

Community standards

A website dedicated to debating free speech raises an interesting question: how freely can we talk about free speech? Since our subject is freedom of expression, we want all contributors to be able to express themselves as freely as possible - even on the most difficult issues. This does not mean that anyone can abuse this space to say anything they like about any subject under the sun, not to mention pushing products, spam and scams. If they did, conversation would become impossible. Liberty is not anarchy. A worldwide debate on freedom of expression is not the same as global logorrhea.

We want this to be a place where everyone feels welcome to join in a free, fruitful and civilised debate. There are also laws that we must abide by - even if some of us might argue for some of those laws to be changed. The following paragraphs set out the community standards which you need to comply with when using this website, and give an indication of the considerations that will guide our moderators. To draw up these standards is itself an exercise in thinking about the legitimate limits to free expression.

Robust Civility. In line with our own fourth principle (“We speak openly and with civility about all kinds of human difference”), and the whole spirit of this experiment, we want every individual to be able to express herself or himself on any subject relevant to a debate about freedom of expression. We also believe that there is a level of civility that is needed to enable such a debate, especially across very diverse countries, cultures and languages. However, the boundaries of civility vary greatly with context and may sometimes be very wide - for example, when it comes to satire, parody or caricature. We summarise this spirit in the phrase “robust civility”.

The Law. The University of Oxford is established in the UK and subject to the laws of England and Wales. Accordingly, content contributed by you must comply with applicable law in the UK. Since the website is in principle accessible worldwide, you should be aware that you might also be liable to prosecution in other jurisdictions.

To flag anything that seems to you to violate these Community standards, use the “Report” button on any user-generated comment and/or email us at report@freespeechdebate. In the event that a violation is reported, the University will determine whether there has been a breach of these Community standards by any user of this website, and take appropriate action.

To achieve our goals of openness, relevance and robust civility, and to abide by the law, the kinds of content which may be removed include:

- Incitement to violence.
- Personal abuse and defamation, including threats, [flame-wars](#) and [trolling](#).
- Incitement to discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, age,

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- disability, nationality or ethnic origin.
- Pornography.
- Violations of other people's right to privacy and relevant data protection laws
- Impersonations of others, or any material which misrepresents your identity or affiliation with any person or organisation.
- Infringements of copyright, database right, trademark or similar intellectual property rights.
- Commercial and/or promotional material, including spam.
- Material which may result in a contempt of court.

The University may revise these Community standards at any time by amending this page. Please also see our: [Terms of use](#), [Copyright and attribution](#), [Privacy](#) and [Accessibility](#) policies.

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