Social Media Guidelines for Volunteers

Purpose

As representatives of the Actuaries Institute, our volunteers play a pivotal role in sharing knowledge about the work and values of the Actuarial profession and the Institute. Positive, thoughtful and well-written posts on social media can benefit brand Actuary and the Actuaries Institute, build relationships and advocacy, but poorly judged or ill-timed activity can hurt the Institute's reputation.

This guide aims to ensure that our volunteers maintain the Institute's reputation for integrity, expertise and professionalism when using social media as a volunteer of the Institute.

1. Representing the Institute

- Always make it clear that the views and opinions you express on social media are your own and not those of the Actuaries Institute. This can be done by adding a disclaimer in your bio on your chosen social media channels, and through framing of the statement, e.g., "Been reading a lot about the proposed pension reforms. **Personally, I believe** a more flexible approach could benefit many retirees."

- If speaking about a Report or Paper published by the Institute, ensure accuracy and avoid misrepresentation. This can be done by speaking purely to the data and findings published in the Report or Paper, avoiding personal opinion.

Here is an example:

Scenario: The Actuaries Institute publishes a report titled "The Impact of Climate Change on Insurance Availability." One of the key findings in the report is that "Based on current data, there's been an estimated 15% increase in the cost of natural perils in urban fringe areas in the past 10 years due to rising bushfire and riverine flooding activity."

Incorrect/Misrepresentative Post: "Just read the Institute's new report. Insurance premiums are skyrocketing because of climate change! Everyone's going to be paying so much more now. 😡 #ClimateCrisis"

Accurate/Representative Post: "The impacts of climate change are many and varied – including rises in insurance costs.

The latest Actuaries Institute Report, The Impact of Climate Change on Insurance Availability, found that urban fringe areas have seen a 15% rise in the cost of natural perils. Driven by increased bushfire and riverine flooding activity, the Report shows that higher insurance costs have the potential to effect insurance affordability and availability for Australian households.

Read the Report here: [enter link]

#actuaries #climatechange #insurance #affordability #dataforgood

In the accurate post, the volunteer:

- Clearly references the source (Actuaries Institute's report).
- Provides a specific and accurate detail from the report.
- Avoids exaggeration or emotional language that could mislead readers.
- Uses relevant hashtags to promote informed discussions.
- This approach ensures that the information shared is both accurate and representative of the report's findings, maintaining the integrity and reputation of the Actuaries Institute.

2. Posting about a specific Report or Paper

- Wait until the official release of any Paper or Report before discussing it on social media.
- Ensure alignment with the Institute's social media plan:
  - The Institute will provide you with timings on when we will post – where possible, allow the Institute to publish a post first before posting from your own channels.
  - The Institute will provide you with designed assets to support the post, as well as recommended hashtags to use.
- Use clear, non-technical language when possible to make your posts accessible to a broader audience.
- Always link to the original source of the Report or Paper to provide context and allow readers to delve deeper.

3. Engaging with the Audience

- **Be respectful and professional**, even when faced with disagreement.
- **Like and or reply to every comment** as this encourages feedback from others, it encourages the person to comment on your next post, and it increases impressions, which means your post will be more widely viewed.
- **Listen Actively:** Always take the time to read comments and feedback. Understand the perspective of your audience before responding.
- **Acknowledge and Appreciate:** Thank those who share positive feedback or contribute constructively to the discussion. A simple "Thank you for your insights!" can go a long way.
- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** Encourage dialogue by posing questions like, "Have you experienced anything like this?" or "How do you see this impacting your area of work?"
- **Share Personal Experiences:** Relate to your audience by sharing relevant anecdotes or experiences, making your interactions more genuine and relatable.
- **If someone questions your research or findings**: If this is done in a respectful manner, maintain a positive and constructive tone. Respond with phrases like, "I appreciate your perspective" or "Thank you for your comment." Then, provide clarifications with evidence by linking back to the Paper or Report and directing the person to the reference page, and avoid getting defensive.

4. Handling Disagreements

- Stay calm and composed. Avoid engaging in heated debates.
- If someone disagrees with your findings, you may wish to acknowledge their perspective, thank them for their engagement with the issue and direct them to the Paper or Report and reference page.
- Avoid personal attacks and focus on the content of the discussion.
- An alternative option is to not engage (refer below).

5. Dealing with Trolling

- Do not engage with trolls or individuals who are intentionally trying to provoke or harass.
- If someone is continuously disruptive or abusive, consider blocking or reporting them.
- Remember that it's okay to disengage from a conversation if it becomes unproductive or toxic.
- Keep the Institute informed about trolling behaviour so that we can provide support, handle the troll and limit potential impact.

6. Privacy and Confidentiality

- Avoid sharing information or details that haven't been publicly released yet by the Institute.
- Do not share personal information or details about other volunteers without their consent.

7. Inappropriate Uses

For all social media activity, volunteers should not:
- Conduct illegal or criminal activities
- Distribute material that could be interpreted as libellous or defamatory
- Share updates, images and messages that may tarnish the Institute's public image
- Harass others by sending them offensive content and messages
- Distribute spam and chain messages
- Disclose any personal information about the organisation or its staff.

A reminder that the Code of Conduct applies to all members of the Institute.

8. Continuous Learning

- Social media is ever-evolving. Stay updated with the latest best practices and adjust your approach accordingly.
- Attend any social media training or workshops provided by the Institute to enhance your online presence.

Social media is a powerful tool for communication and engagement. By following these guidelines, our volunteers can ensure that they represent the Actuaries Institute in the best possible light and foster positive interactions online. If you have any questions, please contact us via at comms@actuaries.asn.au.