



# Cardiff Astronomical Society

## Social Media Policy

Version 2.5

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### Document History

Date	Author(s)	Version	Comments
31 Mar 2024	M Bradley	1.0	Document completely rewritten for improved clarity
26 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	A Culbertson	2.0	Added Twitter's new name and Instagram as another social media platform that CAS uses
23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 2025	A Culbertson	2.5	Removed "X" (formerly twitter) mentions as CAS no longer uses this platform

### CAS Social Media Policy

1. This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of CAS, and the use of social media by all in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what members need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the charity and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

2. This policy is intended for all trustees, committee members and volunteers. The policy applies to content posted on both a CAS device and a personal device. Before engaging in CAS related social media activity, all must read this policy.

### What is social media?

3. Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and videos), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.

#### Why do we use social media?

4. Social media is essential to the success of communicating CAS's activities.
5. It is important for appointed members to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of our activities.

#### Why do we need a social media policy?

6. It is essential to have control over the information posted online regarding CAS activities. The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media. While the CAS committee encourages the use of social media, standards outlined in this policy must be observed by everyone. Publication and commentary on social media carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

#### Point of contact for social media

7. CAS Publicity Officer is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. No other member can post content on CAS 's official channels without the permission of the Publicity Officer or Secretary.

#### CAS social media channels?

8. CAS uses the following social media channels:
  - a. Facebook
  - b. Instagram

#### Appropriate conduct when using CAS social media channels

9. The Publicity Officer is responsible for setting up and managing CAS social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the Committee will have access to these accounts.
10. All social media content must have a purpose and a benefit for CAS.
11. Care must be taken with the presentation of content. Ensure there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Image quality must be appropriate for the media.
12. Always pause and think before posting. That said, reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.
13. If anyone outside of CAS wishes to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, the committee should be consulted before the media is posted.

14. Content about third parties must not be used without their permission. When sharing content from third party sites, this content should be clearly labelled to ensure audiences know it has not come directly from CAS. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.
15. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, ensure the consent of a parent or guardian has been given before using them on social media.
16. Always check facts. Do not assume information is accurate unless it is from a trusted source.
17. Refrain from offering personal opinions via CAS social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about CAS position on a particular issue, please speak to the committee.
18. It is vital that CAS does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a stunt.
19. Do not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage.
20. Do not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of CAS. This could confuse messaging and result in conflicting information being issued.
21. If a complaint, criticism or any adverse comment is made on CAS social media channels this should be reported to the committee for advice before responding. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to CAS reputation. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity but action must be sanctioned by the committee in these circumstances.
22. The Publicity Officer regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of CAS so we can catch any issues or problems early.

#### Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

23. This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. CAS members are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with CAS values and policies, both online and in real life.
24. Be aware that any information made public could affect how people perceive CAS. Always make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of CAS. When using personal social media accounts to promote and talk about CAS activity, you must use

a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent CAS positions, policies or opinions."

25. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with CAS and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the general public, colleagues, partners and funders.

26. If a member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to CAS, they should talk to the Publicity Officer or a committee member immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

27. Always protect yourself and the charity. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully.

28. Think about your reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.

29. We encourage all to share tweets and posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support CAS and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage all to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the committee who will respond as appropriate.

### Political Campaigning and Opinions

30. CAS is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing CAS, members are expected to hold a position of neutrality. CAS may express views on policy, including the policies of parties, but can't tell people how to vote

31. Never use CAS's logos when campaigning for a party.

### Libel

32. Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. When posting content on social media as part of their role or in a personal capacity, members should not bring CAS into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

### Copyright law

33. It is critical that all abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written

content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

#### Confidentiality

34. Any communications that anyone makes in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that CAS is not ready to disclose.

#### Discrimination and harassment

35. Do not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official CAS social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- a. making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- b. using social media to bully another individual
- c. posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

#### Lobbying Act

36. Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose. In most cases, spending on charity campaigns that are in accordance with charity law will not be regulated under electoral law. However, the Lobbying Act, which was passed in January 2014, states that during national elections (known as regulated periods) spending on campaigning activities may be regulated.

#### Protection and intervention

37. The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas.

38. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. For example, Facebook. However, if you consider that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the committee immediately.

#### Under 18s and vulnerable people

39. Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

40. Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, ensure the online relationship with CAS follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary.

Also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and CAS content and other content is appropriate for them.

#### Responsibilities and breach of policy

41. Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of CAS is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. Anyone who breaches the policy may be subjected to disciplinary action.

#### Operational guidelines

42. The publicity officer will post content on the page, such as sharing and uploading of photos. The secretary will respond to all messages. Others with access can post content which relates to their role only. This ensures that when questions are raised the responsible officer can be identified.

#### Document Review

43. This policy document will be reviewed annually by the Publicity Officer or other society member appointed by the Secretary.

Aaron Culbertson  
Publicity Officer  
23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025