

GUILDERTON COUNTRY CLUB

Social Media & Online Conduct Policy



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1. Purpose

This policy establishes a formal framework governing all social media and online conduct associated with the Guilderton Country Club.

Its purpose is to:

- protect and uphold the reputation, integrity, and good standing of the Guilderton Country Club within the community
- ensure compliance with applicable legislation, including the Liquor Control Act 1988 and governance obligations under the Associations Incorporation Act 2015
- support Committee Members in meeting their duties of care, good faith, and proper purpose in managing the affairs of the Club
- reinforce the behavioural expectations outlined in the Guilderton Country Club's Code of Conduct, including respect, avoidance of conflict, and protection of the Club's reputation
- provide clear, consistent, and enforceable standards for online conduct
- minimise legal, reputational, operational, and regulatory risk to the Club
- ensure all matters are managed in accordance with procedural fairness and good governance principles

2. Scope

This policy applies to all persons associated with the Guilderton Country Club, with expectations proportionate to their role and level of responsibility, including:

- Committee Members
- The Approved Manager
- Employees and volunteers
- Members of the Club

This policy applies to all online and digital activity where the Guilderton Country Club is:

- directly named or referenced
- identifiable through context, location, uniform, or association
- reasonably capable of being linked to the Club by others

This includes, but is not limited to:

- social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok)
- messaging platforms, online forums, and community groups
- video, audio, images, written posts, comments, and reactions

This policy applies regardless of:

- whether content is shared publicly or within a restricted/private audience
- whether the activity occurs during or outside of working hours
- the device or platform used

Where a person is:

- wearing Club uniform
- located on Club premises
- acting in their official capacity

3.Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

Club

Means Guilderton Country Club Inc.

Authorised Person

A person approved by the Committee or the Approved Manager to act on behalf of the Club in relation to social media, communications, or online engagement.

Online Conduct

Any communication, content, or interaction occurring via digital platforms, including but not limited to social media, messaging applications, forums, and online communities.

Social Media

Includes platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and any other platform used to create, share, or interact with content online.

Representing the Club

A person will be considered to be representing the Club where they:

- are wearing Club uniform
- are on Club premises
- identify themselves as a staff member, committee member, or representative
- refer to the Club in a manner that suggests authority or affiliation
- could reasonably be perceived by others as speaking on behalf of the Club

Club-Related Content

Any content that:

- refers to the Club, its operations, staff, members, or activities
- is created on Club premises

- includes identifiable Club branding, uniforms, or facilities
- could reasonably be linked to the Club

Incident

Any event or occurrence involving online conduct that may pose a risk to the Club's reputation, operations, safety, or compliance, whether or not a formal complaint has been made.

Complaint

A formal or informal expression of dissatisfaction regarding conduct, behaviour, or actions associated with the Club.

Higher Standard of Conduct

An elevated expectation of behaviour applying to individuals who are identifiable as representing the Club, including staff and Committee Members, requiring professionalism and accountability beyond that of general members.

Reputational Harm

Any action or content that may:

- damage the public perception of the Club
- undermine confidence in the Club's management or operations
- negatively impact relationships with members, the community, or regulators

Personal Account

A privately owned social media or online account not officially controlled or authorised by the Club.

Official Club Account

Any social media or online platform operated on behalf of the Club by authorised persons.

Confidential Information

Any non-public information relating to:

- Club operations
- incidents or complaints
- members, staff, or committee matters
- financial or governance matters

4. Guiding Principles

All individuals must ensure that their online conduct:

- does not bring, or have the potential to bring, the Club into disrepute, including conduct that may damage its reputation, integrity, or standing within the community

- does not undermine the safety, wellbeing, or confidence of staff, members, or patrons, or interfere with the proper operation and management of the Club
- is consistent with the standards expected of a licensed venue, including responsible service of alcohol (RSA), professionalism, and appropriate behaviour at all times
- does not create or contribute to conflict, division, or hostility within the Club environment, including through public criticism, disputes, or inflammatory commentary
- is respectful and does not involve offensive, abusive, defamatory, or inappropriate language, gestures, or content
- does not involve the making or sharing of unverified allegations or statements that may be misleading or harmful to individuals or the Club
- complies with all applicable laws and regulatory obligations, including the Liquor Control Act 1988 and other relevant legislation
- supports the Club's governance framework, including the obligations of Committee Members to act in good faith, with care and diligence, and for a proper purpose

