

10 Simple Rules to Manage Your Online Presence

Whether you are a keen user of social media or prefer to keep your online footprint to a minimum, below are some basic rules that you should follow.

1- Create a profile page in your departmental and MRC WIMM website.

You should have an online profile page so that you can be found. This could be because someone saw your talk at a conference, or your name on a paper. Having an online profile (including a photograph) allows you to be easily recognisable and contactable- increasingly important as your career progresses. Make sure you connect your profiles and accounts (e.g. link to your twitter account from your web profile and vice-versa).

2- Be careful about unpublished or confidential information

Anyone will be able to read what you write on your profile page or on your social media accounts. Be careful of what you reveal online (whether is the description of your project or your latest result). There have been cases here at the MRC WIMM where a patent could not be filled because unpublished/confidential information was already available online. This can happen in many ways, e.g. if you post a photo of yourself by your conference poster (forgetting that the data on the poster is unpublished).

Do not post medical advice, or information containing personal details about staff, patients or donors without their permission. Be careful about using social media in a way that appears to endorse commercial ventures or references to research on animals.

3- You will be seen to represent the University- so add a disclaimer to your social media account

We all have personal opinions about all sorts of issues, from politics to the food in the MRC WIMM coffee room. It is up to you whether you feel that you should express those publicly and online, but you should be aware that for the outside world you are representative of the MRC WIMM and the University. Please add a disclaimer to your social media accounts making clear that opinions expressed are your own and not those of the University.

4- Don't tweet other people's data

Never tweet unpublished data or other people's conference posters or talks unless they give you permission to (this applies to both photos or text). However, if you can share something, make sure to give credit and tag relevant accounts. At conferences and meetings, check the official social media rules.

5- Keep it professional

Your online profile and social media accounts can be excellent tools to build your online professional profile, make connections and network. If this is how you plan to use them then try to keep them professional- in line with what you are trying to achieve. Check your text for typos and beware of context- or cultural-dependent meanings of emojis.

6- Beware of arguments and misunderstandings online

Unlike face-to-face conversations, tweets and online posts rely almost exclusively on text and so can often be misconstrued or misunderstood. Try to focus on opinions that you are qualified to give, and avoid nuances that might be missed or misconstrued. Always be polite and don't make false claims. If an argument starts, give yourself time to think about a reply that does not fuel an unnecessary argument.

7- Make your posts and tweets more visible by tagging official accounts

The communication officers at the MRC WIMM (Cat Vicente), your Department, Medical Sciences Division and the University are here to help! Let them know that you have a twitter account or that you have content that you would like to share, by sending them an email or tagging their official accounts.

8- Paper and grant embargoes

During your time at Oxford you may publish a paper, or receive an award or a grant. When you receive the happy news you may be told that the announcement is under embargo until a particular date. This means that you should not announce it widely, especially on social media. However, embargo rules do not prevent you from sharing the news with communications officers. So if you have an announcement or a new paper, please contact the MRC WIMM Communications and Public Engagement Officer Cat Vicente as soon as possible. This will give you and her time to prepare a news story or a press release (if appropriate) in advance of the embargo date.

9- Do not post images or videos without permission

Just because an image or video is available online, it doesn't mean that you have permission to use it or share it, whether it is as an image illustrating a blog post or added to a tweet. Please make sure that you always have permission. This also applies to photographs of people- always check with other people (even if they are your friends) whether they are happy for their photograph to be published online. If you are sharing photographs of yourself or others in the labs, ensure that you are wearing all the correct personal protective equipment (you should be wearing it anyway!).

10- Use the correct branding templates

These are available on the MRC WIMM intranet: <https://www.imm.ox.ac.uk/internal>

Any questions on managing your online presence or communications in general?

- Contact the MRC WIMM Communications Officer on catarina.vicente@imm.ox.ac.uk
- More information:
 - <https://www.ox.ac.uk/public-affairs/social-media>
 - <https://www.medsci.ox.ac.uk/support-services/teams/communications-web/guidelines/social-media>



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