

BAS social media policy

Latest update: May 2022

Introduction

British Antarctic Survey (BAS) recognises and embraces the benefits and opportunities of social media. The communications team are responsible for running the BAS corporate accounts on the following platforms

- Facebook: British Antarctic Survey
- Twitter: @BAS_News
- LinkedIn: British Antarctic Survey
- You Tube: British Antarctic Survey
- Instagram: britishantarcticsurvey

Scope

For the purposes of this policy, social media is defined as any interactive online media that allows parties to communicate with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes online social forums, blogs, video- and image-sharing websites and similar facilities.

Social media is an instantaneous, permanent, and far-reaching form of communication. Inappropriate use is a risk that could impact upon colleagues and the reputation of BAS.

Purpose of policy

This policy provides a framework for all colleagues who use social media to share information about your role and experiences at British Antarctic Survey. It is intended to do three things:

1. Protect employees and BAS
2. Minimise the risk of social media activity which may impact negatively on our reputation
3. Collaborate with the Communications team whose job it is to manage BAS reputation.

This approach will support colleagues so they can benefit from the advantages of social networking within our policy framework.

This policy is aligned to the UKRI-NERC and Government Communications Service guidance on the use of social media. Colleagues should be aware of the UKRI policy on [personal use of social media channels](#).

Who does this apply to?

This policy relates to **all** employees of BAS who use social media. It covers all use, work-related and personal, where there is potential impact on BAS.

Responsibilities

Before posting, please consider:

1. Does it have any relation to my work at BAS and should I tag @BAS_news into my threads?
2. Could it be contrary to BAS' values?
3. Is it clear that I am speaking in my own personal capacity and not on behalf of BAS?
4. Would I be happy to share this with my line manager or colleagues in person?
5. Could sharing this have negative consequences for myself or BAS in the future?

Principles

1. Don't post confidential or sensitive information about BAS, including but not limited to:
 - unpublished scientific research
 - Zoom meetings without security controls (use webinar software if open to all)

- photos containing sensitive information including confidential screen shots, operational information in the background etc
 - medical evacuations
 - news stories ahead of an embargo or planned communications activities
 - images of people working with animals that could be mis-interpreted as being unethical
 - activities that could be mis-interpreted as being environmentally damaging
 - activities that could be mis-interpreted as being culturally insensitive or discriminatory
 - images of people in our care not wearing appropriate safety equipment*
 - commercially sensitive information.
2. Be transparent and state that you work for BAS if you are posting about the organisation or its work. (For example, as well as stating in your profile, you can tag and/or link to the BAS corporate channels.)
 3. Be clear that the information you post represents your own views (in your content and bio), and not a corporate BAS view. (Particularly when commenting on sensitive or political topics)
 4. Be clear that you are not an authorised BAS spokesperson, unless we ask you to do so.
 5. Please direct all media enquiries to the Communications Team communications@bas.ac.uk, or press@bas.ac.uk.
 6. BAS may request that colleagues remove any social media posts, including historic posts, which do not meet these standards.
 7. BAS IT regulations apply whilst using BAS' IT Facilities and/or equipment; this includes use of social media. Please see [IT team policies](#).
 8. In a major incident, BAS corporate channels will be the primary source of information and guidance for the organisation. All BAS colleagues, if commenting, should direct to these channels.
 9. We do not tolerate derogatory, discriminatory, bullying, threatening, defamatory, offensive, intimidating, harassing, behaviours in BAS, online or otherwise.
 10. You should always comply with UKRI-NERC and BAS policies, as well as national and international legislation.
 11. Colleagues should stay vigilant of security threats and be on guard for social engineering and phishing attempts. Social networks can also be used to distribute spam and malware. Please see UKRI guidance [UKRI Information Security \(sharepoint.com\)](#).
 12. BAS' response to any misuse of social media in a personal capacity will be reasonable and proportionate. If unresolved, issues will be escalated to the appropriate director and addressed as a breach of the BAS Code of Conduct and/or breach of contract and may result in further disciplinary action.

Further information and guidance

- For all queries and concerns contact communications@bas.ac.uk
- For all media queries contact press@bas.ac.uk
- Send your pictures and films to pictures@bas.ac.uk
- UKRI communications guidance [UKRI communications toolkit \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- Civil Service standards for social media <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/professional-standards/propriety/propriety-in-digital-and-social-media/>
- GCS countering misinformation toolkit <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/publications/resist-2-counter-disinformation-toolkit/>
- Ofcom <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/latest/features-and-news/ofcom-to-regulate-harmful-content-online>

*All health and safety issues and near misses should be reported on our AINM system.
[Operations - Polar \(sharepoint.com\)](#)