

ITALIA CONTI

Student Guide to the Italia Conti Social Media Policy

1. Why this guide exists

Social media is an important part of modern creative and professional life. It can help you celebrate your work, support your peers, build your profile, connect with the wider industry and share positive moments from your training.

Italia Conti does not want to stop students using social media well. In fact, the Social Media Policy recognises that effective social media use is part of the skillset needed by many creative and performing arts professionals.

However, social media also carries risks. Posts, comments, messages, photos, videos and group chats can affect:

- your professional reputation;
- someone else's privacy, safety or wellbeing;
- the reputation of another student, tutor, member of staff or visiting professional;
- the reputation of Italia Conti;
- your future employability, representation or casting opportunities;
- formal processes such as complaints, investigations or disciplinary matters.

This guide explains the key parts of the Social Media Policy in plain English. It does not replace the policy. The approved **Italia Conti Social Media Policy** remains the formal document.

2. The basic principle

Before you post, share, comment, like, repost, forward, screenshot, record or message, ask yourself:

Would I be comfortable if this was seen by a tutor, future employer, agent, casting director, parent, student, member of staff or someone involved in a formal process?

Even private accounts, close friends lists, disappearing posts and group chats are not fully private. Content can be screenshotted, forwarded, saved, reported or shared more widely than you intended.

The policy reminds students to be mindful of their digital footprint and to use social media responsibly, respectfully and professionally.

3. What counts as social media?

For the purposes of the policy, social media is not just Instagram or TikTok.

It includes, for example:

- Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Facebook, X, BlueSky, YouTube, LinkedIn and similar platforms;
- WhatsApp, Discord, Messenger and group chats;
- blogs, forums, comment sections and online communities;
- dating apps;
- livestreams and video-sharing platforms;
- Microsoft Teams chat, online learning chats and conferencing software;
- images, videos, recordings, screenshots, comments, likes, reposts and direct messages.

The policy applies whether content is public, private, anonymous, temporary, deleted, archived, hidden or posted from outside Italia Conti.

4. The three types of account

The Social Media Policy refers to three types of account.

Official Italia Conti accounts

These are accounts run by authorised people on behalf of Italia Conti. Students must not create accounts that look like official Italia Conti accounts unless they have permission.

Professional personal accounts

These are accounts you use to present yourself professionally. For example, an account where you share performance work, headshots, showreels, training updates or industry-facing content, and where you are identifiable as connected to Italia Conti. This may also include accounts that are set up for Graduate Year Groups / Alumni pages.

Private personal accounts

These are your personal accounts. Italia Conti does not seek to interfere with your private life. However, personal social media use can still fall within the policy if it affects Italia Conti, staff, students, the wider community, your professional relationships, or a safe and respectful learning environment.

5. Positive ways to use social media

Students are encouraged to use social media positively and professionally.

Good social media use might include:

- celebrating achievements, performances and milestones;
- sharing official Italia Conti posts;
- supporting classmates and creative projects;
- promoting your professional profile;
- engaging with industry in a respectful and thoughtful way;
- sharing approved content from events or performances;
- building a portfolio of work that reflects your skill, judgement and professionalism.

A good professional account does not need to be bland. It can have personality. The key is that it should not undermine your reputation, someone else's dignity, or Italia Conti's expectations of professional conduct.

6. Posting about Italia Conti

You may want to post about your training, performances, rehearsals, friends and experiences at Italia Conti. That is understandable, and positive posts can be a valuable part of community and professional life.

However, you must take particular care when posting anything connected to Italia Conti.

You should not post or share:

- photos, videos or recordings from classes, rehearsals, tutorials, assessments or performances unless permission has been given;
- footage of staff, tutors, or visiting professionals;
- footage of other students without permission;
- backstage, dressing room, studio, classroom or private-space content;
- scripts, choreography, music, rehearsal material, assessment content or production material;
- confidential information about students, staff, assessments, casting, complaints, disciplinary matters, welfare or safeguarding;
- content that implies you are speaking on behalf of Italia Conti;
- content using the Italia Conti logo, crest, branding or name in a way that suggests official approval without permission.

The policy is clear that staff and students should not create or post images or videos from Italia Conti activities, or of Italia Conti staff or students, without permission. This includes classes, rehearsals and performances.

7. Consent matters

Before posting anyone else, ask for permission.

This includes:

- photos;
- videos;
- audio recordings;
- screenshots;
- group chat content;
- direct messages;
- rehearsal footage;
- performance footage;
- behind-the-scenes content;
- personal information;
- jokes or captions that identify someone directly or indirectly.

