



THE ARTS
SOCIETY

BEHAVIOUR AND TONE OF VOICE GUIDELINES

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WHAT ARE BRAND VALUES?

Our values support The Arts Society's vision and purpose and aim to reflect what is important to us as an organisation. They are vital to our success. Our values define who we are, they identify what makes us unique and what we want to achieve.

We created our brand values together and it's down to each of us to make all four values more than just words. We need to live them in our own roles, whether that's in a small day-to-day task, a conversation with a member or colleague, or the way we tackle our next piece of work, or how we go about what we are already doing.

CONNECTED

We are one team. The only way to achieve our vision is to be relevant, responsive and coherent in our approach.

KNOWLEDGEABLE

We always strive for the highest standards of expertise and rigour. This requires dedication and commitment.

PIONEERING

We bring imagination, curiosity and courage to everything we do. We enjoy exploring new and different ways of working.

WELCOMING

We are approachable and open, sociable and generous in our attitude. We respect each other's expertise and ideas.

WHAT DO OUR BRAND VALUES MEAN FOR OUR BEHAVIOUR?

CONNECTED

This means we:

- understand and anticipate the big issues which impact our society, organisation and our members
- support each other to listen, engage and respond to the needs of our members
- communicate ideas, good practice and learnings with each other

This doesn't mean:

- involving everyone in everything
- keeping things to ourselves
- staying at our desk and relying on email to connect and communicate

What it looks like when we're connected:

Each year The Arts Society produces a membership card for individual members to use to obtain various discounts. For the 2020 membership card, the Membership Team decided to use an image on the front of the card instead of the usual plain design. We chose a detail of the 'Terrace Sunlight Triptych' by the RBA Rising Stars Competition Winner, Megan Burridge. The card not only gives members a sense that they belong to the wider organisation but also to the work that The Arts Society does.



2, WHAT DO OUR BRAND VALUES MEAN FOR OUR BEHAVIOUR?

KNOWLEDGEABLE

This means we:

- base decisions on evidence, business insights and expertise
- ensure information is accurate and clear
- take time to reflect, adapt and are willing to learn from each other if we don't know

This doesn't mean:

- being good at everything
- doing things just because we think they make us look knowledgeable
- overthinking and being elitist

What it looks like when we're knowledgeable:

We encourage everyone in the organisation to develop their skills or acquire new ones. Training and information days are available to all our Societies. They are held throughout the year at The Arts Society House and across all Areas. Training covers a wide range of relevant topics.

2, WHAT DO OUR BRAND VALUES MEAN FOR OUR BEHAVIOUR?

PIONEERING

This means we:

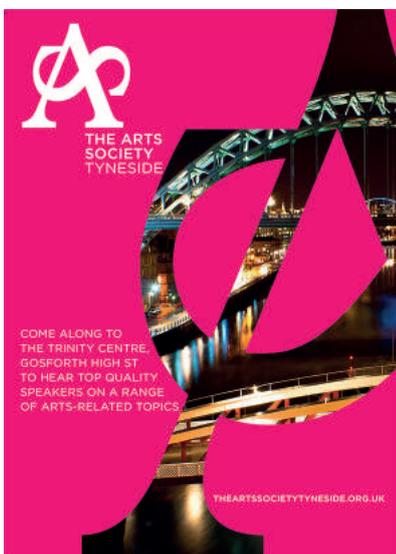
- are open to new ideas and different approaches
- are flexible and can adapt to and embrace new opportunities and changing circumstances
- try to treat each day as a new opportunity to innovate and push boundaries

This doesn't mean:

- taking risks for the sake of it
- rushing things through, being unrealistic and neglecting quality
- letting fear of failure stop us from seeing a new idea through

What it looks like when we're pioneering:

To coincide with the Great Exhibition of the North in the summer of 2018 (our 50th anniversary year), we and our member Societies took the initiative to present a series of talks at Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle upon Tyne. This is a great example of Societies trying something new, working with each other and the team at head office to organise and promote a project, which successfully attracted and raised awareness of The Arts Society to new and diverse audiences.



2, WHAT DO OUR BRAND VALUES MEAN FOR OUR BEHAVIOUR?

WELCOMING

This means we:

- are approachable, inclusive and act natural
- strive to remove barriers to interacting or engaging with The Arts Society
- are respectful of individuality and provide a warm, supportive and non-judgmental environment for all who engage with us

This doesn't mean:

- saying yes to everything
- over-sharing
- being fussy and precious

What it looks like when we're welcoming:

As part of our rebrand we have upgraded and redesigned some of our office spaces at The Arts Society House to better reflect our values and ensure our shared spaces are welcoming and inviting. We have created in the Zena Walker room an environment which can be used for staff meetings and members' events. It's a space where we can also showcase the work of artists and can accommodate creative sessions and workshops.

3, WHAT IS TONE OF VOICE?

WHAT IS TONE OF VOICE?

Tone of voice is the way in which we write and speak; what we say and how we say it.

Having a tone of voice doesn't mean we all sound the same. It's a springboard for our imagination and creativity, not a straightforward. It gives us the confidence to write our own materials rather than relying on copying and pasting the varying quality of other sources.

The more consistent our tone of voice is, the more likely our community will recognise and understand us as the people who enrich peoples lives through the arts. The way we write and speak should reflect our brand values. Consistency will also develop through sharing and asking colleagues to do a sense and tone check, especially when a communication is going to multiple recipients.

WHERE DO WE USE OUR TONE OF VOICE?