5. Representation of the Club

A person will be considered to be representing the Club where they:

- are wearing Club uniform or identifiable Club attire
- are located on Club premises
- identify themselves as a staff member, committee member, volunteer, or representative of the Club
- reference the Club in a manner that suggests authority, affiliation, or inside knowledge
- create or share content that includes Club branding, facilities, operations, or activities
- could reasonably be perceived by others as speaking on behalf of, or in connection with, the Club

When representing the Club, individuals must:

- act professionally at all times, consistent with the standards expected of a licensed venue
- ensure all communications are respectful, appropriate, and measured, including tone, language, and presentation
- not engage in personal disputes, arguments, or commentary, including responding to criticism, rumours, or conflict in a public or online forum

- not use Club premises, uniform, or identity to express personal grievances or opinions
- not make allegations, accusations, or statements that may be defamatory, misleading, or unverified
- ensure their conduct does not create reputational, legal, or regulatory risk to the Club, including under the Liquor Control Act 1988

6. Acceptable Use

The following use of social media and online platforms is considered acceptable:

- promoting Club events, activities, and initiatives in a positive and accurate manner
- sharing approved or authorised Club content in accordance with role and authority
- engaging respectfully and constructively with members, patrons, and the broader community
- supporting the Club's reputation and community standing through appropriate and responsible online conduct
- using personal social media accounts in a manner that does not reference, involve, or negatively impact the Club
- expressing personal opinions, provided it is clear the individual is not representing the Club and the content does not create reputational, legal, or operational risk
- participating in community discussion in a respectful manner that aligns with the Club's values and Code of Conduct

7. Unacceptable Conduct

The following conduct is not permitted and may result in action under this policy, the Club Constitution, or employment processes:

- posting, sharing, or engaging with content that is abusive, offensive, inappropriate, threatening, or defamatory, including the use of obscene language, gestures, or imagery
- making, repeating, or endorsing allegations about individuals or the Club that are unverified, misleading, or without evidence, including through comments, reactions, or indirect references
- engaging in arguments, disputes, or "rant-style" commentary, particularly where the individual is representing or may reasonably be perceived as representing the Club

- using Club premises, uniform, branding, or identity to express personal grievances, opinions, or disputes, including content created while on Club premises or in uniform
- posting or sharing content that discloses confidential, sensitive, or internal Club information, including incidents, complaints, governance matters, or operational issues
- posting or sharing content that damages, or has the potential to damage, the reputation, integrity, or standing of the Club, including content that undermines confidence in its management or operations
- engaging in conduct that creates or contributes to conflict, division, or hostility within the Club community, including public criticism of staff, committee members, or other members
- encouraging, depicting, or normalising behaviour that breaches legal or regulatory obligations, including responsible service of alcohol (RSA) requirements or obligations under the Liquor Control Act 1988
- representing or implying endorsement by the Club without authorisation, including speaking on behalf of the Club outside approved channels

Intent is not a defense. The impact of the conduct will be the primary consideration.

8. Personal Accounts

Individuals may use personal social media accounts freely. However, they must ensure that:

- they do not state or imply that they are speaking on behalf of the Club, unless authorised to do so
- they do not post, share, or engage with content that could reasonably be linked to the Club in a negative, damaging, or inappropriate way, including where the individual is identifiable as being associated with the Club
- they do not rely on privacy settings to limit accountability, noting that content shared within private or restricted audiences may still be distributed more broadly
- they do not reference the Club, its staff, members, operations, or activities in a manner that creates reputational, legal, or operational risk
- they maintain a clear distinction between personal opinions and any perceived connection to the Club, particularly where their association with the Club is known

9. Official Club Accounts

Only authorised persons may:

- post, publish, or share content on official Club social media or online platforms

- respond to messages, comments, or enquiries on behalf of the Club
- represent the Club in any online communication or public-facing digital interaction

Authorisation must be determined by the Committee and/or the Approved Manager, and may be limited or withdrawn at any time.

