

GAMBLING LAW UPDATE

New Social Media Code of Conduct for Gambling Operator Partnerships with Football Clubs

From 1 March 2021, a new [Code of Conduct](#) from the Betting and Gaming Council will prevent adverts for gambling operators appearing on football clubs' social media, unless age gated. We set out below the key rules and their applicability.

Content to be age gated

The code requires that any social media post by a football club which includes the following content should be age gated:

- › A link to or display of the website address of a betting site
- › A betting company handle
- › A bonus or acquisition offer
- › Betting odds
- › Calls to action for a gambling product

Content that does not need to be age gated

The following content can be used in non-age gated posts by clubs:

- › Brand specific safer gambling graphics
- › Posts about gambling generally, which are not in partnership with a particular operator

Retweets

The BGC considers that football clubs retweeting posts from gambling accounts would constitute a breach of the Code, on the basis that retweets are not age gated.

Requirements for age gated posts

The age gating should be targeted at age 25+, unless the platform is whitelisted by the BGC for 18+ targeting. The BGC has yet to publish a whitelist, so 25+ targeting is currently expected.

The age gating may be applied to either the posting profile or the post itself.

The Code requires that age gated posts include GambleAware and 18+ messaging. This is expected to be included in the graphic, if a brand image is used.

Applicability

The Code applies to all posts about gambling operators on football clubs' social media (text and graphics), including but not limited to Twitter and Facebook.

It only applies to posts in partnership with [BGC members](#) (90% of UK licensed gambling operators).

The Code is not worded so as to be limited to posts by UK football clubs, so could be considered to apply to a sponsored post by a non-UK club, even if linking to a non-UK facing website, if the gambling operator is also a BGC member.

Status and enforcement of the Code

The BGC is not the regulator of gambling in Great Britain, it is an industry body acting for licensed gambling operators.

The Code cannot be enforced against football clubs, nor are there sanctions for non-compliance by gambling operators, although members of the BGC have agreed to abide by the body's rules and are likely to expect their commercial partners to comply.

If you would like any further advice or assistance on the new requirements, please contact Melanie Ellis (melanie.ellis@northridgelaw.com) or Tom Edmonds (tom.edmonds@northridgelaw.com)