

Group Analytic Society International (GASi)

Social Media Policy

To use social media well and stay safe, GASi has developed a clear social media policy. This policy will be regularly reviewed, support the charity's goals, follow the law, promote safe online behaviour (especially for vulnerable people), and guide responsible and effective external communication. This policy should be read in conjunction with the charity's Code of Behaviour, its Safeguarding Policy and its Online Abuse Handling & Reporting Policy.

This social media policy is intended to comply with the Charity Commission guidance on Charities and social media ([Charities and social media - GOV.UK](#)) and incorporates provisions from the template policy recommended by the Commission, as developed by CharityComms.

This policy is intended to be a comprehensive guide for social media use for GASi's channels and for individuals using social media in a personal capacity as a representative of GASi.

This policy is intended for all staff (including consultants and freelancers), volunteers (including trustees) and members of the charity. Before engaging in social media activity, you must read this policy, which contains guidance that will help you adhere to our standards.

Please read this policy carefully as it is designed to encouraging respectful, legal, and careful use of social media to protect the charity and keep public trust.

1. Social Media Accounts are overseen by the GASi Online Communications Committee.
2. The day to day running of Social Media Accounts is managed by the Social Media Contents Administrator appointed from time to time by the Chair of Online Communications Committee.
3. Social Media accounts can also be accessed by the GASi Office Manager and at least one other trustee

Why do we need a social media policy?

Social media is a fast-moving online world, where nuance and context can be easily lost. While social media brings the charity to a wide audience, it can also present risks. We want to ensure that all staff and volunteers using social media represent and GASi in the best way possible. It is also important to mitigate risks (such as reputational or legal issues) associated with the use of social media to protect our supporters, members, staff and volunteers, work and reputation.

While we encourage the use of social media to support our communications strategy or plans, we have important standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe and adhere to. The difference between a personal and professional opinion can also be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to GASi's

work. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations and is subject to the same laws as other kinds of publication or commentary in the public domain.

Failure to comply with this policy could expose GASi to reputational damage as well as putting staff, volunteers and members at risk.

Responsibilities and breach of policy

Everyone is responsible for their compliance with this policy.

Participation in social media on behalf of GASi is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect.

Breaches of policy or inappropriate behaviour may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue.

Application

This policy applies to all social media platforms used by staff (including consultants and freelancers), volunteers (including trustees) and members in a professional and personal capacity.

This policy also applies to online blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, and messaging based apps, such as WhatsApp. Social media can be accessed in various ways, including from a desktop or laptop computer, tablet or smartphone. This policy applies to the use of all such devices.

Internet access and monitoring usage

There are currently no access restrictions to any of our social media sites in the GASi office(s). You are permitted to make reasonable and appropriate use of personal social media activity in line with this policy during your breaks. But usage should not be excessive or interfere with your work.

Point of contact for social media and authority to post on GASi's social media accounts

Our Social Media Contents Administrator is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have questions about any aspect of these channels, please speak to the Social Media Contents Administrator. No other staff member or volunteer is permitted to post content on GASi's official channels without the permission of the Social Media Contents Administrator or the GASi Online Communications Committee.

Policy ownership

The GASi Online Communications Committee is responsible for authoring and updating this document, under the delegated authority of the GASi trustees. The policy must be approved by the trustees and reviewed annually, unless a significant change requires the organisation to check the policy before the next review date. All staff and volunteers will be notified of updates.

Rules for use: headlines

Code of conduct headlines :

- I will not insult, harass, bully or intimidate individuals or organisations
- I will respond to others' opinions respectfully and professionally
- I will not do anything that breaches my terms of employment/voluntary role
- I will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly using provided guidance
- I will disclose conflicts of interest where I am able
- I will not knowingly post inaccurate information
- I will link to online references and original source materials directly
- I will be considerate, kind and fair
- I will always ensure my activity does no harm to the organisation or to others
- I will champion GASi and its purposes

Rules for use: full list

Using GASi's social media channels — appropriate conduct

1. Know our social media guardians

The Social Media Contents Administrator is responsible for setting up and managing GASi's social media channels. The GASi Online Communications Committee has overall ownership of these accounts and only those authorised to do so by the Social Media Contents Administrator will have access to these accounts.

The GASi Online Communications Committee will uphold best practices for channel security with secure passwords that regularly change. Never give out the passwords for our channels without express permission from the Social Media Contents Administrator.

2. Be an ambassador for our brand

Staff and volunteers must ensure they reflect GASi's values in what they post and use our tone of voice. Please note only the Social Media Contents Administrator is permitted to respond to comments on our social media posts on behalf of the organisation. All posts and comments should be attributed to the charity and not an individual. In special cases it may be appropriate for a staff member or volunteer to make an individual comment as themselves, but this should be under the supervision, and with the approval, the Social Media Contents Administrator.

3. Always pause and think before posting

When posting from GASi's social media accounts, you must respond to comments in the voice of our charity and not allow your own personal opinions to influence responses. Staff and volunteers must not reveal their personal opinions via our accounts by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'reposting' as GASi, unless it is clear that you are doing so as an individual staff member or volunteer as part of an approach agreed with the GASi Online Communications Committee (e.g. as part of a 'takeover' of the charity's account). If you are in doubt about GASi's position on a particular issue, please speak to the Social Media Contents Administrator.

4. Ensure brand consistency

Staff, volunteers and members must not create or manage any other social media channels, groups or pages on behalf of GASi without express permission from the Social Media Contents Administrator or the GASi Online Communications Committee and training. This is to ensure brand consistency for users and the appropriate safeguarding and monitoring processes are in place.

