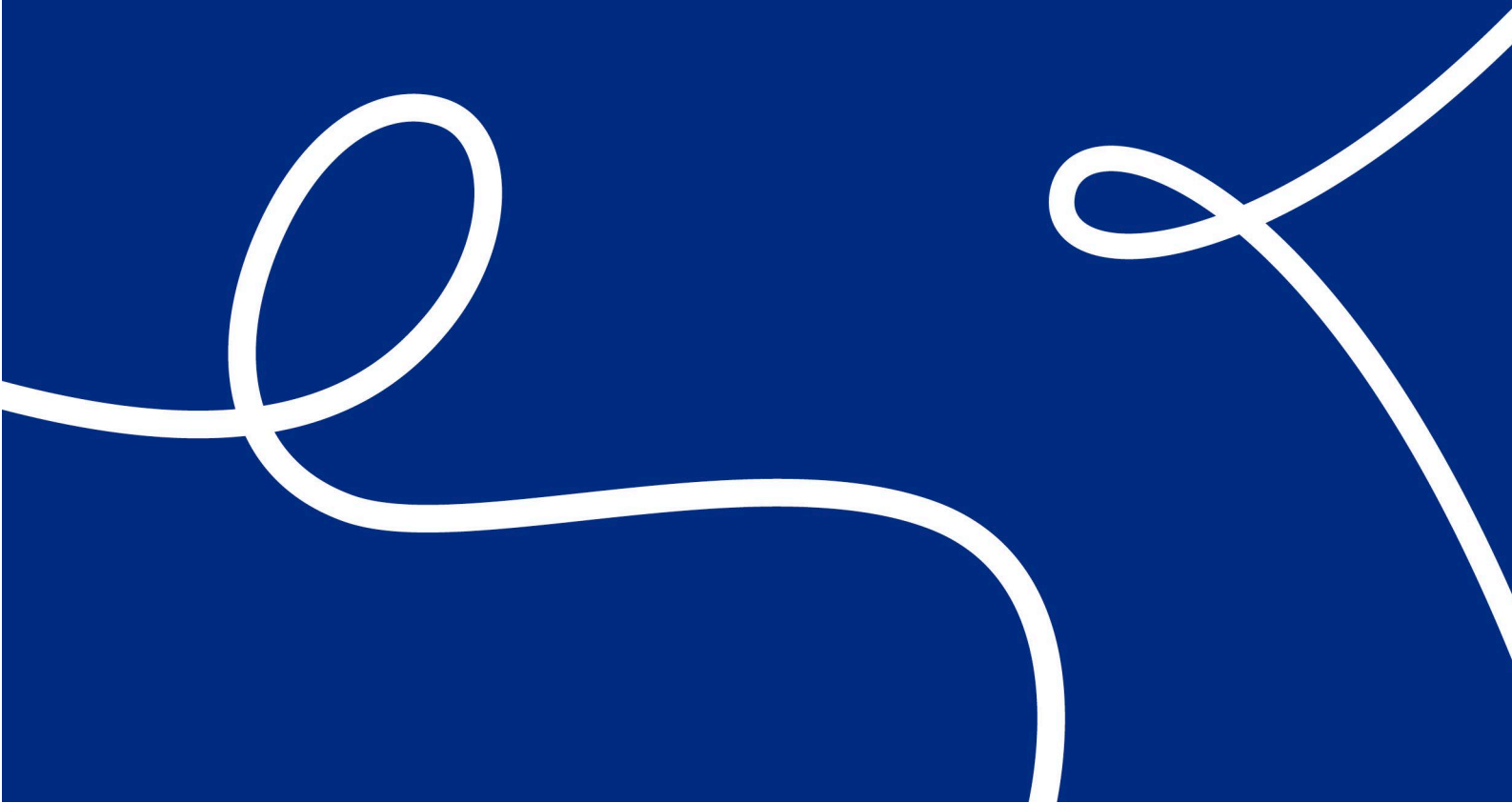




Gymnastics
Australia

Social Media Policy



Acknowledgements

This Policy was developed by Gymnastics Australia as a significant step towards protecting children, young people and all our members from inappropriate behaviours when communicating online, and more specifically, using social media. Gymnastics Australia wishes to acknowledge the e-Safety Commission which has generously given advice and feedback to inform the development of this Policy.

