



[Name of House]

Social Media Guide

Introduction

The [Name of House] recognises that social media technologies can enhance communication, collaboration and information exchange.

However, the extended reach of communicating online can have both positive and negative effects. The risks and challenges of social media must be identified and dealt with. Provided the risks and challenges are managed, they are far outweighed by the opportunities social media presents. The House encourages staff members, volunteers and Management Committee members to use social media responsibly on behalf of the House.

Importantly, while much communication through social media networks is primarily a *personal* matter, this does not mean it is *private*. Consider personal conversation within social media networks as public rather than private as everything submitted online is effectively part of the public domain. Even if you have strict privacy controls in place, people can forward that information to a wider audience. Therefore, have no expectations of privacy when using social media.

These guidelines provide helpful, practical advice on using social media safely, efficiently and effectively.

Guidelines

Be a good ambassador

It is everyone's personal decision whether to use social media, networks and tools in their work or personal life. Remember that behaviour and opinions on personal social media can reflect on the House, even if House social media is not used.

Consider a 'Dummy' profile

The House Facebook page must be accessed via a person's personal profile. Some people may be happy to use their active personal profile but others may consider this a privacy issue. Creating a 'Dummy' profile, specifically used for work purposes is a solution. There are positives and negatives to both options. If you use a personal profile, people connecting for work purposes can see all your personal information. On the other hand, by creating a "dummy" work profile, existing friends of a personal Facebook page may miss out on connecting to the House Facebook page.



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Be enthusiastic and genuine

Enthusiasm is contagious. Share the enthusiasm you feel for your work and the sector and talk about the successes you have been part of or know about. If you are genuine in your support of the House, people will be a lot more responsive.

Use a disclaimer

On any personal social media profiles, always add a disclaimer to make clear that the views you express are yours alone. For example, “The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the [Name of House] positions, strategies or opinions”. However, this disclaimer doesn't free you from any legal and House obligations you have.

Think of television, your mother and your boss

Remember that anything you submit online is not private so do not say anything online that you wouldn't be comfortable seeing quoted on the television, being asked about by your mother or having to justify to your boss.

Add value

Sharing information and experiences benefits the whole community and our sector and ultimately the people we serve. Feel free to share and discuss your experiences. Being knowledgeable and helpful will reflect positively on you and on the House.

Use common sense about sharing information. Do not share anything that is internal or could be confidential. If in doubt, ask the owner of the information you want to share.

Don't comment on the work of colleagues in the House or other organisations that are outside your field of expertise.

If you see an error, feel free to correct but stick to the FACTS

Houses can be complicated, legally and operationally to understand. People may misunderstand or choose to misunderstand the House. If you come across any misrepresentation of the House or the sector, you can identify yourself and your connection to the House and correct their mistake with RESPECT and with FACTS. Alternatively, notify someone else, preferably the Coordinator.

In most cases people won't mind being corrected and they will frequently even distribute the correction themselves. However, if you get the feeling that someone is deliberately misinterpreting you, just ignore them and flag this with the Coordinator.



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Be the first to admit a mistake

If you have made a mistake, be upfront about it. Admit and correct the mistake. If you correct an earlier post do so visibly, e.g. by using the strikethrough function and adding a paragraph that explains the update at the end.

Use your best judgement

If you are about to publish something that you are even slightly concerned about, wait a few more hours or a day and think again whether this is what you want to say. If you are still concerned and it is related to the House, ask your Coordinator for advice.

Protect your own privacy

Many Social Media sites allow you some form of control over who can see your material. Use these features.

Never divulge personal and identifiable contact information such as a home address or phone number.

Keep security in mind

Never leave your computer on with social media sites open and your accounts open. You do not want people accessing your accounts and submitting content or redesigning anything. This is like leaving your wallet or phone in the street.

Spread the word and connect with your colleagues

Don't only talk about yourself but also about the successes of your colleagues. Connect with them through social networks and spread their success stories.

Observe the House code of conduct

Even if you are using your own computer, tablet or phone in your own time, the code of conduct policy applies concerning anything to do with the House. Violating the code of conduct policy will mean disciplinary action.

Respect privacy

Respect people's right to privacy and don't take photos or videos without their permission. Even if you take photos or videos for personal use only, make sure that you respect the people portrayed. Focus on positive images. Never post anything



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about any minors that could lead to anyone identifying them or where they live. Violating the privacy policy will mean disciplinary action.

Stay focused on your job

While the [Name of House] encourages the use of social media and online communities for House purposes and recognises that these can be a valuable resource, keep in mind that you were not hired to spend all your time on social media. Make sure that your online activities don't interfere with your job. Please refer to House policies and your Position Description or induction pack.

Keep your Coordinator in the loop

To avoid problems, if you plan publishing anything related to your work function or assignment obtain permission before hand. Always keep your Coordinator informed about your work-related social media activities.

Observe IT security rules

Don't download or install software that you find through social networks on your work computer. Please follow the House policies on this.

Share House posts

If you use social media personally in your own time, consider sharing items from House social media posts.

Respect the House

Don't use your personal social media platform to disparage the name and reputation of the House, staff, volunteers, Management Committee, members, sponsors and partners. Doing so will mean disciplinary action.

Respect Copyright, Fair use and Disclosure laws

Always protect sensitive information and always be aware of copyright. Do not use the House logo on your personal site. This must only be used in an official capacity.

Supporting Documentation (add or remove as relevant to your House)

Computer Use/IT Policy
Confidentiality and Privacy Policy
Employee Information Kit
Social Media Policy