

Social Media Guidance and Agreement

Agreement:

National Momentum requires the full names, email addresses and phone numbers of two Social Media Managers, both of whom must be eligible for Momentum membership and at least one of whom must be a women, to be responsible and accountable for the social media output of local groups, in accordance with the Social Media Agreement. We would widely encourage more people to be involved as editors and contributors to ensure that local groups have dynamic and engaging social media output. However, the two Social Media Managers are responsible for ensuring that content is in line with the Social Media Agreement.

These two Social Media Managers will be placed in a National Momentum Social Media Coordinating Facebook Group with all of the Social Media Managers for Momentum, so that people can share best practice and offer mutual support and guidance.

Context:

Momentum promotes the values that Jeremy popularised during his campaign, of fair, honest debate focused on policies, not personal attacks or harassment. All post and tweets should follow this principle and be in line with Momentum's [Code of Ethics](#).

The Jeremy Corbyn for Labour Leader Campaign demonstrated how much social media has transformed the way we campaign. It was probably the first time we have seen the concrete evidence in terms of an internal party election in this country (although there were small signs of this phenomenon in the last two Labour National Executive Committee elections).

There is a great deal of difference between the ordinary, daily use of social media to communicate and the strategic use of social media to campaign. There is even more of a difference between using social media as a traditional "top down" campaigning tool (publicizing events, sharing content or relaying information) and using it as an interactive, democratic tool which gives people a genuine stake in our political projects and in the construction of counter narratives to the traditional media.

Used effectively, social media can be an incredibly useful way of communicating and organizing. There are some important things to bear in mind when using it.

This document aims to be a guide for using social media from official Momentum accounts, striking a balance between creativity and independence whilst bearing in mind the importance of adhering to a set of guidelines to protect the reputation of Momentum.

General advice

1. Posting:

Try to post regularly, but not all in one go. If you don't have time to post throughout the day, use an app like Buffer or TweetDeck to schedule your tweets. Facebook posts can be scheduled without the need for an app. There are times of day when it is most useful to post, because more people are on social media. These are generally before working hours in the morning on weekdays, lunchtimes, just after normal working hours (5 - 7 pm) and around 8 - 9pm. Post text with pictures where possible to increase engagement, though ensure the designs are easy to read.

Facebook and Twitter both have free analytics tools – called 'analytics' on Twitter and 'insights' on Facebook. You can use them to see what kinds of posts are getting more people to engage with you, and then act on that. Don't create more accounts than you can manage – whilst it might seem like a good idea to have an Instagram to add to your Facebook and Twitter, it won't be effective if the only person volunteering to help manage social media has a full time job and only a couple of spare hours a week. When setting up an account, ensure that everyone in the group is asked to like/follow it and invite their friends to do the same. Some groups like the idea of setting up a blog or a website. If you have the time to do so, then go for it – but it's a time-consuming job and involves posting regular content, proofreading it, managing a site and managing the sharing of content on social media.

2. Responding to interactions:

It's good to engage with people commenting on your posts as it makes them feel valued, helps to increase your group followers or likes and it promotes discussion. Respond quickly but always carefully consider what you're saying before responding. Avoid long, drawn-out discussions that involve lots of comments – that's fine from a personal account but looks odd from a group. Don't feel you need to respond to everything – social media can easily take over your life and it's important not to spend unhealthy amounts of time doing it, especially if you are (as is likely) a

volunteer. Sometimes a public figure or a journalist might engage with you. Be extra careful if so, and definitely consult someone else before replying. Do not respond to local media enquiries without consulting others in your group (particularly any named individuals who help with media). If you receive national media enquiries, please contact Momentum's press officer, James Schneider on james.schneider@peoplesmomentum.com.

3. Behaviour:

It goes without saying that all your posts and replies should treat others as respectfully and be in line with Momentum's [Code of Ethics](#). Address the issue in hand, however emotive, and be clear and reasonable. Obviously avoid swearing - even when not directed at a person - and equally never abuse, threaten or make a personal remark towards anyone, even if they are being offensive towards you. If someone is offensive or threatening towards you, screen grab the message in question, save it and if necessary report it to an appropriate body. It is fine to make strong feelings clear, use humour, or point out where someone is being unreasonable. Being polite doesn't mean you have to be boring, but do remember that there are hostile figures in the press and public life watching Momentum very closely.

4. Policy:

Statements on policies, ideas or positions should be in line with stated Momentum policy positions or views expressed through the National Momentum social media platforms. For instance, opinions on the merits or demerits of mandatory reselection should be avoided when posting as Momentum pages since Momentum has stated that it will not campaign on the selection of MPs. If speaking for a Momentum local group, avoid expressing an opinion that members of the group may not agree with. Momentum is a pluralist organisation. Again, approach this reasonably. Of course, if your local Momentum group has not passed a motion in support of the junior doctors pay dispute, or something else uncontroversial within the movement, it is likely to still be fine to tweet/post in support of it.

