

## SOAS Social Media Policy

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Policy sponsor: Registrar

### Scope and purpose

SOAS expects conduct to be observed across all social media which is consistent with its values and policies.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- encourage good practice by SOAS staff;
- promote the effective use of social media by SOAS;
- protect the School, its employees and students from the risks of inappropriate use.

A series of guidance notes on using social media have also been developed and should be read in conjunction with this policy.

This policy is reviewed annually.

### Defining social media

Social media here means online interactive tools that enable communication and exchange via a digital platform.

SOAS's social media accounts exist as platforms to interact directly with our main audiences and stakeholders, including current staff and students, potential staff and students, alumni, partner organisations, donors and supporters, industry professionals, media, etc.

Common examples of social media are Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat YouTube, LinkedIn, Student Room and blogs.

The main SOAS accounts are:

Twitter: @SOAS

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/soasunioflondon](http://www.facebook.com/soasunioflondon)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/user/soasuniversity](http://www.youtube.com/user/soasuniversity)

Instagram: [instagram.com/soasuni/](http://instagram.com/soasuni/)

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/soas](http://www.linkedin.com/company/soas)

Google+: [plus.google.com/+SoasAcUk/posts](http://plus.google.com/+SoasAcUk/posts)

Weibo: [www.weibo.com/SOASLondon](http://www.weibo.com/SOASLondon)

New channels may be created as new social media platforms develop and former channels may be archived and closed down as channels die off.

### Who is covered by this policy?

The policy applies to all SOAS staff and students, and any person or organisation contracted to act on SOAS's behalf on social media. However it does not form part of the contract of any

member of staff or with any student. Sanctions for misuse are covered by other policies, which are themselves updated periodically, including:

- SOAS's core values: <https://www.soas.ac.uk/corevalues/>
- SOAS equality and diversity policies: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/equalitydiversity/equalopspolicies/>
- Respect at SOAS: <https://www.soas.ac.uk/equalitydiversity/respect/file89778.pdf>
- SOAS visual identity: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/visualidentity/style-guide/>
- SOAS Intellectual Property and Copyright: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/infocomp/copyright/>
- This policy complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the web. The SOAS policy can be found at <http://www.soas.ac.uk/lis/policies/itpolicy/>

## **Staff**

All SOAS staff who communicate through social media on behalf of the School, such as for a Department or Institute, or in a particular role (eg as Director of Research and Enterprise) are expected to abide by this policy.

The standard of behaviour and conduct outlined in SOAS' core values <https://www.soas.ac.uk/corevalues/> is expected to be observed when using social media.

Personal views expressed by members of staff who identify themselves as an employee of SOAS are not statements on behalf of SOAS and do not necessarily reflect the views of the School. However, conduct under this policy applies to individuals who identify themselves on personal social media as SOAS members of staff.

Private use of social media which does not refer to SOAS or purport to represent SOAS falls outside of this policy.

## **Students**

The standard of behaviour and conduct expected of SOAS students that is outlined in the Student Charter: <https://www.soas.ac.uk/about/studentcharter/> also applies when using social media

## **Key responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of social media users to read and act in accordance with the principles of this policy and guidance.

SOAS will ensure that this policy and guidelines are accessible to students and employees via the website, and incorporated in induction information.

## **Policy**

Social media should not be used in a way that breaches any of our existing policies, including:

- SOAS' core values: <https://www.soas.ac.uk/corevalues/>

- SOAS equality and diversity policies: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/equalitydiversity/equalopspolicies/>
- Respect at SOAS: <https://www.soas.ac.uk/equalitydiversity/respect/file89778.pdf> SOAS visual identity: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/visualidentity/style-guide/>
- SOAS Intellectual Property and Copyright: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/infocomp/copyright/>
- This policy complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the web. The SOAS policy on social media can be found at <http://www.soas.ac.uk/lis/policies/itpolicy/>

Use of both personal and/or professional social media by staff which is in breach of legislation or which may bring the School into disrepute may constitute gross misconduct and result in dismissal.

Use of social media which negatively impacts the wellbeing of other members of staff or students is subject to SOAS's Staff Conduct policy or Respect at SOAS policy.