Consent should be clear. Someone being present in a room, rehearsal or photograph does not automatically mean they have agreed to be posted online.

Be especially careful with content involving:

- students under 18;

- visiting professionals;
- staff;
- welfare or safeguarding matters;
- dressing rooms, changing areas, backstage spaces or private conversations;
- anything that could embarrass, expose, mock or misrepresent another person.

8. Staff and student boundaries online

The Social Media Policy sets clear expectations around staff and student contact on social media.

Students should not send friend requests, follow requests or direct personal social media contact to staff or staff relatives. Staff are also expected not to make personal social media contact with students.

This applies to both personal and professional accounts.

If you are unsure whether a connection is appropriate, speak to the Wellbeing Team or an appropriate member of staff before acting.

The policy allows for social media connections after the relevant period following the end of a student's course, provided the student is over 18 and the required time has passed. Until then, communication should remain through official Italia Conti channels.

9. Group chats and private messages still count

A group chat can feel informal, but it is still part of your online conduct.

The same expectations apply to:

- WhatsApp groups;
- Discord servers;
- Instagram group chats;
- Teams chats;
- closed or invitation-only groups;
- anonymous or temporary accounts.

Do not use group chats or private messages to bully, humiliate, exclude, intimidate, threaten, spread rumours, share private information, mock someone, or circulate content without consent.

If something would be unacceptable in person, it is likely to be unacceptable online.

10. Complaints and concerns should use the proper routes

Students are allowed to raise concerns. The policy does not stop students from making a genuine complaint, reporting misconduct, seeking support, contacting the police, reporting harassment or sexual misconduct, or using external routes where appropriate.

However, social media is not usually the right place to raise complaints or make allegations.

If you are unhappy with a lesson, rehearsal, decision, staff member, student, process or part of your course, use the appropriate Italia Conti route so the concern can be considered properly and fairly.

Posting publicly, or in a group chat, can make it harder to resolve the issue. It may also risk breaching confidentiality, harming another person, compromising an investigation, or escalating a situation unnecessarily.

This does not mean you cannot express views or raise concerns. It means serious concerns should be raised in the right way.

11. What not to post

The Social Media Policy gives examples of unacceptable use. In student-friendly terms, you should not post, share, forward or engage with content that:

- bullies, harasses, humiliates, threatens or intimidates another person;
- discriminates against someone because of sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief, age or another protected or personal characteristic;
- spreads rumours, lies, gossip or innuendo;
- mocks another person, whether deliberately or recklessly;
- shares someone's personal contact details or private information without permission;
- shares confidential information about Italia Conti, staff, students, assessments, complaints, disciplinary matters or internal documents;
- makes false, malicious, defamatory or misleading allegations;
- impersonates someone else or uses a fake identity to mislead people;
- implies that your personal view is the view of Italia Conti;
- uses the Italia Conti logo or branding without permission;
- discusses ongoing complaints, investigations, disciplinary matters or legal proceedings in a way that could compromise them;
- shares intrusive, intimate, explicit or sexual images or recordings without consent;
- encourages others to target, shame or harass someone.

This is not a complete list. The key question is whether the content could harm another person, breach privacy or confidentiality, damage a safe learning environment, break the law, or undermine professional standards.

12. Harassment, sexual misconduct and intimate images

Some online behaviour may be referred under the **Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy**.

This may include:

- unwanted sexual messages;
- sharing, threatening to share, or requesting intimate images;
- intrusive or explicit images or recordings shared without consent;
- stalking or obsessive online behaviour;
- grooming behaviours;
- coercive or threatening messages;
- hate-related harassment;
- online behaviour that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

If you experience or witness this type of behaviour, report it to the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team through the appropriate route. The Social Media Policy does not prevent anyone from reporting harassment, sexual misconduct or sexual violence, accessing support, going to the police, or using internal or external reporting routes.

13. Copyright, performances and creative material

You must not assume that you can post creative material just because you are involved in it.

This includes:

- choreography;
- scripts;
- songs;
- sheet music;
- backing tracks;
- rehearsal recordings;
- production footage;
- assessment material;
- professional workshop material;
- designs, costumes, sets or backstage content;
- another student's creative work.

Some material may be protected by copyright, licensing agreements, image rights, performance rights or internal restrictions. If you are not sure whether something can be posted, ask before posting.

