

Deafblind Scotland vision – “A society in which deafblind people have the permanent support and recognition necessary to be equal citizens”



Social Media Policy

Introduction

Social media is the term commonly given to web-based tools which allow users to interact with each other in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests online. This includes blogs, message boards, social networking websites (such as Facebook, Twitter, Bebo and Myspace).

These platforms open up many new and exciting opportunities. However there are many potential issues to consider - both as individual employees and as an organisation.

Deafblind Scotland social media use

Only nominated administrators have the authority to update Deafblind Scotland social media accounts. The Information Officer, Fundraising and the executive team are the lead administrators responsible for updating principle Deafblind Scotland social media sites. Sub groups created with the explicit intention of raising the profile their respective departments through Twitter should also adhere to the following administrator rules and guidelines.

Designated administrators will hold the necessary passwords to log into social media sites and should keep them private.

Any update to Deafblind Scotland social media accounts must be approved by the chief executive, or an administrator appointed by the Chief Executive, before it is published.

The language used by the administrator on Deafblind Scotland social media sites should be accessible to all.

Online conduct of an administrator

If you have been designated to deploy social media in a professional capacity it is important that you think through any potential risks and make sure you have plans in place to manage and mitigate these.

You are required to adhere to the following conditions outlined below.

- Be professional. Make sure you are always seen to act in an honest, accurate, fair and responsible manner at all times.
- Be aware of your language and conduct. The rules governing staff conduct apply and care should be taken to avoid language which could be deemed offensive to others.
- Nothing should be written that could harm Deafblind Scotland's reputation. Do not publish any content which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claims for damages.
- Do not disclose confidential information relating to Deafblind Scotland – if unsure consult your manager.
- **Do not cite or reference members, guides, or interpreters without their approval.**
- If quoting, or publishing a photograph or video of, a member, interpreter, guide, volunteer or a Deafblind Scotland employee, approval by that individual via a consent form must be obtained.
- Publishing data regarding member's private details is forbidden except if approval has been given by the member, the services manager and your line manager.
- You must always alert your manager if you think you may have made a mistake.
- Respect copyright when linking to images or other online material.
- When posting a video, or providing a link to a video, the administrator must make sure (when possible) the video is subtitled so it is accessible to those with a hearing impairment.
- Consider if the information you are posting requires permission from a third party organisation and seek this when appropriate

Conduct of Deafblind Scotland employees when engaging with personal social media

Social media is used by billions around the world and is widely recognised communication tool. While Deafblind Scotland does not wish to impinge on an individual's freedom of speech it does ask for the consideration of the protection of the Charity's reputation and the members that it serves.

When an individual declares on their personal Facebook site that they work for Deafblind Scotland then they are intrinsically linked to the organisation. Therefore they must be aware that their online actions may be associated with the charity.

Staff members are encouraged to actively promote the good work of the charity while also maintaining a professional and considered approach when commenting on the work of the charity, its employees and members.

Should any member of staff be found to be bringing the organisation into disrepute as a result of social media activity, steps will be taken in line with Deafblind Scotland's disciplinary procedure.

Personal Grievances

Personal grievances or disputes linked with the charity, its employees, or members - either directly or indirectly - must not be published on any social media platform, or linked to a Deafblind Scotland social media platform.

Personal Relationships

In accordance with the Scottish Social Services Council's Codes of Practice (in particular section 5) **Deafblind Scotland employees must refrain from forming personal relationships with members through social media platforms.**

Scottish Social Services Council's Codes of Practice Section 5:

5. As a social service worker you must uphold public trust and confidence in social services.

In particular you must not:

- 5.1 Abuse, neglect or harm service users, carers or colleagues.
- 5.2 Exploit service users, carers or colleagues in any way.
- 5.3 Abuse the trust of service users and carers or the access you have to personal information about them, or to their property, home or workplace.
- 5.4 Form inappropriate personal relationships with services users.
- 5.5 Discriminate unlawfully or unjustifiably against service users, carers or colleagues.
- 5.6 Condone any unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination by service users, carers or colleagues.
- 5.7 Put yourself or other people at unnecessary risk; or,
- 5.8 Behave in a way, in work or outside work, which would call into question your suitability to work in social services.

Whistleblowing

If a Deafblind Scotland employee becomes aware of any social media activity which breaches the above rules and regulations they should alert their direct line manager. This is in accordance with Deafblind Scotland Policy on Whistleblowing (Reviewed June 2017). The employee will be protected under UK Law within the Public Interest Disclosures Act 1998.

Photos and Videos

Photos and videos which could bring the organisation into disrepute must not be posted, published, or linked. If in doubt please seek advice from your line manager.

Declaration by association

Social media activity is open to public scrutiny and consequently Deafblind Scotland employees should remain aware of potential repercussions of “liking”, “following” “befriending” or “commenting” on groups, individuals or movements which have the ability to bring the charity into disrepute through association.

If an employee's social media account is linked to Deafblind Scotland they should have a disclaimer which states "all views and opinions expressed are my own"

Security and Identity theft

Social networking websites allow people to post detailed personal information which can form the basis of security questions and passwords.

Staff must be security conscious and take steps to protect themselves from identity theft, for example by restricting the amount of personal information that they give out.

At all times staff must keep their password confidential.