5. Hashtags:

The point of a hashtag is to filter a conversation. They originally started being used on Twitter because of the nature of the channel – there is a whole mass of information which it is very difficult to sift through. Before you use a hashtag, think about what conversation this is part of. Look at trending hashtags - will people actually search this term, and if they do, will this content be relevant to what they're

looking for? If you can engage with a hashtag that is currently trending, that is particularly useful. Check which term people are actually using most often – e.g. #bbcqt rather than #questiontime. Try not to use large numbers of hashtags in one tweet (one to two is usually good practice).

6. 'Style guide':

Obviously there will be exceptions, but try to keep Facebook posts to a paragraph where possible. Try to keep tweets to one tweet, but if you need to express something longer than 140 characters you could take a screenshot of a longer piece of text, crop it and upload it as an image. If replying to a person's tweet but intending for everyone to see it, add a dot before you tweet. E.g. '.@DavidCameron privatised Britain's least cost-effective railway service' rather than '@DavidCameron privatised (etc)' – because only the recipient can see the latter unless people are specifically looking for your replies or they follow both you and @DavidCameron. Ensure posts are understandable to everyone. Don't use jargon, unnecessarily convoluted language or unclear abbreviations. Sometimes you will need to shorten things, but only use 'text speak' when genuinely necessary.

Above all, enjoy it. Whilst it's not a substitute for good old fashioned conversations, social media can enable you to get a positive message about left-wing principles and politics out to millions at the touch of a keyboard. It can help activists feel less isolated, equip people with arguments and ideas, facilitate conversation, organise events and assist with all the things we're going to need to build our movement and transform our country.

10 tips for Momentum activists: Facebook and Twitter

Twitter:

1. Local Momentum Twitter accounts should be run on a collective basis. This is to encourage accountability and democracy in our social media activity. Momentum accounts should never be seen as, or used as, individual accounts. Account admins should be members of Momentum and reflect the diversity of the group and community. At least 50% should be women. In particular, a proactive effort should be taken to ensure the inclusion of people who are often marginalised from political discussion on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability and socioeconomic background. Account admins should reflect the views of the local group and be in regular contact with regional and national structures. Our local social media accounts are the public face of our network, as much the national Twitter presence is. This

should be kept in mind every time we tweet.

2. As Momentum builds its social media presence, we will develop closed, online spaces (such as Twitter conversations) where our nominated social media activists can share best practice, support each other, discuss quality control and develop skills. These spaces will be the way that local groups can co-ordinate, organise and feedback in a positive manner. It is therefore important that the way in which such groups are organised is democratic, transparent and engaged with local Momentum structures.

3. Following other accounts is a good way of building the Twitter account numbers by way of "follow back", but care should be taken when following accounts. If following accounts who follow you, check their bio and previous tweets to make sure that they are genuine Momentum supporters. If there is anything offensive in there, don't follow them. Please take extra caution following accounts that may look sympathetic but tweet anti-semitic or other racist material. Another method to generate followers we'd recommend, is to follow accounts who retweet or like your posts. Again, make sure that you take the time to check any accounts before following them. This is a crucial part of building your Twitter reach, but it is time intensive and might be a job allocated to one or two specific admins for the account.

4. Equally, when retweeting other tweets, make sure that they are from a bona fide source and adhere to our [Code of Ethics](#) (that goes for the tweets themselves as well as the accounts they are tweeting from). With current levels of press scrutiny, we can't afford to make the mistake of appearing to endorse views that are not in keeping with our [Code of Ethics](#) or Jeremy Corbyn's "new kind of politics".

5. Momentum Twitter accounts should not ever be used to engage in personal attacks, personalised arguments or "trolling activity". Instead, they should be used to show the positive face of Momentum groups locally, to mobilise activity locally and to share stories of interest to its Twitter followers. Be as creative as you want, but also remember to be responsible; that means no content that could be construed as aggressive, offensive or bullying. We are representatives of Momentum when we tweet in that name, not representatives of our own views.

6. Think before you tweet. How will the tweet be interpreted? We don't want our activists to become too frightened to engage properly with Twitter and use it positively to mobilise Momentum supporters on the ground, but it is a skill to convey meaning accurately in 140 characters, so make sure that your tweets can't be misinterpreted and are clear and positive. Twitter is used by journalists to fish for stories, as it is easy to search for anything controversial.

7. Wherever possible, it is generally a good idea to have one other person look over your tweets before you send them. Ensure it is people you can trust to respond fairly quickly – but two heads are better than one at spotting mistakes, potential room for additions, related stories, controversial issues, and so on. You may find it useful to have a secret group, a Facebook message thread or an email chain to discuss and coordinate social media posts.

8. We take any expressions based on hate extremely seriously, whether that is racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, anti-semitism, ageism or ableism. Momentum operates a zero tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. It should go without saying that no Momentum account should ever tweet, retweet or like anything which comes under any of these categories. If that happens, whoever made the tweet should have their role discussed as a matter of urgency and a decision made democratically amongst the admins and / or the local group on their continued involvement.

