



Media and Social Network Policy Guidelines for Partakers

30 July 2019

Version 1.0

These guidelines have been prepared to provide helpful guidance to Scottish Athletics Partakers with regards to media comments and social networking postings. The guidelines in no way affect, supersede, alter or replace the Scottish Athletics Social Media Policy for Partakers and Code of Conduct for Partakers in force from time to time. Reference should always be made to the actual Code of Conduct for Partakers and Social Media Policy for Partakers.

General

Matters involving media comments or comments made on a social networking site will be dealt with and determined under the Scottish Athletics Disciplinary Policy for Partakers, with reference to the Code of Conduct for Partakers and Social Media Policy for Partakers.

Types of comment

The following types of media or social networking comments may be considered to be in breach of the Code of Conduct for Partakers and/or Social Media Policy for Partakers:

Comments which are improper, which bring the sport of athletics into disrepute, which are threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting; and

Comments about Scottish Athletics or another Partaker which imply bias, attack that person or organisation's integrity or which are personally offensive in nature.

Points to be aware of

Partakers are deemed responsible for any postings on their social media account. The fact that a posting may have been made by a third party on their account will not necessarily prevent disciplinary action being taken. Partakers must exercise utmost caution at all times in relation to the security of their social media account to ensure that third parties (such as but not limited to friends and family) cannot access and post from the Partaker's account.

Further, re-tweeting or sharing of another person's social media post may lead to disciplinary action if the original post was improper or insulting.

Finally, deleting an inappropriate social media post, whilst advisable, will not necessarily prevent disciplinary action being taken.

Process

For matters involving media comments and social networking comments which have only been published in written format and which are considered by Scottish Athletics to be a potential breach of the Code of Conduct for Partakers and Social Media Policy for Partakers, Scottish Athletics will always seek written observations from the Partaker alleged to have made the comment.

This affords the Partaker an opportunity to explain whether they did in fact make the comment, clarify the context in which the comment was made and what was meant by it. In investigating any alleged breach of the Social Media Policy, Scottish Athletics will consider the observations provided by the Partaker and determine whether the matter should be referred to the Disciplinary Committee or whether no further action should be taken in the circumstances.

In the event that Scottish Athletics considers that content published amounts to a disciplinary offence, the matter will be referred to the Disciplinary Committee, in line with Scottish Athletics Disciplinary Policy for Partakers. The Partaker will have the opportunity to accept or reject the allegation that a disciplinary offence has been committed.

In the event that the Partaker accepts the allegation, the Disciplinary Committee will consider sanctions only. The Partaker will also have the opportunity to enter a plea in mitigation which may be taken into account by the Disciplinary Committee when considering sanctions. In the event that the Partaker disputes the allegation, the Disciplinary Committee will firstly determine whether the allegation is proven on the balance of probabilities before turning to the question of sanctions.

Partakers can request a personal hearing or have the matter determined on the papers only.

Turning to public media comments made during television or radio interviews or in articles written and attributed to the Partaker, Scottish Athletics may choose not to seek written observations. This will often be the case where the comment was clearly made by the Partaker and the context is apparent. The Partaker will have the opportunity, however, to provide a statement during any disciplinary process.

Sanctions

Partakers should be aware that there are no set sanctions for disciplinary charges in relation to media comments or social networking comments.

END OF GUIDELINES