To ensure the Social Media Policy appropriately considered and captured the athlete's voice, we consulted and sought feedback with the following:

- Gymnastics Australia's Youth Advisory Panel (2022),
- Gymnastics Victoria's Senior and Junior Youth Advisory Groups (2022); and
- Current and former athletes from Gymnastics Australia's High Performance Programs.

We thank the above athletes for dedicating their time, sharing their experiences, and providing valuable feedback on this Policy.

Staying Safe Online



WHY THIS POLICY IS IMPORTANT

Social media is a fantastic tool which can help us connect, learn and communicate with people around us.

It is important that we take care of ourselves and treat other people with respect, kindness and care when we are online.

Gymnastics Australia has created some rules called a 'policy,' about using the internet and social media to keep everyone in gymnastics safe when online.

WHO HAS TO FOLLOW THESE RULES?

If you are involved in gymnastics in Australia, you are covered by the rules and expectations in this policy.

This includes club owners and staff, coaches and volunteers, children and young people. By following these rules, you are helping keep gymnastics a safe and inclusive place for everyone.

WHAT ARE THE RULES OF THIS POLICY?

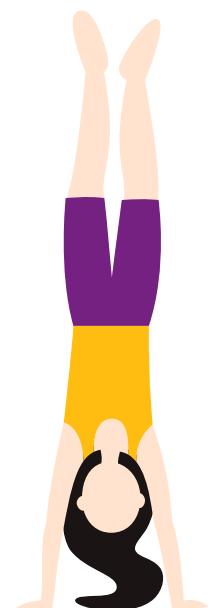
These rules have been developed to help keep you safe online. The rules below apply to everyone in gymnastics in Australia.

We must not:

- ▶ Make a post or create content that may be hurtful to someone else.
- ▶ Show other people information, pictures or videos that may be hurtful or make someone uncomfortable.
- ▶ Pretend to be someone else online.
- ▶ Share personal or private information.

Remember: If you wouldn't say it to someone's face, it shouldn't be said online.

There are some rules that have been created just for adults who are involved in gymnastics.



They must not:

Contact or communicate with you or your friends online or using social media unless both your parent / guardian and your gymnastics club are included.

This includes sending you text or direct messages, tagging you in posts or sending you friend requests.

HOW CAN I STAY SAFE ONLINE?

Gymnastics Australia has some tips for you to help keep you safe online:

- ▶ Each type of social media has different rules about how old you can be to have an account. If you are not old enough for an account yet, it is important to talk to your parent or guardian about using social media.
- ▶ Personal information — such as your birthday, phone number and address — is personal. It should never be shared online. If someone is asking you for this information, it is important to ask an adult for help.
- ▶ Pause before you post — ask yourself some important questions such as, 'Could this hurt anyone's feelings?' 'How would my parents or carers feel about this?' before posting or sharing.
- ▶ Once you post content online or on social media, it can never truly be deleted or removed. *Did you know that the team at Snapchat see and save every snap you send or post to your story? Once a photo is posted on Facebook, the photo no longer belongs to you, but to them. This is written in their Terms and Conditions. Did you or your parent or guardian read these before you signed up?*
- ▶ It is important to remember that you are a member of Gymnastics Australia, and so anything you say, post or create could be hurtful to the sport of gymnastics in Australia. Gymnastics Australia may monitor or record content to be sure it is not harmful to people within gymnastics in Australia.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I BREAK ONE OF THESE RULES?

It is ok to make mistakes, but when it involves someone else's safety or feelings, it is important to remember there may be consequences for your actions.

If you break one of these rules, you are said to be 'breaching' this policy, and Gymnastics Australia will work closely with you to determine what happened, and how the problem can be fixed. This may involve apologising to the person who you have hurt, or in more serious cases, talking to the police about what has happened.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

The Office of the e-Safety Commissioner is a group of people who care about young Australians and their safety online. Their role is to help keep you safe, and to educate everyone in Australia about safe and positive online environments. If you would like to learn more about being safe online, you can find information at [e-Safety kids](#) and [e-Safety young people](#). If you are a parent or guardian, [e-Safety parents](#) has a range of information about social media as well as practical tips about talking with your children about staying safe online.

