The Pony Club AI Usage Policy for Company Members and Volunteers

1. Purpose

The Pony Club recognises that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be a useful tool for improving productivity, supporting administration, developing assets, drafting communications and helping people work more efficiently.

This policy sets out how Company Members, Volunteers, Committee Members, Officials and other representatives of The Pony Club should use AI tools responsibly, safely and appropriately when carrying out Pony Club-related work.

AI should support good human judgement, **not replace it**. Anyone using AI on behalf of The Pony Club remains responsible for checking the accuracy, suitability and tone of anything produced.

2. Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to anyone using AI tools in connection with Pony Club activity, including:

- Company Members
- Branch and Area volunteers
- Staff involved with Pony Club activities at Linked Centres
- Area Representatives & District Commissioners
- Committee members
- Officials and event organisers
- Coaches and instructors, where relevant to Pony Club activity
- Staff and contractors supporting Pony Club work
- Anyone producing communications, documents, guidance, reports or content on behalf of The Pony Club

This policy is not intended to stop the use of AI. It is intended to help people use AI safely, consistently and in a way that protects members, volunteers, horses, the organisation and The Pony Club brand.

3. Approved and preferred AI tools

Company Members, Volunteers, Area Representatives, District Commissioners and others with an authorised pcuk.org Microsoft 365 account should use the Microsoft Copilot Chat included with that account. This is the preferred and default option, as it operates within The Pony Club's enterprise data protection, permissions and security controls.

Anyone without an authorised pcuk.org M365 account may use a reputable, mainstream AI tool of their choice. Microsoft Copilot remains a good default, but the choice of tool matters less than how it is used.

Whichever tool is used, the data protection rules in Section 7 and the checklist in Section 12 must be followed at all times — in particular, no confidential, personal, safeguarding, financial, membership, disciplinary, legal or commercially sensitive Pony Club information should ever be entered into a personal or unapproved AI tool.

Where a piece of work involves sensitive information of this kind and the person handling it does not have an authorised pcuk.org M365 account, it should not be processed through AI at all.

4. Appropriate uses of AI

AI may be useful for general support tasks such as:

- Drafting or improving non-sensitive emails, newsletters and documents
- Summarising general information or public guidance
- Creating agendas, meeting notes or action lists where no sensitive information is included
- Generating ideas for events, activities, communications or training
- Reviewing wording for clarity, tone or accessibility
- Producing first drafts of non-sensitive guidance or process notes
- Helping structure reports, presentations or volunteer communications

AI outputs must always be reviewed before they are used or shared. AI can make mistakes, misunderstand context, invent information or produce wording that is not suitable for The Pony Club.

5. Human accountability

AI must not be used as a substitute for human judgement.
Anyone using AI on behalf of The Pony Club remains responsible for:

- Checking the accuracy of the output
- Making sure the wording is appropriate for the audience
- Ensuring the content reflects The Pony Club values and policies
- Confirming that any facts, figures, dates, names or rules are correct
- Making sure the final decision or communication is suitable and fair

AI must not make final decisions about people, safeguarding matters, disciplinary issues, complaints, finance, legal matters, welfare concerns or membership eligibility.

6. Accuracy, verification and record keeping

Before AI-generated content is used, users must check that it is accurate and appropriate.
Care should be taken where content relates to:

- Pony Club rules, policies or procedures
- Safeguarding, welfare, health and safety or risk management
- Finance, membership, payments or insurance
- Branch, Area or national governance
- Equestrian guidance, horse welfare, tack, equipment or riding practice
- Public communications or official statements

Where AI has helped produce a significant piece of work, the user should be prepared to explain how it was used and confirm that the final version has been reviewed by a person.

7. Data protection and confidential information

AI tools must be used in line with data protection responsibilities and The Pony Club's wider policies.
Users must not enter the following into unapproved AI tools:

- Personal data about members, parents, guardians, volunteers, coaches, officials or staff
- Membership numbers, dates of birth, addresses, phone numbers or email addresses
- Safeguarding information or welfare concerns
- Medical, disability or access information
- Complaints, disciplinary details or sensitive correspondence
- Financial, payment or bank information
- Internal reports, contracts or confidential business information
- Login details, passwords or system access information

Where AI is used to help draft or summarise information, users should minimise the data included. Names, identifiers and sensitive details should be removed wherever possible.
Even where an AI tool offers enterprise data protection, users should still apply professional judgement and only include sensitive information where there is a clear business need, appropriate authorisation and a safe approved tool.

