

OPERATIONAL

Social Media Policy

1.0 Purpose and scope

1. This Policy is to provide guidance and clarity to Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA) Workers, Stakeholders and ESSA Members regarding their obligations and expectations in the use of social media platforms.
2. Social media means any platform used for digital publications and commentary with virtual communities and networks, including without limitation; social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter (X), Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, forums and discussion boards such as Yahoo!, Google, Facebook Groups or LinkedIn Groups.
3. ESSA Workers and Members must comply with the policy should they be identifiable as an ESSA Contributor, Employee or Member.
4. This Policy does not apply to personal use of social media platforms where no reference to ESSA-related issues is made.
5. This Policy should be read in conjunction with other policies, including the ESSA Code of Professional Conduct ([link to conduct](#)) and Ethical Practice ([link](#)), and the Code of Conduct for ESSA Workers ([link](#)).
6. This Policy applies to ESSA Workers and ESSA Members.

2.0 Principles and key requirements

2.1 Key principles

1. ESSA will provide a forum for online conversations and actively engage with communities on different social media channels. This engagement is underpinned by three key objectives:
 - a. Informing users about ESSA news and ESSA-related activities.
 - b. Actively listening and engaging with community conversations.
 - c. Consulting with community members around key ESSA or industry issues.
2. The use of social media and online tools in connection with ESSA will be guided by the following principles:
 - a. Respect - for people, for the organisation and ESSA's Values.
 - b. Fairness – treating ESSA, workers, Members and stakeholders fairly.
 - c. Transparency – personal views do not imply ESSA endorsement.
 - d. Confidentiality - of information obtained from ESSA.

2.2 Use of social media

1. ESSA acknowledges and encourages the positive use of social media as a tool for connecting with and engaging Members, stakeholders and the community.
2. Opportunities for the use of social media include, but are not limited to:

- a. Promotion of ESSA to the community and industry in a way that reinforces and builds a positive reputation and brand awareness.
- b. Communication of ESSA services and activities.
- c. Communication on activities related to ESSA's corporate partners and sponsors.
- d. Attraction and building of relationships with new and existing Members, stakeholders, and the community.
- e. Sharing collaborative opportunities (e.g., surveys, consultations).
- f. Responding to Member queries.
- g. Advertisement of recruitment opportunities (jobs, volunteer opportunities).
- h. Promotion of events, professional development opportunities, awards, and achievements.
- i. Facilitation of professional networking.
- j. Promotion of our accredited professionals to Members, stakeholders and the wider community.
- k. Dissemination of important information.

2.3 Discussion rules for ESSA pages/groups

1. ESSA Facebook groups are for Members only.
2. State-based Facebook groups are for Members who reside in that state. A Member may be part of more than one State-based Facebook group only if they reside on the border of two Australian states.
3. ESSA Student social media channels are for student Members only.
4. ESSA encourages positive, constructive, fair, true and honest commentary.
5. ESSA will encourage posts sharing information of use to other Members in relation to health, exercise and sports science matters only.
6. Posts will be deleted if they are considered unprofessional, abusive, aggressive, insulting, or otherwise inappropriate, including making false or malicious claims that may harm a person or ESSA's reputation.
7. Access to groups will be removed if membership is cancelled, there is continued negative, or demeaning behaviour, or comments breach the ESSA Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice, and the Code of Conduct for ESSA Workers.
8. ESSA will delete promotions of other social media groups that affect the ESSA organisation.
9. Posts considered promotional in nature must be relevant to Members and not repetitive.

2.4 Management of ESSA social media accounts/channels

1. ESSA will authorise and maintain social media accounts and channels according to the following criteria:
 - a. The Marketing and Communications Unit is responsible for the authorisation and management of ESSA social media accounts and channels. This ensures ESSA's branding and narrative are consistent, posts are updated regularly, and enquiries, complaints and disputes are actioned appropriately.
 - b. Only employees authorised by the CEO or Marketing and Communications Manager are permitted to access ESSA social media accounts and passwords to manage content, images

or video. If an authorised employee ceases employment at ESSA, their immediate supervisor must notify the Marketing and Communications Manager to ensure that all relevant authorisations are revoked.

