

## AJJA Social Media Policy

Your online presence reflects on everything you are associated with work, social or sporting.

Social media is a powerful tool that allows us to express our identity through what we “like” and the campaigns and issues we support. But being connected can blur a line between what’s personal and what’s private in our lives.

Some of us can’t escape being associated with what we do and where we work. Work can turn up in our online comments, our photos, and our connections.

When that association is obvious, we need to make sure we are protecting our own reputation **and** that of the associations we belong to.

### The basic rules of social media etiquette are a good start

- **Be polite and respectful.** Don’t post or endorse material that is defamatory, violates the privacy or rights of others (bullying, discrimination), breaches copyright or any other laws. Online comments carry the same legal risks as other forms of communications. They can reach a wider audience, are more difficult to remove, and are easily searchable.
- **Use appropriate channels to resolve complaints.** Social media is not an appropriate forum to air grievances and could open you up to defamation charges. If you can’t speak directly to the person involved discuss your situation with your Sensei or head of style.
- **Maintain confidentiality.** Don’t share any information that isn’t publicly available, and pay particular care to guard information that is confidential, private or sensitive. Even private messages, sent through social media platforms can’t be considered secure.
- **Avoid discussing AJJA or club business on social media.** Unless it is an authorised media release.

### Protecting the Australian Ju Jitsu Association’s reputation

The AJJA promotes values such as honour, respect and fairness in all activities. Where you’re associated with the AJJA or one of its member clubs on social media, you’re expected to model these values too.

Take care to:

- **Use your online presence to support the AJJA,** not to damage it. Consider carefully before posting any comments or images that reference the AJJA’s brand or that of your colleagues.
- **Speak within your authority.** Be careful not to give the impression that you’re speaking on behalf of the AJJA.
- **Avoid displaying people and logos in your images without specific permission.** Some people don’t want or can’t have their information or photos on social media due to their employment.
- **Avoid derogatory comments.** Do not get involved in comments about other people, styles or schools.
- **Remove derogatory comments posted as replies to your posts.** If others post material that is defamatory or violates the rights of others in response to your post, it is also your responsibility to remove it.

Defamatory comments (false accusations), could land you in court facing a lawsuit. Defamation can be seen as any wrongful, intentional publication of words or behaviour relating to another person that injures or demeans their status, good name, character or reputation.

We all know that we are responsible for what we say on social media and we should always think before we post. But did you know that you could also be responsible for the comments made about someone that other users subsequently publish in response to your post?

The District Court of South Australia recently found an individual responsible, not only for the defamatory contents of his own Facebook post, but also for the defamatory comments other Facebook users attached to the original post.

The subject of the commentary was awarded \$100,000 in damages.

The original post was effectively providing a forum for others to publish comments. By failing to remove those that were inappropriate, the individual hosting the commentary was found to be liable for the defamatory comments of others as well as their own.