



## Social Media Policy

Policy number	OP-002	Version	2.0
Approved by SIA Directors	11 January 2022	Scheduled review date	2026
Date Reviewed	7 June 2024	No amendments required	

### Introduction

Social media such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and blogging are an accepted form of communication within the community and is used by Schools in Action to engage with their partners, participants, their families and the wider public.

### Scope

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear procedures and guidelines by all for the use of social media within business and out of office hours.

Schools in Action may choose to engage in social media such as:

- Facebook;
- Instagram;
- LinkedIn;
- YouTube;
- Website; and
- Other social media platforms as they are created.

Schools in Action seeks to encourage information and link-sharing amongst its partners, participants and their families, staff, suppliers and volunteers, and seeks to utilise the expertise of its employees and volunteers in generating appropriate social media content.

However, it is also an area in which rules and boundaries are constantly being tested. This policy operates in conjunction and should be consistent with Schools in Action's Communication Policy, Media Relations Policy and Privacy Policy to maximise our social media reach while protecting our public reputation.

Social media posts should align with the image that Schools in Action wishes to present to the public. Posts made through its social media channels should not damage the organisation's reputation in anyway.



## Policy Statement

Schools in Action supports the use of social media as a way of promoting the business provided it is used within clear procedures and guidelines.

Social media posts should be respectful of others and adhere to SIA values of:

- Integrity;
- Diversity;
- Respect; and
- Wellbeing.

Schools in Action's social media use shall be consistent with the following key themes:

- **Integrity** - Schools in Action will not knowingly post incorrect, defamatory or misleading information about its own work, the work of other organisations, or individuals.
- **Professionalism** - Schools in Action's social media represents the organisation as a whole and should seek to maintain a professional and uniform tone. Staff and volunteers may, from time to time and as appropriate, post on behalf of Schools in Action using its online profiles, but the impression should remain one of a singular organisation rather than a group of individuals.
- **Information Sharing** - Schools in Action encourages the sharing and reposting of online information that is relevant and appropriate to its aims.

Schools in Action will seek to grow its social media base and use this to engage with existing and potential partners, donors and stakeholders, whilst ensuring a professional balance which avoids placing the organisation's reputation at risk.

## Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the SIA Directors to implement this policy and monitor its effects.

It shall be the responsibility of the person responsible for Communications from Schools in Action to monitor posts by employees to ensure that meet with SIA Social Media policy.

The Policy and Procedures applies to all Schools in Action employees and volunteers for all activities undertaken by Schools in Action employees and volunteers on Schools in Action and external workplace sites.



## Definitions

For the purpose of the Procedures:

- ‘employee’ means persons working at Schools in Action including ongoing and temporary employees, agency staff, contractors, consultants, directors, trainees and students on work experience;
- “staff” means any employee or volunteer at Schools in Action.

For the purposes of the Procedures ‘social media’ means websites and internet-based applications used for social networking/interaction, sharing of information/content and creation of communities through online networks of people. Examples of social media to which this policy relates includes, but is not limited to:

- Social networking, photo and video sharing sites e.g. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, WhatsApp;
- Weblogs including corporate blogs and personal blogs;
- Forums and discussion boards;
- Online encyclopedias such as Wikipedia;
- Any other websites that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools.

## Procedures

### Delegation

Social media is often a 24/7 occupation. As such, the responsibilities for posting to social media accounts may be delegated to other staff by the Communications Officer to another appropriate staff. It is noted however that social media posts will generally only be published during SIA office hours unless prior arrangements have been made with the approval of the Communications Officer.

### Posting to social media

Before social media posts are made, staff should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is the information I am posting, or reposting, likely to be of interest to Schools in Action’s stakeholders?
- Is the information in keeping with the interests of the organisation and its aims?



- Could the post be construed as an attack on another individual, organisation or project?
- Would Schools in Action's stakeholders be happy to read the post?
- If there is a link attached to the post; does the link work; and have I read the information it links to and judged it to be an appropriate source?
- If reposting information, is the original poster an individual or organisation that Schools in Action would be happy to associate itself with?
- Are the tone and the content of the post consistent with other posts made by Schools in Action? Does it maintain the organisation's overall image?

If the person making the post has any uncertainty on whether the post is suitable, it should not be posted until it has been approved by the person responsible for communications by Schools in Action. A few moments spent checking can save the organisation big problems in the future.

It is important to maintain the balance between encouraging discussion and information sharing whilst maintaining a professional and appropriate online presence.

### Damage limitation

In the event of a damaging or misleading post being made, the Directors should be notified as soon as possible, and the following actions should occur:

- The offending post should be removed.
- Where necessary an apology should be issued, either publicly or to the individual or organisation involved.
- The origin of the offending post should be explored and steps taken to prevent a similar incident occurring in the future.

### Moderating social media

The reputation of Schools in Action is first and foremost. This involves maintaining a safe and friendly environment for users.

From time to time social media forums may be hijacked by trolls or spammers or attract people who attack other posters or the organisation aggressively. To maintain a pleasant environment for everybody, these posts need to be moderated.

Freedom of speech is to be encouraged, but if posts contain one or more of the following, it is time to act:

- Excessive or inappropriate use of swearing



- Defamatory, slanderous or aggressive attacks on Schools in Action, other individuals, organisations, projects or public figures
- Breach of copyrighted material not within reasonable use, in the public domain, or available under Creative Commons license
- Breach of data protection or privacy laws
- Repetitive advertisements
- Topics which fall outside the realms of interest to members and stakeholders, or which do not appear to be within the context of a legitimate discussion or enquiry.

If a post appears only once:

- Remove the post as soon as possible
- If possible / appropriate, contact the poster privately to explain why you have removed the post and highlighting Schools in Action's posting guidelines.

If a poster continues to post inappropriate content, or if the post can be considered spam:

- Remove the post as soon as possible
- Ban or block the poster to prevent them from posting again.

Banning and blocking should be used as a last resort only when it is clear that the poster intends to continue to contribute inappropriate content. However, if that is the case, action must be taken swiftly to maintain the welfare of other social media users.

The decision to block, ban and remove posts ultimately lies with the person responsible for communications by Schools in Action, but may, at their discretion, be delegated to responsible staff and volunteers.

#### External platform for social media

When using external social media sites, staff must ensure that they do not make disparaging remarks against the organisation, its staff, suppliers and customers. Any breaches of this policy will result in disciplinary action as detailed below.

Staff should be cognisant that the use of email, SMS, MMS and social media platforms in work and private time can lead to discrimination, harassment or bullying of staff or other persons. This would be the case if content comes under the definitions of harassment, vilification, discrimination or bullying outlined in the Equal Opportunity Policy.

Staff should take care with the information they publish into the public domain about Schools in Action, the people they work with and the type of work they do.

A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action instigated including termination of employment. Disciplinary action includes the possibility that a breach may be deemed serious misconduct.

#### Material posted by others

Should an employee become aware of any disparaging comments made on social media platforms relating to Schools in Action, its employees, sub-contractors, suppliers or customers they should notify the Directors.

#### Attachments

- Nil

#### Related Documents

- Communication Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Media Relations Policy
- Privacy Policy

#### Authorisation



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Deneille Sutton - Director



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Michael Grant - Director