- c. Employees must generate passwords in accordance with ESSA's Cyber Security Procedures and securely stored using ESSA's nominated password protection software. No passwords are allowed to be sent internally unless they are shared using the software and authorisation to share has been granted by the relevant manager.
- d. Any ESSA social media account, group or page created without prior authorisation of the Marketing and Communications Manager will be immediately moderated and may be removed.
- e. ESSA reserves the right to restrict or request the removal of any social media account or content that is deemed in violation of the Social Media Policy.
- f. All ESSA social media accounts, even if branded otherwise, like those for Exercise Right, must indicate clearly their link to ESSA.
- g. All ESSA social media accounts will indicate clearly that they are maintained by ESSA Employees.

2.5 Sanctions for non-compliance

1. A failure to comply with this policy may constitute a breach of the ESSA Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice and/or the Code of Conduct for ESSA Workers.
2. If an individual is found to have breached a Code, relevant authorities within ESSA may determine that it is appropriate to impose sanctions. These could include:
 - a. reprimand
 - b. reassigned duties
 - c. termination of employment
 - d. termination of membership

3.0 Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities

3.1 Publishers of social media content

1. Publishers on ESSA's social media are required to:
 - a. act with respect towards audiences, including fellow Members, co-workers and consumers, acknowledging diversity in relation to customs, values and points of view and ensuring language is not obscene, threatening, discriminatory or hateful.
 - b. act without bringing ESSA into disrepute.
 - c. ensure published content is in line with information on the ESSA website.
 - d. avoid being dishonest, or sharing untrue, misleading or negative commentary with the potential to damage the association, the professional groups ESSA represents or individual employees.
 - e. show respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others.
 - f. only offer advice, support or comment on topics that fall within their area of responsibility.

- g. never publish confidential information.
- h. disclose any errors made in previous posts.

3.2 Moderators of ESSA social platforms

1. The Marketing and Communications Unit will act as moderators on all ESSA social media platforms.
2. Moderation of ESSA social media platforms and ensuring users follow and enforce engagement guidelines is essential.
3. Moderators:
 - a. can remove, report or ban users for inappropriate content.
 - b. should respond to questions posed in posts or private messages within two (2) business days.
 - c. can delete posts if they breach the page guidelines (e.g., by containing inappropriate language or themes, links to spam sites, hateful comments and other behaviours as outlined in this Policy).
 - d. should ensure Facebook's 'profanity block list' is always set to 'high' on the ESSA Facebook page.

4.0 Monitoring, review and assurance

1. The Chief Executive Officer maintains oversight of this policy.
2. The Marketing and Communications Manager will ensure the relevance, veracity and consistency of content before making recommendations for amendments to the CEO.
3. This policy is subject to triennial review.

5.0 Recording and reporting

1. Members must agree to abide by this Policy before using the ESSA social media channels.
2. Any failures to comply with this Policy will be recorded on ESSA systems.

6.0 Appendix

6.1 Definitions

Contributor means an ESSA Board member, Council member or Committee or Advisory Group member.

Employee means persons who are paid a salary from ESSA and can reasonably expect to receive a PAYG payment summary statement.

ESSA means Exercise and Sports Science Australia Ltd.

Marketing and Communications Manager means the Marketing and Communications Manager of ESSA.

Marketing and Communications Unit means the employees of ESSA reporting to the Marketing and Communications Manager.

Member means a person who is a member of ESSA.

Publisher means any person who is publishing content on an ESSA social media platform.

Workers means employees, officers, contractors (including employees of contractors), contributors, suppliers and consultants.

6.2 Related documents

- The following documents and legislation also apply to the application of this policy:
 - [Code of Conduct for ESSA Workers](#)
 - [Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice](#)
 - [Cyber Security Procedures](#)
 - [Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)
 - [ESSA Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Copyright Act 1968 \(Cth\)](#)
 - [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#)
 - [Equal Opportunity/Anti-Discrimination Acts](#) relevant to each state/territory

7.0 Metadata for document management

Owner	Chief Executive Officer
Custodian	Marketing and Communication Manager
Last Approval Date	19 February 2024
Next Review Date	19 February 2027
Audience / Users	Workers, Members
Notes	

8.0 Modification History

Date	Version	Details
15 December 2015	2.1	
24 October 2022	3	Major rewrite of policy. Includes the purpose of ESSA social media, responsibilities for moderation role, rules for discussion groups.
19 February 2024	4	Miscellaneous updates to bring policy into line with modern practices.