Guide for Blogs produced by SAI Committees or Working Groups

'Blogs' are another useful way for SAI Committees or Working Groups to share their views and results of research with their fellow members and non-members of the Society. They are an increasingly important part of the various communications tools used by the Society. As they are a less formal communications medium than, for example, position papers or press releases, and are not confined to publication cycles, they have the advantage of being more agile in responding to fluid situations.

There are a few groups in the Society who currently produce regular blogs and we would welcome others to consider doing the same as part of the Society's mission to "serve the public interest by promoting thought leadership and contributing as an independent voice on matters where an actuarial perspective can add value".

Although they may be less formal, of course blogs should always conform to the Society's policies and 'Thought Leadership Values'

Disclaimer: Members of the Society of Actuaries in Ireland should not claim to express the views of the Society unless they have received explicit approval to do so from the Society's Chief Executive or Officer Group.

Hints and Tips

- Write for your target audience
- Keep the blog short and your paragraphs short
- Create good headlines but make sure they are supported by content
- Keep your language gender neutral and free from bias and generalisations
- Cite your sources. You should do this by citing the original author's name and the website or blog name where the quote was originally used, along with a link to the original source.
- Ensure you have necessary permissions and/or licences for any third-party content that is to be used, including images and photos. As 'rights clearances' can be cumbersome, carefully consider the merit of using third-party content. Further information on this is listed below.
- Ensure you have permissions from your employer if they are being mentioned in the blog.
- Do not use the blogs to promote products or services. The credibility of the blog will be diminished if the reader believes that it is not impartial. Particularly avoid references to your own employer or your company's products or services.
- Consider copyrighting the blog and adding a permission to use statement (i.e. this material may (may not?) be reproduced with (without?) permission.

- Before sending to the Member Services Team, please ensure the blogs are proof-read and signed off by your Committee or Working Group. The SAI executive support to your committee should also have seen the final version before sending to the Member Services Team for posting.
- Source an image to post alongside your blog (*see 'best practices for clearing copyright in third-party content' below*). The Society has a subscription with iStock so a link of the image can be sent to the Member Services Team who will download it from our account.
- Once it is drafted on the website, we will send to the author for one last proof before it is deployed onto the live site.   All blogs will be posted with the author's name, the name of the Committee or Working Group and the following disclaimer: ***The views of this article do not necessarily reflect the views of the Society of Actuaries in Ireland, the <INSERT NAME OF> Committee/Working Group, or the author's employer.***
- The blog will be promoted on the Society's LinkedIn page and on our weekly News updates.

Best Practices for Clearing Copyright in Third-Party Content

Rights Clearance

When planning use of third-party materials, you must ensure that all appropriate licenses and permissions are in place. This process is known as "rights clearance."

The basic process requires you to:

- Identify all copyrightable content that you plan to use (e.g. a photo, video, music).
- Remember a single work, such as a music video, may include multiple copyrightable elements of the work (e.g., the lyrics, musical compositions and sound recordings are each subject matter of copyright).
- Identify owners of applicable copyrights or all agents, licensees or others with authority to grant permissions.
- Determine whether a license or other permission may be required.
- Secure the necessary licenses and appropriate written permissions.

Linking to Third-Party Content

- Generally, it is permissible to provide a link (or "hypertext" link) to a third-party website, but check to see if a website has indicated that linking is not allowed. Anything more than linking may lead to liability.
- If you would like to provide links to a third-party website, and that website has indicated that linking is not allowed (e.g. with a message on the website or a notification to you), do not link to such a website.

Website Contracts

- Website "Terms of Use" or "Terms of Service"
  In addition to copyright issues, consider whether any terms of use apply to the material you are thinking of using (as sourced from another website).

General Recommendations

You should:

- Take the position that permission will be required whenever third-party content is to be used.
- Ensure that the license and permissions you secure cover the intended and actual use and duration of that use and consider whether the permission granted contains any applicable restrictions.
- Always consider all anticipated uses (which may include videos and documents being posted to the Society's social media channels and website, for example) in order to facilitate permissions negotiations and avoid later pitfalls; a license for one use does not typically extend to additional uses.
- Always maintain clear records/backup for the various permissions obtained. The Society reserves the right to ask you for confirmation and evidence that permissions have been obtained and copyright has not been infringed upon.

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