I AM FEELING UNSAFE ONLINE, WHO CAN I TALK TO?

If you are feeling unsafe online, it is important to know there are people who can help you. Your parents or guardian, or a trusted adult, are the best people to talk to, but if they are not nearby, there are other people you can contact:

- ▶ If you believe you are in serious danger, you can call the police on 000.
- ▶ [Kids Helpline](#) offer a free phone service to talk about any problem, any time. They also have lots of great information about staying safe, happy and healthy.
- ▶ Did you know Gymnastics Australia has a National Complaints Manager? Their role is to listen to your worries about safety in gymnastics and help you to fix them.



Phone: 03 8698 9700 select option 0 for Integrity / Child Safety
Email: childsafety@gymnastics.org.au

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Review History Table

Revised On	Version	Date Endorsed	Approved By	Content Reviewed / Purpose
N/A	1	20 June 2022	GA Board	

1. Background

1.1 Introduction

Gymnastics Australia (**GA**) encourages the use of Social Media and recognises the value it provides the Gymnastics community to engage, interact and share. As most Social Media is shared in the public realm, it is important that all individuals involved in the sport of Gymnastics conduct themselves appropriately while using Social Media.

This Social Media Policy (**Policy**) aims to:

- (a) Promote and encourage appropriate use of Social Media by Relevant Persons;
- (b) Ensure Relevant Persons understand GA's approach to Social Media, and its expectations for the personal and professional use of online communication; and,
- (c) Establish expectations for the conduct of all Relevant Persons in relation to Social Media.

While this Policy should give the Gymnastics community confidence and freedom to use Social Media, it is ultimately each individual's responsibility to comply with this Policy and make informed choices on how to engage with others on Social Media.

1.2 Definitions

In this Policy the following words in the singular include the plural and vice versa and have the corresponding meaning:

Activity means a gymnastics competition, event, training or activity, educational activities, whether on a one-off basis, an ongoing basis or as part of a series and is sanctioned or organised by Gymnastics Australia or a Member Organisation.

Administrator – see 'Participant'.

Athlete – see 'Participant'.

Authorised Provider – see 'Relevant Organisation'.

Board - means the board of Gymnastics Australia.

Child - means a child or young person who is under the age of 18 years.

Club – see 'Relevant Organisation'.

Coach – see 'Participant'.

Employee - means a person employed by Gymnastics Australia or a Member Organisation.

Gymnastics - means the sport of gymnastics, as governed by Gymnastics Australia.

Gymnastics Australia - means the national governing body for gymnastics within Australia.

Individual Member – see ‘Member’.

Integrity Unit - means Gymnastics Australia's National Integrity Unit

Judge – see ‘Participant’

Member -means a member of Gymnastics Australia under its constitution, including:

- (a) **Member Organisations**, means a member of Gymnastics Australia including each:
 - (i) Association Member (each State and Territory Association);
 - (ii) Club Member; and
 - (iii) Affiliates that are members of an Association Member or Gymnastics Australia.
- (b) **Individual Members**, means individuals who are registered with a Member Organisation or Gymnastics Australia and include:
 - (i) Participant Members;
 - (ii) Technical Members;
 - (iii) Honorary Members; and
 - (iv) Life Members.

Member Organisation – see ‘Member’.

Participant means:

- (a) **Athletes** who are registered with or entitled to participate in a Member Organisation or a Gymnastics Australia Activity.
- (b) **Coaches** appointed to train an Athlete or Team in a Member Organisation or Gymnastics Australia Activity.
- (c) **Administrators** who have a role in the administration or operation of a Member Organisation or Gymnastics Australia, including owners, directors, committee members or other persons.
- (d) **Judges** appointed to judge at a Member Organisation or Gymnastics Australia Activity.
- (e) **Support Personnel** who are appointed in a professional or voluntary capacity by a Member Organisation or Gymnastics Australia including sports science and sports medicine personnel, team managers, and team staff members.

