

Social Media Policy

1. Interpretation

The following definitions and rules of interpretation apply in this Policy (unless the context requires otherwise).

1.1. Definitions

Association: The British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (“**BASES**”).

BASES Staff: Anyone employed by BASES, or working for BASES on a voluntary basis or otherwise (including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, agency staff, students working on placements).

Board: The Board of Directors of the Association.

Code of Conduct: The Code of Conduct of the Association in place from time to time.

Director: Includes the BASES Chair, Chairs of the five Divisions; Chair-Elect (in the year preceding office), Non-Executive Directors, and the Chief Executive Officer, who, together, make up the BASES Board which is responsible for the management of the Association’s business in line with its Strategy, Articles of Association, and legal requirements.

Equal Opportunities Policy: The Equal Opportunities Policy of the Association in place from time to time.

Members: A member of the Association including Fellows.

Professional Disciplinary Policy: The Professional Disciplinary Policy of the Association in place from time to time.

2. Scope and purpose

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all Members, Directors of the Association and all BASES Staff.
- 2.2. BASES encourages BASES Staff, Directors and Members to use social media: it can bring many benefits and opportunities and is a valuable tool to engage with other members, colleagues, and clients.
- 2.3. ‘Social media’ means internet-based applications which allow users to collaborate or interact socially by creating and exchanging content, such as social networks or platforms, community sites, blogs, microblogging sites, wikis, web forums, social bookmarking services and user rating services. Examples include Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and X.
- 2.4. BASES recognises its obligation to set and uphold the highest standards of professionalism, and to promote ethical behaviour, attitudes, and judgement on the part of those involved in sport and exercise sciences. This is primarily addressed in the Code of Conduct.
- 2.5. However, advances in technology are changing the way we communicate with friends, family, professional networks, and clients. To help BASES Staff, Directors, and Members avoid miscommunications and potential problems on the online platforms, this Policy specifically addresses the use of social media and other online platforms by BASES Staff, Directors, and Members. It also sets out how the Code of Conduct can be applied in this context, providing practical advice for using them responsibly.
- 2.6. The expectations around Directors’, Members’ and BASES Staffs’ professional and personal conduct, as set out within the Code of Conduct also apply to Directors, Members and BASES Staff expressing their views on the online platforms. Therefore, Directors, Members and BASES Staff should always act responsibly and uphold the reputation of the profession and should not use social media in a way that is inconsistent with the

- Code of Conduct or any other BASES policies, laws, regulatory requirements or rules of online platforms themselves.
- 2.7. This Policy does not seek to regulate how BASES Staff, Directors, and Members use social media in a purely private capacity, provided that use has no bearing on the Association or its activities. This Policy is intended to ensure that BASES Staff, Directors, and Members understand the rules governing their use of social media in relation to their work for the Association, or when referencing the Association, or where use of social media may affect the Association or its activities. It is designed to help BASES Staff, Directors, and Members use these platforms and services responsibly, so as to minimise the risks set out above and to ensure consistent standards of use of social media.
- 3. General rules for use of social media**
- 3.1. Remember that social networking sites are public and permanent. Once you have posted something online, it remains traceable even if you delete it later.
- 3.2. Think before you post. Your posts and blogs can be read and shared by anyone.
- 3.3. BASES Staff, Directors, and Members who make derogatory remarks toward Protected Characteristics on social media are very likely to be in breach of the Association's Code of Conduct and Equal Opportunities Policy. As a result, they may be subject to an investigation and disciplinary hearing and could face sanctions under the Professional Disciplinary Policy.
- 3.4. You should not post any offensive, obscene, or criminal material or material which will, or is likely to, bring BASES and/or its Members into disrepute. Nor should you use social media to disparage or defame the Association, BASES Staff, Directors, Members or third parties, make any false or misleading statements or impersonate colleagues or third parties, Be aware that where you have identified yourself as a BASES Member, Director, and/or member of BASES Staff on social media (or those people whom you have permitted to access your online profile are aware that you are BASES Staff, Director or a Member), your online activity, comments, photographs, and behaviour have the ability to bring BASES, the profession and/or the Members into disrepute.
- 3.5. Protect your privacy. Even if you limit your privacy settings, it does not guarantee that something you post will not be publicly visible. Be aware that social networking sites may update their services, and privacy settings can be reset to a default that deletes your personalised settings. You should therefore regularly review your privacy settings.
- 3.6. Consider the kind of information you want to be available about yourself and your family. Think about the consequences posting pictures and personal information on the online platform may have to you, your work and personal life.
- 3.7. Consider keeping your professional and personal lives separate. This can be achieved by using different features to keep them separate, for example, setting a page or business account separate from the personal one. In addition, think about using online platforms aimed at professional audiences in their intended manner (e.g., LinkedIn).
- 3.8. Maintain appropriate professional boundaries when communicating online with colleagues, practitioners, and clients. This includes social media (e.g., Facebook or X) as well as video conference calls (e.g., Zoom, Teams, etc.).
- 3.9. Please respect client's confidentiality. Consider whether information posted online could identify them unless you have their permission to do so.
- 3.10. You should not post comments about sensitive business-related topics, or do anything to jeopardise our trade secrets, confidential information and intellectual property.

- 3.11. If you see social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on us, please contact our Chief Executive Officer.
- 3.12. Never discuss work-related issues online using non-secure medium.
- 3.13. Use your professional judgement in deciding whether to post, comment or share materials, as some information may be offensive, inappropriate, or defamatory. Defamation law can apply to any comments posted on the web, irrespective of whether they are made in a personal or professional capacity.
- 3.14. Members may also be subject to policies of their employer that relate to the use of social media. Members should always comply with such policies, in addition to BASES' Social Media Policy.
- 3.15. When in doubt, get advice. Appropriate sources might include a senior colleague, your line manager, a member of the Board, trade unions and professional bodies.
- 3.16. Keep on posting. We know that many BASES Staff, Director, and Members find using social media beneficial and do so without any issues. There is no reason why you shouldn't keep on using it with confidence.

4. Monitoring

- 4.1 BASES will:
 - (a) maintain accurate and current records as required by legislation or as good practice.
 - (b) annually consult with Divisions to consider how well the policy is being implemented, and to review its content every two years.

5. Implementation

- 5.1 BASES will:
 - (a) as and when BASES deems it necessary and appropriate, and in

- BASES' sole discretion, provide advice and training on the implementation of this Policy; and
- (b) implement the disciplinary procedure found in the Professional Disciplinary Policy in relation to breaches of this Policy.

6. Review of policies and procedures

- 6.1 The policy will be reviewed by the Board on the first anniversary of its adoption and every two years hereafter in accordance with paragraph 4.1(b) above. The purpose of each review will be to ensure that the Social Media Policy remains appropriate to the aims of the Association. In addition, the Board may choose to review the policy more frequently in response to emerging technological developments and legal developments in this area.
- 6.2 BASES will seek advice each time this Social Media Policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice as the professional body for sport and exercise sciences.

Approved by the BASES Board:

15 November 2021

Reviewed and updated by the BASES Board:

4 September 2024