

**National Guardian**  
Freedom to Speak Up

**National Guardian's Office**  
Social Media Handbook

## About this handbook

This outlines how the National Guardian's Office will use Twitter and what we believe is good practice for the channel. We hope it will serve as a resource for members of the team using Twitter to promote their activities. This is not a definitive document and we will continue to modify its content as we listen to online conversations and the needs of our organisation and audience change.

This handbook will outline our social media objectives and what role we would like it to play. It will also outline the enquiries we can deal with and which enquiries we need to direct to other members of the team. We will also develop a standard responses section in this document listing regular queries and responses. These can then be used to tailor responses to individuals. This will allow for consistency in messaging and tone of voice.

### 1. Process for online responses

#### 1.1 Options for responding on Twitter

- Explain - Concern ("we're aware/sorry"), action ("what we're doing"), perspective ("context")
- Take offline
- Negotiate
- Counter misinformation
- Wait to see
- Remove

#### 1.2 Response checklist

- 1) **Message received** – Read the message carefully. What is the root of the issue and how can you help?
- 2) **Take a screenshot** – It's a good idea to document the message. This can be used for training or to share with a team member who might want to follow up.
- 3) **Don't delete** – Remain transparent with our audience.
- 4) **Don't delay** – Timeliness is key here. If necessary, follow up with the relevant member of the team to give the user a satisfactory answer.
- 5) **Keep your cool** – Draft your response. Remember the basics of good service. Our response will be judged not only by the user we're conversing with, but by all our followers.
- 6) **Respond** – Send the response.
- 7) **Monitor** – Continue to monitor our social spaces to track any activity that happens after you've done your part.

#### Tips:

- Sometimes, inappropriate comments need to be deleted. If you find a comment to be derogatory, exercise your own judgement.
- Reread your draft. Would you feel comfortable saying this to a person face-to-face?
- **Do:** verify... who are they? Is it true?
- **Do:** respond, whenever possible
- **Don't:** ignore everything that is negative
- **Don't:** feel pressured to provide a full answer, straight away
- **Don't:** get into arguments

## 2. Behaviour escalation policy

It is important to respond to users who have a valid question or response, while appreciating that some people may not be looking for a satisfactory outcome, but simply a platform to criticise.

We use a three-step traffic light system when responding to a negative comment.

1. We will send a response that shows we're compassionate, informative and accessible.
2. If they continue, we will then offer to take it offline.
3. Anyone repeatedly engaging with us using abusive language or content after will be muted, blocked and in severe cases reported to Twitter where appropriate.

We will mute, block and/or report users on Twitter who direct tweets or comments we believe are:

1. Abusive, obscene or defamatory
2. Deceptive or misleading
3. In violation of any intellectual property rights, law or regulation

Blocking users on social media should always be a last resort.

## 3. Use of Twitter

We will seek to use Twitter to further our engagement and communication activities, including:

1. Furthering the conversation about speaking up
2. Promoting conversations using the hashtag #FTSU
3. Extending our reach
4. Working collaboratively with other ALBs and supporting their campaigns
5. Launching Thunderclap campaigns
6. Supporting the regional guardian network
7. Helping to make speaking up business as usual