5. Remember the bigger picture and focus on the benefit

Staff, volunteers and members must make sure that all GASi social media content has a purpose and a benefit for GASi to further our charitable purposes (either directly or indirectly, by engaging stakeholders and building our brand using our strategy). All content must accurately reflect GASi's agreed position.

6. Bring value to our audience(s)

Those responsible for the management of our social media accounts should answer questions as swiftly as possible to help and engage with our service users and supporters.

7. Seek permission to share

If staff or volunteers outside of the GASi Online Communications Committee wish to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, they should obtain guidance and permission from the Social Media Contents Administrator.

8. Obtain consent

Staff, volunteers and members must not post content about GASi, supporters, members or other stakeholders without their (or their guardian's) express permission. If sharing information about third party individuals or organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from GASi.

9. Put safety first

It can be challenging working on social media and there may be times where staff, volunteers or members could be subject to unpleasant or abusive comments directed at the charity, our work or people. We encourage everyone who is on social media on behalf of the charity to be aware of our safeguarding and wellbeing practices to deal with online abuse and consult with the Safeguarding Officer where necessary.

It is also vital that GASi does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials in pursuit of social media engagement.

10. Stick to the law

Staff, volunteers and members must not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.

11. Remain politically neutral

GASi is not associated with any political organisation and does not have any affiliation with or links to political parties. We can express views where appropriate on policies that impact our work, members and stakeholders, but it is essential that GASi remains, and is seen to be, politically neutral.

We cannot endorse a political party or candidate. We must carefully manage the risk that we are perceived to have any party-political bias and should carefully consider any posts which might be perceived as such, for example, posts which talk about individual politicians or parties rather than policies.

Ultimately, we all have a responsibility to ensure that any online campaigning activities by GASi must be proportionate and well-justified and political campaigning must not become the charity's primary focus.

12. Check facts and be honest

Staff, volunteers and members should not automatically assume that material that's shared or included in any post is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification – for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it. But think first about how to manage any risk to the charity and its brand in doing so by consulting with the Social Media Contents Administrator to craft the response.

13. Seek advice for complaints

If a complaint is made on GASi's social media channels, staff, volunteers and members should ensure this is dealt with via the charity's Complaints Procedure.

14. Know what to do in a crisis

Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation.

If any staff, volunteers or members become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, they should speak to the Social Media Contents Administrator immediately. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to report complaints or comments that could escalate into a crisis or have serious implications for the charity. Only the Social Media Contents Administrator or another person acting under the authority of the GASi Online Communications Committee is permitted to amend or delete content in a crisis.

17. Handover ownership if your role changes

You must hand over ownership of the group/page/account you manage to another appropriate staff member (or volunteer) if you change roles or if you leave GASi.

18. Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

Personal social media use by staff, volunteers and members can sometimes be attributed to the charity or bring other risks for the charity or individual staff, volunteers or members. This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media, but instead flags up those areas in which risks or conflicts might arise. GASi staff, volunteers and members are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are considerate of GASi's values and policies, both online and in real life.

19. Separate your personal views

Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive GASi. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of GASi. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about GASi's work, you must

use a disclaimer such as: "Views are my own" or "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent GASi's positions, policies or opinions."

20. Take care when publishing personal views (particularly trustees and senior staff)

Those in senior management including trustees and public-facing or specialist roles where they are well known in their field of expertise, must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing GASi's view.

21. Discuss risks and conflicts of interest

Staff and trustees who have a personal blog, social media profile or website which indicates in any way that they work at GASi should discuss any potential risk or conflicts of interest with their line manager. Similarly, staff or trustees who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for GASi should discuss any potential risk or conflicts of interest with their line manager or (in the case of trustees) one of the Co-chairs.

22. Protect your personal reputation

Think about your personal reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be the first to correct your own mistakes.

Remember that if you have a public profile with the charity, your personal social media accounts could be looked at by critics of the charity, and bear this in mind when posting.

23. Use your common sense and good judgement

Be aware of your association with GASi and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself.

24. Refer press enquiries

If a staff member, volunteer or member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to GASi, they should talk to the Social Media Contents Administrator immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

25. Keep your political activity separate from the charity

When representing GASi, staff, volunteers and members are expected to uphold GASi's positioning. Staff, volunteers and members who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from GASi, and understand and avoid potential risks and conflicts of interest. Staff should also inform their line manager about any such political activity, and trustees should inform the Chair. Senior staff and trustees should take particular care.

26. Protect your privacy

Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. Remember that a simple 'like' can draw attention to your personal accounts. What you publish is widely accessible and could be around for a long time, so do consider the content, and your privacy, carefully.

27. Avoid logos or trademarks

Never use GASi's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so.

28. Defamation

[Defamation](#) is when a false statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published in print (such as in media publications) or online (such as Instagram Story, Facebook Live, Snapchat post). Whether staff, volunteers or members are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring GASi's name into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

29. Copyright law

It is critical to abide by [the laws governing copyright](#), under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, when representing the charity. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

30. Confidentiality

Any communications that staff, volunteers and members make must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that GASi is not ready to disclose yet.

31. Discrimination and harassment

Staff, volunteers and members should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official GASi social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- Making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.
- Using social media to bully another individual.
- Posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content.

32. Accessibility

We endeavour to ensure our social media is as accessible as possible. This includes:

- Using plain English, accessible fonts and avoiding small text sizes
- Using contrasting colours
- Using subtitles where appropriate
- Using alt text for videos and images
- Explaining text contained in an image in the copy that accompanies it

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