

SCR PART 1 - POLICIES
Chapter 10
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SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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Patron: HM The Queen
A charity registered in England and Wales
313013 and in Scotland SC037808

Social Media Policy

CHANGE CONTROL RECORD

Change No	Date of Change	Change
-	25/06/21	<p>Initial Issue</p> <p>This policy separates 'Social Media' from the former 'Social Media, Internet, Email & Photography Policy'. A new and separate policy document relating to photography is to follow.</p> <p>Until the new policy relating to photography is issued the policy content of the 'Social Media, Internet, Email & Photography Policy' remains extant. Initial Issue</p>
1	28/03/22	<p>Addition of reference to new 'Photography and Video Policy' Ref: SCR 1.11.22</p> <p>Renumbering of paragraphs 5.3 to 5.9</p> <p>Addition of paragraph 5.4 relating to Weapons</p>

Social Media Policy

PREFACE

In order to protect our charity's brand and reputation as well as our cadets, volunteers, apprentices and employees online, we have set out this policy to ensure correct use of digital content in the public eye.

This document sets out a clear policy on the publication of content online when posted in regards to Sea Cadets, Marine Society or MSSC or when acting in your employed (MSSC) or volunteer (Sea Cadets) role. This policy ensures that MSSC employees and Sea Cadets volunteers are compliant with the regulations of posting digital content in their roles.

Social Media Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION – STATEMENT OF INTENT

The aim of this policy is:

- a. To ensure all employees and volunteers protect the brand and reputation of the charity online
- b. To safeguard all of the charity's members (cadets, volunteers, employees, apprentices)

2. IMPLEMENTATION

- 2.1 This policy must be implemented at all times when posting digital content in relation to Sea Cadets, Marine Society or MSSC; it is the responsibility of individuals to make sure they adhere to the policy in accordance with the further guidance and processes issued below.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this policy only an 'employee' of the MSSC includes those employed on permanent or fixed term contracts of employment, those on secondment or on loan to the MSSC, those on a temporary contract or employed through an agency to work for the MSSC or an independent consultant for the MSSC.
- 2.3 Failure to adhere to this policy could lead to implementation of the formal disciplinary action being taken against the employee. Volunteers breaching this policy, as outlined in the Code of Conduct (SCC Adults) ([see paragraph 3](#)) may be subject to further (appropriate) disciplinary action.
- 2.4 Failure to adhere to this policy could lead to a safeguarding enquiry, which for volunteers would be an immediate suspension pending investigation.



3. RELATED POLICIES AND CODES OF CONDUCT

This policy is supported by the following guidelines, the behaviour and conduct of our volunteers and employees extends to their use of social media. We will keep our young people safe by making sure we follow our policies:

- [Safeguarding Children, Young People & Adults at Risk Policy](#) [All] (SCR Part 1 Chapter 1) – an overarching policy covering the organisations safeguarding statement, aims and legal framework. It provides safeguarding requirements to be followed by volunteers and employees.
- [Internet and Network Usage Policy](#) [Employees only] – specifically addressing what is acceptable and not acceptable with regards to accessed subject matter online, personal use of facilities and network safety.
- [Code of Conduct \(SCC Adults\)](#) [Volunteers only] (SCR Part 3 Chapter 8) – provides a clear understanding of the standards of behaviour expected of volunteers in order to provide a safe and nurturing environment for cadets.
- [Code of conduct](#) [Employee only] – specifies how employees of MSSC will behave in order to represent the organisation in a positive light.
- Photography & Video Policy [All] (SCR Part 1 Chapter 11) – provides clarity as to what is and is not allowed to represent MSSC activities through

photography and videography, as well as legal frameworks and data protection information.

4. SCOPE

This policy relates to the use of any online digital tool, including but not limited to social media sites, message boards, blogs and websites. Content refers to but is not limited to photography, images and wording.

MSSC understands digital communications provide an important role in our daily lives and does not wish to nor can it prohibit the use of digital tools. However, this document sets out a guideline that protects the reputation of the charity and safeguards the interests of its members.

4.1 Volunteers:

If a problem ever arises online, particularly negative comments, abusive or discriminatory language and you're not sure how to deal with it, or if you have any questions about the use of photography, images and digital media please seek advice from the National Support Centre Communications Team on 020 7654 7000 or email marketingsupport@ms-sc.org

If you're concerned about a safeguarding issue, such as cyberbullying, please contact the Safeguarding Team on 020 7654 7098 (out of hours: 020 7654 7070) or safeguarding@ms-sc.org

4.2 Employees:

If a problem ever arises online, particularly negative comments, abusive or discriminatory language and you're not sure how to deal with it, or if you have any questions about the use of photography, images and digital media please seek advice from your line manager/Director, the HR team or a member of the National Support Centre Communications Team on 020 7654 7000 or email marketingsupport@ms-sc.org

If you're concerned about a safeguarding issue, such as cyberbullying, please contact the Safeguarding Team on 020 7654 7098 (out of hours: 020 7654 7070) or safeguarding@ms-sc.org



5. RULES FOR POSTING ONLINE

The next few paragraphs set out the rules a user must adhere to when posting digital content that is linked to the charity or can be linked back to the user as a representative/'member of the charity' (employee or volunteer).

It is important to always conduct yourself on the internet as you would face-to-face, being aware of both what you say and how you say it. If you wouldn't say or do something in the "real" world, then don't do it online.