The School reserves the rights to:

- Require the removal of any post that is not in line with SOAS's brand or tone or could bring the organisation into disrepute
- Require the removal of a social media account if it has not been updated for a period of six months or longer or is deemed surplus to requirements (applies to corporate channels only)
- Investigate matters which raise concerns around impartiality, confidentiality and privacy

## Guidance on using social media

### Line managers whose members of staff manage use or manage SOAS social media channels must:

- Ensure that they have read and understood all of SOAS's relevant policies
- Ensure members of staff within the team are familiar with the policy and guidance available
- Be accountable for content that is posted by staff they line manage
- Monitor content and alert the communication team ([comms@soas.ac.uk](mailto:comms@soas.ac.uk)) if any issues arise

### Staff members responsible for SOAS's social media accounts are required to:

- Ensure that they have read and understood all of SOAS's relevant policies
- Ensure that any use of social media is carried out in line with this and any other relevant policy
- Ensure they have a reasonable understanding of how people consume information through social media ([egie](#), more pictures and less text)
- Regularly update the social media content they publish
- Regularly monitor responses and messages, and respond where appropriate
- Ensure that there is at least one other member of staff who can keep the channel up to date in their absence
- Not share login details with members of staff who do not have responsibility for publishing on the channels
- Report any incidents or concerns to their line managers

### Top tips: dos and donts

#### Dos

- **Do make good use of the social media channel** which you are using – think ahead about content which you intend to use as part of a wider communications strategy to have a positive impact on your audiences
- **Do think about using strong visual imagery** appropriate to the channel
- **Do craft the words you use in ways which are appropriate to the channel** – so for example using short and focused sentences on twitter
- **Do follow interesting and useful accounts** and use information and ideas gained from these as part of your other work
- **Do engage positively with followers** and people who interact with you – social media accounts are a social way of engaging

- **Do share interesting content generated by others** which is consistent with SOAS goals and values
- **Do remember what you publish will be around for a long time** – consider the content carefully because once posted can be difficult to eradicate entirely, particularly through Twitter, so consider the content carefully.
- **Do correct mistakes:** Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Youtube allows you to change text through 'edit post'. On Twitter you can delete posts and tweet again, or tweet and refer to the error.
- **Do respond to reasonable complaints:** if anyone complains in a public forum, refer them to a SOAS email or phone number to log a formal complaint.
- **Do report any issues of social media misuse,** including inappropriate content, abuse or bullying to your line manager

### Don'ts

- **Don't publish confidential information** such as staff members' and students' personal data, references, unannounced details of staff appointments and unpublished financial information.
- **Don't publish content that you don't want to be publicly quoted** – eg in the mainstream media. Once you have posted, information is in the public domain and can be used by anyone.
- **Don't act in a way that could harm your personal or professional reputation,** or that of anyone related to SOAS.
- **Don't publish images that you don't have permission to use:** always clear permission if you are not the primary holder of the image
- **Don't feel you have to respond to every critical comment** or negative view expressed. If you do think it right to respond, remember you are representing the School and do not enter into heated exchanges via social media.
- **Don't share inappropriate of content** from other sources. Don't share hostile or negative comments about SOAS.

### If in any doubt contact the Communications team

The Communications Team is here to support you – if you have any questions or concerns about using social media, please contact [comms@soas.ac.uk](mailto:comms@soas.ac.uk).



## Getting started

### Contact [comms@soas.ac.uk](mailto:comms@soas.ac.uk) to set up a new account (applies to corporate channels only)

Before setting up a new social media account please examine the availability of existing accounts to see if they will be suitable for your needs. If they are not, email [comms@soas.ac.uk](mailto:comms@soas.ac.uk) and provide the following information:

- What is the purpose of the account?
- Why are existing channels not suitable?
- Who will administer the account from SOAS?
- Will I have enough updated content? (Twitter at least twice per day, Facebook at least three times a week)
- Define main audience for the account (ie, students, library users, academics, partners, historians, artists, etc...)
- Do I have enough content for this specific audience?
- The communications team will contact you to discuss.

At least two members of your team and the Communications Office should have the login details.

Do not use any login details that are the same or similar to any of your personal social media accounts.