14. Using the Italia Conti name, logo or brand

You must not use the Italia Conti logo, crest, branding, typeface or name in a way that suggests official approval unless you have permission.

This includes:

- account names;
- handles;
- profile images;
- banners;
- promotional graphics;
- event pages;
- student-led accounts;
- paid services;
- external projects;
- commercial activity.

You can identify yourself accurately as a student where appropriate, but you must not create the impression that you are speaking for Italia Conti.

15. Digital footprint and future employability

Your online presence is part of your professional profile.

Agents, casting directors, employers, producers, placement providers, collaborators and members of the public may look at your social media. They may form a view about your judgement, reliability, professionalism and suitability for work.

Before posting, consider:

- Does this show good judgement?
- Is it accurate?
- Is it kind?

- Is it professional?
- Could it be misunderstood?
- Could it embarrass or harm someone else?
- Would I be happy for this to be seen in a professional context?
- Does it reveal something private or confidential?
- Does it comply with Italia Conti policy?
- Could it affect my future opportunities?

The policy reminds students that online behaviour is often permanently recorded and may affect future professional reputation.

16. Privacy and personal safety

Protect your own privacy as well as other people's.

Be careful about sharing:

- your home address;
- your phone number;
- your location in real time;
- travel plans;
- daily routines;
- private images;
- login details;
- health or welfare information;
- family or relationship details;
- financial information;
- information that could identify where you live or when you are away.

Review your privacy settings regularly. Remember that privacy settings reduce risk, but they do not remove it. Friends, followers and group members can still screenshot, copy or share content.

17. Emergencies and live incidents

During an emergency, only official Italia Conti channels should provide updates.

Do not post, livestream, speculate, share images or circulate information about a live incident unless authorised. This includes incidents involving:

- evacuation;
- lockdown;
- injury;
- police or emergency services;
- safeguarding;
- medical issues;
- security concerns;
- fire alarms or building incidents.

Sharing unverified information during an emergency can cause confusion, distress or risk.

18. What to do if something goes wrong

If you post something and then realise it may be inappropriate:

1. Do not argue publicly.

2. Take a screenshot or keep a record if needed.
3. Remove the content if it is safe and appropriate to do so.
4. Tell an appropriate member of staff if the issue may affect others, involve safeguarding, or relate to Italia Conti.
5. Ask for advice rather than hoping it will disappear.

If you receive or see harmful content:

1. Do not retaliate.
2. Keep evidence where safe to do so.
3. Report it through the appropriate route.
4. Seek support if the content is upsetting, threatening, discriminatory, sexual, abusive or intrusive.

19. Where to go for help

The right route depends on the issue.

- **Safeguarding, welfare, harassment, sexual misconduct or sexual violence:** Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team
- **Cyber-security or account compromise:** IT
- **Data protection concern:** Data Protection Officer
- **Complaint about course delivery, service or handling of a matter:** Complaints route
- **Whistleblowing concern:** SpeakUp@italiaconti.co.uk
- **Reputational, media or emergency issue:** Senior Leadership Team / Head of Student Services / Duty Manager
- **Uncertainty about whether to post something:** ask an appropriate member of staff before posting

20. What happens if the policy is breached?

If there is a concern that the Social Media Policy has been breached, Italia Conti will consider the matter under the relevant student procedure.

The response will depend on factors such as:

- what was posted or shared;
- whether the content was public or private;
- whether it was repeated, targeted, anonymous or malicious;
- whether someone was harmed or placed at risk;
- whether it involved bullying, harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct;
- whether confidential or personal information was disclosed;
- whether the content was removed when requested;
- whether freedom of speech, academic freedom or lawful expression are relevant;
- whether another Italia Conti policy also applies.

Students may be asked to remove content. Failure to remove content when reasonably requested may itself become a further issue.

No disciplinary finding or sanction will be made under the Social Media Policy without following the applicable procedure.

21. A simple checklist before posting

Before you post, ask:

- **Do I have permission?**
- **Is anyone else identifiable?**
- **Is this kind, fair and accurate?**
- **Could this be seen as bullying, harassment or discrimination?**
- **Does it reveal private or confidential information?**
- **Could it affect a complaint, investigation or disciplinary process?**
- **Could it damage someone's reputation or wellbeing?**
- **Could it damage my own professional reputation?**
- **Am I using Italia Conti's name, logo or brand appropriately?**
- **Would I still be comfortable with this being seen in a year's time?**

If the answer to any of these questions gives you pause, do not post until you have checked.