

# Communication

## Guidelines

### Aims

1. These guidelines are issued as guidance on good practice in written communication to be followed by all volunteers of the Society including trustees, officers, and members.
2. The Society expects that all written communication is respectful, collegial and courteous between members and in dealing with other parties. All volunteers are expected to adhere to the following guidelines.
  - 2.1. Include a clear subject line.
  - 2.2. Use an appropriate greeting.
  - 2.3. If you have not had previous correspondence with someone, first introduce yourself and role within the Society.
    - 2.3.1. It may also be helpful to provide some background on the subject matter and your particular interest in it.
  - 2.4. Keep your communication clear and concise.
  - 2.5. Never write anything that would damage the reputation of the Society or make you uncomfortable if it were published.
  - 2.6. Be polite. Avoid at all times language which may be regarded as insulting, offensive, or implicitly derisive or ridiculing of some person or group.
  - 2.7. Check your tone. Show respect for the opinion of others at all times. If you wish to express disagreement, do so politely and in a respectful manner.
    - 2.7.1. Do not send an email when you are angry or emotional. Cool off, reflect and then review your response.
  - 2.8. Proofread. Remember, it is important to review outgoing communication for spelling errors, incomplete sentences, or grammatical errors.

### Email Good Practice

3. The following guidelines apply particularly to written communication via e-mail. All volunteers are expected to adhere to these guidelines when communicating via e-mail.



- 3.1. Don't over communicate by email - consider if a phone call or in-person meeting might be more appropriate.
- 3.2. Be cautious with 'reply all'. Reply all should only be used when everybody needs to know information or needs to contribute to an ongoing discussion. A response to a group mailing list (e.g. the trustees) should normally include the mailing list in all replies.
- 3.3. Tags can be used within a subject line to classify action needed.
  - 3.3.1. Examples include [Action Required], [Action Requested], or [FYI].
- 3.4. Only use a high priority flag or other signifier such as [Urgent] when necessary. Overuse will lessen the impact.
- 3.5. Use attachments only as required. For internal documents, consider sharing a link to the file on the Society's cloud storage instead.
- 3.6. When replying to a question, refer to the question in your email, then provide your response.
- 3.7. Add contact information at the bottom of your email messages in each one that you send.
- 3.8. Do not forward emails addressed to you personally. If in doubt, ask the writer's permission before forwarding their email.
- 3.9. Do not type in all caps or use excessive exclamation marks. This can be perceived as "shouting" via email.
- 3.10. If you can't check your email for a period of time, set an auto-response message indicating the date when you will be reading and responding to your messages.

## Complaints

4. In the event that a member considers that these guidelines have been seriously breached a complaint may be lodged using the complaints procedure outlined in the Code of Conduct.

## Version History

Version	Summary of changes	Effective from:	Effective to:
1.0	First version	2021-09-17	2024-05-24
2.0	Minor revisions and simplification to refer to Code of Conduct for breaches or complaints.	2024-05-24	