Prohibited Conduct - means the conduct proscribed by this Policy.

Relevant Organisation - means any of the following organisations:

- (a) **Gymnastics Australia**

- (b) **Member Organisation** which means and includes:
 - (i) Member Organisations - see 'Member', including any club, school or group that enters a Team to participate in an Activity; and
 - (ii) Authorised Providers, which means any non-Member organisations authorised to conduct Activities sanctioned by Gymnastics Australia or a Member Organisation;
- (c) **Team**, which means a collection or squad of athletes who participate in a Member Organisation or Gymnastics Australia Activity; and
- (d) Any other organisation who has agreed to be bound by this Policy.

Relevant Person means any of the following persons:

- (a) **Individual Member – see 'Member'**;
- (b) **Participant**;
- (c) **Employee**;
- (d) **Contractor**, which means any person or organisation engaged to provide services for or on behalf of Gymnastics Australia or a Member Organisation, and includes agents, advisers and subcontractors of Gymnastics Australia or a Member Organisation and employees, officers, volunteers and agents of a contractor or subcontractor;
- (e) **Volunteer**, which means any person engaged by Gymnastics Australia or a Member Organisation in any capacity who is not otherwise an Employee or Contractor, including directors and office holders, Coaches, Judges, Administrators and Team and Support Personnel; and
- (f) Any other individual who has agreed to be bound by this Policy.

Social Media means any website or application that enables users to create and share content or participate in one or both of social and online networking, including but not limited to:

- (a) Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Myspace, Yammer, Snapchat, Foursquare, LinkedIn, Wikipedia, Flickr and similar platforms;
- (b) blogs, social networking sites, instant messaging (including Whatsapp and Facebook chat), social bookmarking, podcasting, media sharing and collaborative editing websites (such as Microsoft Teams, Dropbox and Google Docs);
- (c) any other forum which might be classified reasonably as social media as the term is generally understood; and
- (d) any other forum available for public comment (such as Reddit).

Support Personnel – see ‘Participant’.

Team – see ‘Relevant Organisation’.

Volunteer – see ‘Relevant Person’.

2. Jurisdiction

2.1 Who the Policy applies to

- (a) This Policy applies to and binds all:
 - i. Relevant Persons; and
 - ii. Relevant Organisations.
- (b) By participating in an Activity, a Participant is deemed to have agreed to be bound by this Policy.
- (c) Any Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation who:
 - i. has had an Alleged Breach of this Policy referred to the Conduct and Discipline Policy; and
 - ii. was bound by this Policy at the time the Alleged Breach occurred or when they became aware that an Alleged Breach may have occurred; and
 - iii. would, for any reason, otherwise have ceased to be bound by this Policy at any time after the Alleged Breach occurred or when they became aware that an Alleged Breach may have occurred,

remains bound by the Policy in respect of the Alleged Breach and any related Alleged Breach until the disciplinary process has been finalised in accordance with GA’s Conduct and Disciplinary Policy.

3. Responsibility

GA has committed to ensuring the sport of Gymnastics is safe, welcoming and inclusive. Importantly, Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations play a crucial role in this commitment and are encouraged to contribute to the elimination of any inappropriate behaviour on Social Media by:

- (a) Complying with this Policy; and
- (b) Reporting any perceived incidence of non-compliance with this Policy to GA’s Integrity Unit, and to maintain confidentiality while the incident is being resolved.

