



## Pig Veterinary Society

### **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

#### **Policy overview and purpose**

Social media is changing the way we communicate.

This policy has been developed to inform our community about using social media so people feel enabled to participate, while being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations. In particular, this policy provides practical guidance allowing all parties to benefit from the use of social media, while minimising potential risks and protecting those involved.

This policy assists to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all online activities related to the Pig Veterinary Society

This policy contains Pig Veterinary Society guidelines for the Pig Veterinary Society community to engage in social media use. It also includes details of breaches of the policy.

In circumstances where guidance about social media issues has not been given in this policy, we suggest you use common sense or seek out advice from those who have approved this policy.

**Reviewed November 2016**

## **Underlying principles**

This policy complements Pig Veterinary Society's core values:

“The Pig Veterinary Society exists to assist its members to care for pigs, through dissemination of knowledge about health, disease, the pig's welfare and its management.”

The President is responsible for all matters related to this policy.

## **Coverage**

This policy applies to all persons who are involved with the activities of the Pig Veterinary Society, whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity and including:

- all categories of members, including Honorary members of the Pig Veterinary Society;
- persons appointed or elected to the Executive board, committees and sub-committees;
- employees of the Pig Veterinary Society;
- guests of the Society present at Meetings or other such involvement on behalf of the membership

## **Scope**

**Social media** refers to any online tools or functions that allow people to communicate and/or share content via the internet.

This social media policy applies to platforms including, but not limited to:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, Yammer, etc)
- Video and photo sharing websites or apps (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Flickr, Vine, etc)
- Blogs and micro-blogging platforms (e.g. Tumblr, Wordpress, Blogger, etc)
- Review sites (e.g. Yelp, Urban Spoon, etc)
- Live broadcasting apps (e.g. Periscope, Meerkat, Facebook Live, etc)
- Podcasting (e.g. iTunes, Stitcher, SoundCloud, etc)
- Geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare, etc)
- Online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia, etc)
- Instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Skype, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc)

**Reviewed November 2016**

- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second life, Xbox Live, etc)
- Online voting or polls
- Public and private online forums and discussion boards
- Any other online technologies that allow individual users to upload and share content.

**Reviewed November 2016**

This policy is applicable when using social media as:

1. an officially designated individual representing the Pig Veterinary Society on social media; and
2. if you are posting content on social media in relation to the Pig Veterinary Society that might affect the Pig Veterinary Society's business, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

NOTE: This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media where it is not related to or there is no reference to the Pig Veterinary Society or its business, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation. However, any misuse by you of social media in a manner that does not directly refer to the Pig Veterinary Society may still be regulated by other policies, rules or regulations of the Pig Veterinary Society.

### ***Using social media in an official capacity***

You must be authorised by the Pig Veterinary Society Executive Committee before engaging in social media as a representative of the Pig Veterinary Society.

As a part of the Pig Veterinary Society's, community you are an extension of the Pig Veterinary Society brand.

As such, the boundaries between when you are representing yourself and when you are representing the Pig Veterinary Society can often be blurred. This becomes even more of an issue as you increase your profile or position within the Pig Veterinary Society. Therefore it is important that you represent both yourself and the Pig Veterinary Society appropriately online at all times.

### **Guidelines**

You must adhere to the following guidelines when using social media related to the Pig Veterinary Society or its business, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

#### ***Use common sense***

Whenever you are unsure as to whether or not the content you wish to share is appropriate, seek advice from others before doing so or refrain from sharing the content to be on the safe side.

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When using social media, the lines between public and private, personal and professional, may be blurred. Remember, you are an ambassador for the Pig Veterinary Society.

### ***Protecting your privacy***

Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy.

When posting content online there is potential for that content to become publicly available through a variety of means, even if it was intended to be shared privately. Therefore, you should refrain from posting any content online that you would not be happy for anyone to see, even if you feel confident that a particular individual would never see it.

Where possible, privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to limit access. You should also be cautious about disclosing your personal details.

### ***Honesty***

Your honesty—or dishonesty—may be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading. If you are unsure, check the source and the facts before uploading or posting anything. The Pig Veterinary Society recommends erring on the side of caution – if in doubt, do not post or upload.

Do not post anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. Be transparent and honest. Use your real name, be clear about who you are and identify any affiliations you have.

If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. If you make an endorsement or recommendation about something you are affiliated with, or have a close relationship with, you must disclose that affiliation.

The web is not anonymous. You should assume that all information posted online can be traced back to you. You are accountable for your actions both on and offline, including the information you post via your personal social media accounts.

### ***Use of disclaimers***

Wherever practical, include a prominent disclaimer stating who you work for or are affiliated with (e.g. member of the Pig Veterinary Society) and that anything you publish is your personal opinion and that you are not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble — it may not have legal effect.

Reviewed November 2016



***Reasonable use***

If you are an employee of the Pig Veterinary Society, you must ensure that your personal use of social media does not interfere with your work commitments or productivity.

**Reviewed November 2016**

***Respect confidentiality and sensitivity***

When using social media, you must maintain the privacy of the Pig Veterinary Society's confidential information. This includes information that is not publically accessible, widely known, or not expected to be shared outside of the Pig Veterinary Society.

Remember, if you are online, you are on the record—much of the content posted online is public and searchable.