8. Safeguarding, welfare and sensitive decisions

AI must not be used to make or replace decisions relating to safeguarding, child protection, adults at risk, welfare concerns, complaints, disciplinary action or legal matters.
AI may help with general drafting or formatting of non-sensitive wording, but it must not be relied on to assess risk, decide whether a concern is valid, determine action to be taken or replace established reporting procedures.
If someone has a safeguarding or welfare concern, they must follow the relevant Pony Club reporting process and contact the appropriate safeguarding or welfare lead without delay.

9. Fairness, bias and ethical use

AI tools can reflect bias or produce outputs that are incomplete, unfair or misleading. Users must take care to ensure AI is not used in a way that could disadvantage, exclude or discriminate against individuals or groups.
AI must not be used to:

- Make judgements about individuals without proper human review
- Score, rank or compare people unfairly
- Produce misleading or exaggerated information
- Create content that misrepresents The Pony Club's position
- Circumvent Pony Club policies, approval processes or governance
- Replace professional advice where this is required

The Pony Club expects AI to be used in a way that supports care, respect, fairness, inclusion and responsible decision-making.

10. Marketing, imagery and content creation

AI can be helpful for drafting copy, generating ideas, reviewing wording and planning campaigns. However, care must be taken when using AI-generated media that represents The Pony Club, horses, riders, volunteers or Members.

AI-generated equestrian imagery will often contain inaccuracies relating to horse anatomy, tack, rider position, equipment, welfare standards or The Pony Club best practice. Inaccurate imagery can undermine trust in The Pony Club's expertise and damage confidence in the authenticity of our communications. This applies at local Branch & Centre level as much as nationally, since local materials still represent The Pony Club.

For imagery, the expectation is straightforward: use real photos, not AI-generated ones.

Where possible, use genuine local photography (from events, your own horses and riders) to personalise materials – when doing this it is important to gather express permission of parent/guardians.

We strongly advise against the use of AI-generated images of horses, ponies, riders, tack or equipment at any level, because of the accuracy risk above. This also means genuine photos should not be run through AI editing or "enhance" tools, these tools can unknowingly alter details like tack, rider position or a horse's conformation, so a real photo can appear just as inaccurate as an AI-generated one.

The Pony Club logo, branding assets and visual identity must never be recreated, modified or generated using AI tools — only approved Branch-specific or Linked Centre Pony Club logo files and brand assets from the Resource Hub should be used. All Branch-specific and Linked Centre logos are available from The Pony Club Marketing Team and are able to be requested via communications@pcuk.org

AI text and design tools remain useful and don't need any sign-off — drafting copy, headlines, captions, generating layout ideas, or non-representational design elements (backgrounds, borders, colour schemes) are all fine to use freely.

11. Transparency

Where AI has significantly contributed to official content, reports, guidance or communications, users should be prepared to disclose this if requested.

This does not mean every small use of AI must be declared. However, users should be open about AI involvement where it has materially shaped a piece of work, particularly if the content is being used for decision-making, public communication or formal governance.

AI disclosure on social media
Many platforms (including Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube) require or automatically detect AI-generated or AI-edited images and video and will label them accordingly. This can apply to AI photo editing tools as well as fully AI-generated images/posts. Where AI-assisted visual content is posted from a branch or Pony Club associated account, any platform disclosure requirements must be followed — this is a further reason to use genuine photography and Resource Hub imagery wherever possible, as set out in Section 10.

12. Practical checklist before using AI

Before using AI for Pony Club adjacent work, ask:

- Am I using an approved or appropriate tool?
- Am I avoiding personal, confidential or sensitive information?
- Could this involve safeguarding, welfare, legal, finance or disciplinary matters?
- Have I removed names and personal identifiers where possible?
- Will I check the output carefully before using it?
- Does the wording reflect The Pony Club values and tone?
- Could the content mislead, exclude or unfairly affect anyone?
- Would I be comfortable explaining how AI was used?

If the answer to any of these questions raises concern, do not proceed.

13. Support and advice

Anyone unsure about using AI for Pony Club work should seek advice before entering information into a tool or sharing AI-generated content.

Questions about AI tools, data protection, paid plans or technical suitability should be directed to The Pony Club Technology Team (pelham@pcuk.org).

Questions about brand, marketing content, imagery or public communications should be directed to the Marketing Team (communications@pcuk.org)

Questions involving safeguarding, welfare, complaints, disciplinary matters, finance or legal issues should be directed to the relevant Pony Club lead or existing reporting process.

AI should be used to support The Pony Club's work, not to create unnecessary risk. When in doubt, ask first.