It is important that activities and experiences portrayed through social media of Sea Cadets portray a 'safe system of training' at all times.

5.1 Code of Conduct

MSSC has a reputation to maintain and it is important to remember the uniform and mention of the brand links a user to their role within the charity. As such, material posted reflecting the charity must be done with respect and consideration, which includes depiction of the charity's name, facilities, equipment and uniforms or any other item owned by the charity, directly or indirectly. Content online that is posted in relation to your role within the charity must adhere to your code of conduct as an [employee](#) or a [volunteer](#) - Code of Conduct (SCC Adults) ([see paragraph 3](#)).

5.2 Friend requests / network 'ties' online

It is also important to be mindful of who you (on a charity page or your personal social media account) make or accept friend requests with. Consider your relationship with that person

- a. is it MSSC related or personal?
- b. what type of material you will be sharing on your site, and whether or not this will cause offence or compromise your position with that person, your employer or the charity you volunteer with in the real world?

It is not acceptable for a volunteer or employee to make or accept a friend request from a cadet on a personal account unless the cadet and volunteer/employee are related.

5.3 Inappropriate content.

Inappropriate material which MSSC will not condone or endorse, includes, but is not limited to anything illegal under UK law and/or involving:

- a. Inappropriate language, profanity or abusive language (verbal, written or gestured)
- b. Extremist content
- c. Inappropriate subject matters, such as:
 - Self-harm
 - Eating disorders
- d. Violence
- e. Bullying
- f. Exploitation
- g. Sexual or other innuendo
- h. Discriminatory language towards race, religion, gender or sexual orientation abuse
- i. Harassment of any kind
- j. Posting of and dissemination of confidential MSSC and SCC documents (electronic, hard copies etc)
- k. Embarrassment, humiliation or actively degrading someone
- l. Defamation (libel)
- m. Photos of cadets with weapons that do not meet guidelines (see 5.4 below)
- n. Posts that reveal political affiliations/views/bias

- o. Full naming cadets (first name and surname used together or personal contact information (telephone numbers, email, residential addresses etc.)
- p. Any other content that may be damaging/detrimental to the charity
- q. Misuse of equipment

Any content which may include any of the above should never be associated with Sea Cadets, Marine Society or MSSC. If your personal page or post infringes on any of the above, then you should not link yourself to Sea Cadets or MSSC from your account in any way.

5.4 **Weapons**

There are some examples where volunteers are permitted to publish photos of cadets with weapons online, however it is important Sea Cadets is seen first as a fun youth development charity that follows the customs and traditions of the Royal Navy and not as a military training service.

Acceptable images with weapons include:

- Dressing down a weapon
- Weapons handling course activity
- Firing range activities/courses
- Fieldcraft exercises/courses
- Parade purpose weapons being used for drill

Note: use of images with weapons must be accompanied by text captions that stress the teaching of commitment and self-discipline. Suggested captions include:

Drill: *“Cadets are taught drill with parade purpose non firing rifles as part of a structured programme of supervised training that teaches commitment and self-discipline”*

Fieldcraft: *“Cadets are taught rifle handling skills and undertake range target shooting as part of a structured programme of supervised training that emphasises safe and responsible use”.*

Not acceptable use of weapons in photographs include:

- Social posing with weapons
- Weapons held outdoors (unless part of activity listed above). This means drill and parade weapons handling images must be indoors only.



5.5 **Misleading content.**

Material must not be posted online that could compromise the charity by presenting a perception that is misleading, inaccurate or false concerning/regarding Sea Cadets, Marine Society or MSSC. Any such material must be removed immediately. Those responsible for posting the material may be liable to further action.

5.6 Oversight.

Each Sea Cadets units' social media pages must have two volunteers with Administrator access to ensure all content is appropriate, meets the requirements of this policy and responds immediately where it does not. In no circumstances can a cadet have administrator access on a unit's social media page.

Any Marine Society and Sea Cadets national social media pages including, but not limited to, boating stations, training centres, juniors, RMC, inshore, offshore and areas, must include at least one member of the HQ Communications Team, plus an MSSC employee at the Area Office or National Support Centre as an administrator to ensure all content is appropriate, meets the requirements of this policy and to respond immediately where it does not.

5.7 Groups

Closed communication groups on social media or other networks are only permitted for the purpose of Sea Cadets business for volunteers within their unit and area. Under no circumstances should cadets be invited or accepted to join a closed group or conversation.

5.8 Personal messages

When contacting cadets via email, the internet, social media or text messages, volunteers and employees must copy another Sea Cadets' volunteer and parent/legal guardian into all communications. All communication should relate exclusively to Sea Cadets' activities. Junior cadets should not receive direct communication from Sea Cadets volunteers; all such communication should be directed through the cadets' parents or guardians.

5.9 Messaging young people through a page/closed network

It is essential that messaging young people via a 'page', this must only be conducted from a page with two administrators (as above). This is to ensure that any private messages from cadets can be seen by more than one adult and therefore that conversation is not private.

6. FURTHER SUPPORT

If you need more information or are unsure about the material you want to post on the internet, please speak directly to your CO/OiC or the team at Area Office. In addition, you can visit the following websites about online safety (keeping people safe online) www.thinkuknow.co.uk/ and www.getsafeonline.org/

The National Support Centre Communications Team is always on hand to offer advice and assistance, please call us on 020 7654 7000