GA’s National Integrity Team

Email: integrity@gymnastics.org.au

Phone: (03) 8698 9700 (Option 0)

4. Prohibited Conduct

4.1 Prohibited Conduct is when a Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation commits a breach of this Policy, including in particular the conduct defined in this clause (clause 4). The use of Social Media by any Relevant Person should be appropriate, responsible and ethical. A Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation **must not**:

- (a) Communicate with a Child, either electronically or online, unless they copy in the Relevant Organisation and a parent or guardian in all communication. In addition, any communication with a Child is required to be:
 - i. directly associated with delivering a Gymnastics Activity, such as advising that a scheduled event or course is cancelled;
 - ii. concise, with personal or social content limited only to convey the message in a polite and friendly manner;
 - iii. devoid of any sexualised or inappropriate language; and
 - iv. not promoting unauthorised social activity or contact.
- (b) Post, create or distribute content that is, or has the potential to be, offensive, aggressive, abusive, profane, obscene, intimidating, sexually explicit, hateful, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate;
- (c) Exploit platforms to harass, bully, abuse or threaten any other person;
- (d) Exploit platforms to seduce, groom or inappropriately engage with a Child;
- (e) Expose others to content that is offensive, inappropriate, obscene, insulting, provocative or hateful;
- (f) Impersonate or falsely represent any other person;
- (g) Post inaccurate, misleading, deceptive or fraudulent content;
- (h) Make defamatory comments or posts;
- (i) Post material that infringes the intellectual property rights of others or breaks any other law including privacy, defamation or harassment;
- (j) Post content that interferes with the conduct of any Activity;
- (k) Comment in a way that may harm the reputation of other Relevant Persons or Relevant Organisations;
- (l) Use Social Media platforms as a forum for disputes or grievances; or

- (m) Publish, post or release information that is considered confidential and not for the public (if it seems confidential, it probably is).

5. Managing Prohibited Conduct

In circumstances of a suspected breach of this Policy, GA may:

- (a) Make a necessary public comment such as a correction, clarification, contradiction or apology in regard to the breach;
- (b) Issue a formal warning to the Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation responsible for the breach and insist that the content be removed, and an apology be made to the individual/s affected (if any);
- (c) Deal directly with any Social Media provider to remove any posted material that GA considers to be in breach of this Policy;
- (d) If the breach amounts to a breach of the law, report the matter to any local authority or wronged party; and/or
- (e) Refer the matter (at GA's absolute discretion) for determination under the Conduct and Disciplinary Policy as an Alleged Breach of this Policy.

Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations who communicate their opinions and any other materials on Social Media do so at their own risk, and may be held personally liable for any commentary and/or material that appears on their personal Social Media.

6. Personal Social Media Use Guide

GA recommends Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations consider the following when using Social Media.

6.1 Accounts and usage

- (a) All Relevant Persons should meet the required minimum age as specified by the individual Social Media platform.
- (b) Where Relevant Persons do not meet the required minimum age as specified by the individual Social Media platform, GA assumes parents/guardians and/or carers maintain responsibility for the account.
- (c) It is strongly recommended that all Relevant Persons protect their own personal privacy by not including personal information in Social Media communications (for example but not limited to, email addresses, residential addresses and telephone numbers).

- (d) Any Social Media account held by Relevant Persons is a true representation of themselves, and does not use the identity, likeness, beliefs or values of another in accordance with the relevant Social Media's terms of use or similar.
- (e) Any Social Media account held by Relevant Persons is created for the purposes of social or professional networking, and not for the purpose of any behaviours such as but not limited to those that may be considered as misleading or deceptive, anti-discriminatory, predatory, victimisation, vilification, bullying, harassment or defamation.

6.2 Content

- (a) Before using Social Media, it is important to consider:
 - i. Am I comfortable for others to see this post?
 - ii. Does this post portray confidential information?
 - iii. Could this post have negative impacts on my own or someone else's wellbeing, relationships or career?
 - iv. Do I need/have permission to make this post?
- (b) Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations should take their affiliation with GA into account when using Social Media, particularly in the following circumstances:
 - i. Use that has the capacity to damage the Relevant Person's personal and professional reputation;
 - ii. Use that has the capacity to damage the reputation of GA, State and Territory Associations or the sport of Gymnastics;
 - iii. Use that has the capacity to damage a Relevant Person's ability to work with their colleagues; and
 - iv. Use that breaches another of GA's policies.

Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations should not post, create or distribute content that is in breach of one or more of GA's policies, including the Child Safe Practices about Online and Electronic Communications, and Photographs of Children.