All content published on official Club accounts must be:

- accurate, appropriate, and consistent with the Club's values, Code of Conduct, and governance framework
- professional in tone, language, and presentation, reflecting the standards expected of a licensed venue
- factually correct and not misleading, particularly in relation to Club operations, events, or incidents
- free from personal opinion, commentary, or bias, unless expressly approved
- compliant with all legal and regulatory obligations, including the Liquor Control Act 1988
- approved in advance where required by the Committee or Approved Manager, particularly for sensitive, high-risk, or incident-related content

10. Complaints and Breaches

Any concerns or complaints regarding social media or online conduct may be:

- reported to the Committee or the Approved Manager
- submitted in writing or raised verbally for recording

All reported matters will be:

- acknowledged and documented
- assessed to determine the appropriate classification (incident, complaint, or conduct matter)
- managed in accordance with the Club's Incident & Complaint Policy

All matters will be assessed and managed in accordance with:

- procedural fairness principles, including providing relevant parties with the opportunity to respond before any findings or decisions are made
- the Club's governance obligations and decision-making processes
- the Club's Constitution and Code of Conduct

Where appropriate, the Club may:

- request supporting information or evidence from the complainant

- consider available evidence, including social media content, witness accounts, or other relevant material
- proceed to assess the matter based on the information available if further information is not provided within a reasonable timeframe

All parties involved in a complaint must:

- maintain confidentiality where required
- refrain from discussing the matter publicly or on social media while it is under consideration
- not engage in conduct that may compromise the integrity of the process

11. Disciplinary Action

Where a breach of this policy is identified, the Club may take action appropriate to the nature, seriousness, and circumstances of the conduct.

In determining the appropriate action, the Club may consider:

- the severity and impact of the conduct
- whether the conduct was intentional, repeated, or escalated
- the level of responsibility of the individual (e.g. staff, committee member, or member)
- any risk posed to the Club's reputation, operations, or regulatory compliance
- any prior conduct or relevant history

Possible actions may include, but are not limited to:

- informal counselling, guidance, or direction
- formal warning (verbal or written)
- restriction, suspension, or removal of access to Club systems, platforms, or responsibilities
- requirement to remove or amend content
- training or education requirements (e.g. conduct or RSA-related expectations)
- disciplinary action in accordance with employment processes (for staff)
- action under the Club Constitution, including suspension or termination of membership (for members)

All action taken under this policy will:

- be managed in accordance with procedural fairness principles, including providing the individual with an opportunity to respond
- align with the Club's governance obligations under the Associations Incorporation Act 2015

- be proportionate to the conduct and based on the available evidence

12. Interaction with Legal Obligations

This policy operates alongside, and does not replace, any obligations arising under applicable legislation, including but not limited to:

- the Liquor Control Act 1988
- the Defamation Act 2005
- the Associations Incorporation Act 2015

All individuals must comply with relevant legal and regulatory requirements at all times.

Nothing in this policy:

- limits or replaces an individual's obligation to comply with the law
- prevents the Club from referring matters to relevant authorities where required
- restricts the Club from taking action where conduct may expose it to legal, regulatory, or reputational risk

13. Authority of the Committee

The Committee retains full authority to:

- interpret and apply this policy
- determine whether conduct falls within the scope of this policy
- assess the level of risk or impact arising from online conduct
- determine the appropriate process and outcome in accordance with the Club Constitution and governance obligations

The absence of a specific example within this policy does not limit the Committee's ability to take action where conduct is inconsistent with the standards and intent of this policy.

14. Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- at least every two (2) years; or
- earlier where required, including following:
 - incidents or identified risks
 - complaints or breaches of this policy
 - changes in legislation or regulatory requirements
 - identified gaps in governance, operations, or enforcement