9. Anyone who doesn't conform to our [Code of Ethics](#) or displays trolling, aggressive and/or offensive behaviour on Twitter should be unfollowed as a matter of urgency. Following offensive accounts reflects badly on Momentum, even if done accidentally, and must therefore be kept to an absolute minimum. Regular checks on Twitter mentions and answering direct messages promptly will help with this process.

10. Make sure that your Twitter account is regularly updated with interesting and relevant content. Use it to engage positively with followers, encouraging constructive and reasonable debate, but don't get sucked into negative, destructive debate with opponents of our project. If dealing with criticism, remain positive and factual. Again, answering direct messages regularly will help head off potential problems and encourage a sense of involvement from our supporters.

Facebook:

1. When setting up a Facebook forum for your local Momentum group, always use the Page format. Ideally, use the Community Page option. This makes sure you have more control over the public content and that popular posts can be shared to a wider audience. It also enables easy communication between groups and the national page. You can choose to filter posts and comments (you will be asked to authorise each individually), but we'd recommend you avoid doing this unless you feel it's absolutely necessary, as it tends to stifle discussion and is an awful lot of work. Visitor posts are not displayed prominently and can be monitored.

2. Set a profanity filter from the start. Medium is normally enough. You can also choose to ban certain words specifically (the comment will be "hidden" and only

visible to the person who made the comment). This is particularly useful in moderating certain offensive comments. You can choose to "unhide" comments manually.

3. Running a Facebook page should be a collective effort. Make sure that the process for selecting those who run the page is transparent and democratic. Our Facebook pages should reflect the views of the local group and be in regular contact with regional and national structures. Page admins and editors should be members of Momentum and reflect the diversity of the community. At least 50% should be women. In particular, a proactive effort should be taken to ensure the inclusion of people who are often marginalised from political discussion on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability and socioeconomic background. Make these decisions in consultation with your local group. Ideally, the page will be administered by at least two people, with a number of editors (who can create content, but can't change settings). This ensures that it doesn't become the preserve of one individual.

4. As Momentum builds its social media presence, we will develop closed, online spaces (such as Facebook threads or hidden groups) where our nominated social media activists can share best practice, support each other, discuss quality control and develop skills. These spaces will be the way that local groups can coordinate, organise and feedback locally. It is therefore important that the way in which such groups are organised is democratic, transparent and engaged with local Momentum structures.

5. To build your page, post regularly (we'd recommend at least two to three times a day), but be very careful about the content that is being posted. Remember that each Momentum Facebook page is the public face of the network, both locally (and because of press scrutiny, nationally too). Be as creative as you want, but also remember to be responsible and adhere to our code of ethics at all times: that means, in particular, no personal attacks and no content that could be construed as aggressive, offensive or bullying. We are representatives of Momentum when we post in that name, not representatives of our own views.

6. Equally, make sure that comments or visitor posts on the page are monitored closely and on a regular basis. Anything which contravenes our [Code of Ethics](#) should be immediately deleted and a decision should be made whether to ban the author depending on the severity of the offence. Because of the scrutiny we are under, anything which can be construed as offensive and stays on the page for any length of time is potentially damaging to Momentum, even if not authored by anyone involved in the local group. It might be that this job (to monitor comments) is given to one person with admin / editor status to carry out on a regular basis.

7. Wherever possible, it is generally a good idea to have one other person look over your posts before you send them. Ensure it is people you can trust to respond fairly quickly – but two heads are better than one at spotting mistakes, potential room for additions, related stories, controversial issues, and so on. You may find it useful to have a secret group, a Facebook message thread or an email chain to discuss and coordinate social media posts in.

8. Ensure that the Momentum [Code of Ethics](#) (which can be found on our website) is prominently displayed on your page. You can do this by adding it to a pinned post welcoming people to the group or by creating a "note". Make sure you remind people of the code regularly, especially if there is behaviour which is straying towards breaking it. Engage with followers of the page to encourage debate which is constructive and comradely. Not only does that serve as a reminder of good behaviour, it makes people feel part of a community.

9. We take any expressions based on hate extremely seriously, whether that is racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, anti-semitism, ageism or ableism. We operate a zero tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. Any comments which come under either category should be dealt with immediately. If they are made by someone who is active in the group, their role should be discussed and a decision made democratically amongst the admins and / or the local group on their continued involvement.

10. Use the page to show positive examples of local activity. If you are running a stall, or an event make sure someone is taking photos which can be shared on the page as soon as possible. Cover local stories, search out local coverage of campaigns and events, especially if they are concerned with issues that resonate with Momentum's aims to develop a grassroots network of campaigning groups and individuals. By all means share national content, but don't make this the focus of your efforts. The point of Momentum is to be grounded in local communities, and a hundred Momentum groups all sharing the same stories won't achieve that. Don't use the page to push personal hobby horses. Remember that the Facebook presence is there to represent everyone involved locally, not just the admins.