6.3 Permissions and ownership

- (a) When using Social Media in circumstances that are intended to be personal or private, Relevant Persons or Relevant Organisations must:
 - v. Make it clear that the Relevant Person's private opinions are their own and not say or do anything that may indicate that they represent either the views of GA or their connection with Gymnastics.
 - vi. The Relevant Person may wish to use a disclaimer such as "any views expressed on this site/account are those of the author only" or "these views are personal and mine alone".

7. Further Information

The Office of the eSafety Commissioner is Australia's national independent regulator for online safety. Their role is to help safeguard Australian at risk from online harms and to promote safer, more positive online experiences.

Their activities are governed by the *Enhancing Online Safety Act 2015 (Cth)* and they have designed educational resources to support Australian communities have safer and more positive experiences online.

For more information or to access their resources click [here](#).

8. Monitoring & Privacy

GA may record or store any information posted on Social Media and may use that information for the purpose of administering this Policy, or any other purpose consistent with our objectives.

Any record of personal information under this Policy will be undertaken in accordance with the GA's Privacy Policy which may be viewed at [here](#).

GA strongly recommends that all Relevant Persons protect their own privacy by not including personal information in Social Media communications such as personal email addresses, residential addresses or telephone numbers.

9. Additional Responsibilities

9.1 Relevant Organisation responsibilities

In addition to that required under this Policy, Relevant Organisations shall:

- (a) implement and comply with this Policy;
- (b) ensure that all other policies, rules, and programs that apply to Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations are consistent with this Policy;
- (c) use its best efforts to assist Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations to fulfil their responsibilities under this Policy;
- (d) publish, distribute, and promote this Policy (and any updates from time to time) and shall be responsible for making such documents available and accessible to Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations;
- (e) ensure its employees and contractors act in a discreet and confidential manner in discharging their obligations under this Policy.
- (f) recognise any sanction imposed under this Policy;

- (g) take all necessary steps to enforce any sanction imposed under this Policy; and
- (h) assist in any investigation or proceedings regarding any Prohibited Conduct and ensure that they do not knowingly provide any inaccurate and/or misleading information during the course of any investigation or proceedings.

9.2 Relevant Person responsibilities

In addition to that required under this Policy, Relevant Persons shall:

- (a) make themselves aware of the contents of this Policy;
- (b) comply with all relevant provisions of the Policy;
- (c) comply with any decisions and/or sanctions imposed under the Policy.
- (d) assist in any investigation or proceedings regarding any Prohibited Conduct and ensure that they do not knowingly provide any inaccurate and/or misleading information during the course of any investigation or proceedings.

10. Interpretation and Other Information

10.1 Application and Commencement

- (a) This Policy is approved by the GA Board.
- (b) The Policy:
 - i. commences on the date outlined in the Review History Table (20 June 2022);
 - ii. is subject to GA's constitution and if there is any inconsistency, the constitution will prevail; and
 - iii. when in force, is binding on all those listed in clause 2.1.

10.2 Amendment

- (a) The Board may amend this Policy from time to time at their direction and such amendments will be effective on the date specified by the Board.
- (b) Member Organisations must adopt this Policy, including any amendments, in full and without amendment, as a policy under their constitution, within three (3) months of the date it is adopted by GA.

10.3 Interpretation

The following rules of interpretation apply to this Policy:

- (a) Headings are for convenience only and shall not be deemed part of the substance of the document or to affect in any way the language of the provisions to which they refer.
- (b) Words in the singular include the plural and vice versa.
- (c) Reference to 'including' and similar words are not words of limitation.
- (d) Words importing a gender include any other gender.
- (e) A reference to a clause is a reference to a clause or subclause of this Policy.
- (f) Where a word or phrase is given a particular meaning, other parts of speech and grammatical forms of that word or phrase have corresponding meanings.
- (g) In the event any provision of this Policy is determined invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall not be affected, and the document shall not fail because any part of it is held invalid.
- (h) Except as otherwise stated herein, failure to exercise or enforce any right conferred by this Policy shall not be deemed to be a waiver of any such right nor operate to bar the exercise or enforcement thereof or of any other right on any other occasion;
- (i) Defined terms are capitalised and consistent across the Policy.