Within the scope of your authorisation by the Pig Veterinary Society, it is perfectly acceptable to talk about the Pig Veterinary Society and have a dialogue with the community, but it is not okay to publish confidential information of the Pig Veterinary Society. Confidential information includes things such as details about litigation, unreleased product information and details about the content of our regular scientific Meetings, including the information that is accessible from within the Members only area of the Pig Veterinary Society's website

When using social media you should be considerate to others and should not post information when you have been asked not to, or where consent has not been sought and given. You must also remove information about another person if that person asks you to do so.

Permission should always be sought if the use or publication of information is not incidental, but directly related to an individual. This is particularly relevant to publishing any information regarding minors. In such circumstances, parental or guardian consent is mandatory.

***Gaining permission when publishing a person's identifiable image***

You must obtain express permission from an individual to use a direct, clearly identifiable image of that person.

You should also refrain from posting any information or photos of a sensitive nature. This could include accidents, incidents or controversial behaviour.

In every instance, you need to have consent of the owner of copyright in the image.

***Complying with applicable laws***

Do not post or link to content that contains illegal or indecent content, including defamatory, vilifying or misleading and deceptive content.

**Reviewed November 2016**

***Abiding by copyright laws***

It is critical that you comply with the laws governing copyright in relation to material owned by others and the Pig Veterinary Society's own copyrights and brands.

You should never quote or use more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and you should always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

***Discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying***

The public in general, and the Pig Veterinary Society's employees and members, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view.

You must not post any material that is offensive, harassing, discriminatory, embarrassing, intimidating, sexually explicit, bullying, hateful, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate.



**Reviewed November 2016**

### ***Avoiding controversial issues***

Within the scope of your authorisation by the Pig Veterinary Society, if you see misrepresentations made about the Pig Veterinary Society in the media, you may point that out to the relevant authority in the Pig Veterinary Society. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is based on fact and does not discredit or belittle that party.

### ***Dealing with mistakes***

If the Pig Veterinary Society makes an error while posting on social media, be up front about the mistake and address it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses the Pig Veterinary Society of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), address it promptly and appropriately and if necessary, seek legal advice.

### ***Conscientious behaviour and awareness of the consequences***

Keep in mind that what you write is your responsibility, and failure to abide by these guidelines could put your Membership or employment with the Pig Veterinary Society at risk.

You should always follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites in which you participate.

### ***Branding and intellectual property of the Pig Veterinary Society***

You must not use any of the Pig Veterinary Society's intellectual property or imagery on your personal social media without prior approval from the Pig Veterinary Society.

The Pig Veterinary Society's intellectual property includes but is not limited to:

- trademarks
- logos
- slogans
- imagery which has been posted on the Pig Veterinary Society official social media sites or website.

You must not create either an official or unofficial the Pig Veterinary Society presence using the organisation's trademarks or name without prior approval from the Pig Veterinary Society.

You must not imply that you are authorised to speak on behalf of the Pig Veterinary Society unless you have been given official authorisation to do so by the President.

**Reviewed November 2016**

Where permission has been granted to create or administer an official social media presence for the Pig Veterinary Society, you must adhere to the Pig Veterinary Society Branding Guidelines.

## **Policy breaches**

Breaches of this policy include but are not limited to:

- Using the Pig Veterinary Society's name and/or logo in a way that would result in a negative impact for the Society and/or its members.
- Posting or sharing any content that is abusive, harassing, threatening, demeaning, defamatory or libellous.
- Posting or sharing any content that includes insulting, obscene, offensive, provocative or hateful language.
- Posting or sharing any content that is a breach of any UK law.
- Posting or sharing any material to our social media channels that infringes the intellectual property rights of others.
- Posting or sharing material that brings, or risks bringing the Pig Veterinary Society, the British Veterinary Association, the veterinary profession, its Executive committee, members or sponsors into disrepute. In this context, bringing a person or organisation into disrepute is to lower the reputation of that person or organisation in the eyes of the ordinary members of the public.

### ***Reporting a breach***

If you notice inappropriate or unlawful content online relating to the Pig Veterinary Society or any of its members, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy, you should report the circumstances immediately to the Officers of the Society ([officers@pigvetsoc.org.uk](mailto:officers@pigvetsoc.org.uk)).

### ***Investigation***

Alleged breaches of this social media policy may be investigated according to the Pig Veterinary Society's Constitution.

Where it is considered necessary, the Pig Veterinary Society may report a breach of this social media policy to police.

### ***Disciplinary process, consequences and appeals***

Depending on the circumstances breaches of this policy may be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedure contained in the the Pig Veterinary Society's Constitution.

**Reviewed November 2016**

Employees of the Pig Veterinary Society who breach this policy may face disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment in accordance with the Pig Veterinary Society Constitution or any other relevant policy.

***Appeals***

Any person who is sanctioned under a disciplinary process for breach of this policy may have a right of appeal under the Pig Veterinary Society Constitution to the Executive Committee.

Other legal considerations that may be applicable include but are not limited to:

- Defamation
- Intellectual property laws, including copyright and trade mark laws, Privacy, confidentiality and information security laws
- Anti-discrimination laws
- Employment laws
- Advertising standards
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Information Privacy Act 2000*
- Equal opportunity laws
- Contempt of Court
- Gaming laws