Our tone of voice should shine through in everything we do from our website and newsletters to our internal communications and the way we talk to members when they call or email us:

We use our tone of voice in:

- day-to-day conversations
- e-newsletters, emails
- events and meetings
- funding applications
- leaflets, posters
- press releases, speeches and blogs
- reception / answering the phone
- recruitment adverts and interviews
- training materials
- videos and online tutorials
- website and social media platforms

3, WHAT IS TONE OF VOICE?

HOW DO WE USE OUR TONE OF VOICE?

We use our tone of voice for all the people we need to communicate with. Before we write (or speak) we need to consider who our audience is, as this will help us engage with them. We are talking to real people with needs, wishes and aspirations.

Our community includes:

- colleagues /each other
- existing and potential members
- external stakeholders, including our Trustees
- funders
- general public
- grant recipients
- lecturers
- partners and sponsors
- volunteers

3. WHAT IS THE ARTS SOCIETY TONE OF VOICE?

WHAT MAKES OUR TONE OF VOICE DISTINCTIVE?

In the same way as thinking about our community, it's useful to think about The Arts Society as a person with a distinct personality that we are seeking to convey in any conversation. Our personality is underpinned by our brand values. If we were to meet The Arts Society they would be informed, responsive, warm, personable, sociable, cosmopolitan, curious and imaginative.

To help us think about tone of voice we've broken it down into 5 things to remember.

OUR TONE OF VOICE AT A GLANCE

1. Stay informed

Make statements which are backed up with evidence.

2. Keep it simple

Start any communication with the single most important point.

3. Act natural

Be genuine and write or speak like a person, not an organisation.

4. Be curious

Establish conversation and dialogue by asking questions and being curious.

5. Make an impression

Try telling or sharing with people something new, that they might not know.

3, WHAT IS THE ARTS SOCIETY TONE OF VOICE?

OUR TONE OF VOICE IN MORE DETAIL

1. Stay informed

We do:

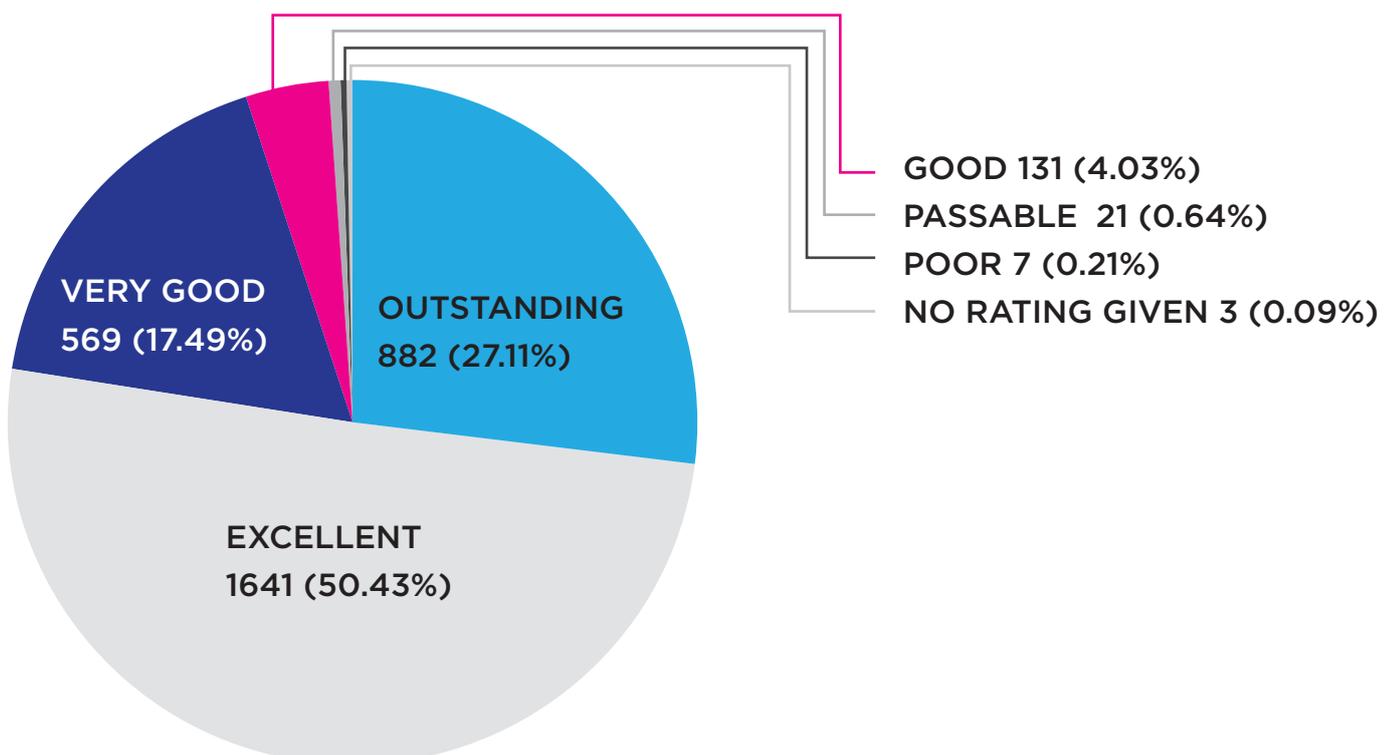
- Relate The Arts Society's work and mission to the wider context - relevant issues and opportunities in society
- Include facts and business insights to support what we say and think
- Use different points of view to demonstrate a rationale

Example: The Education Department Statistics

THE ARTS SOCIETY'S EDUCATION STATISTICS 2018

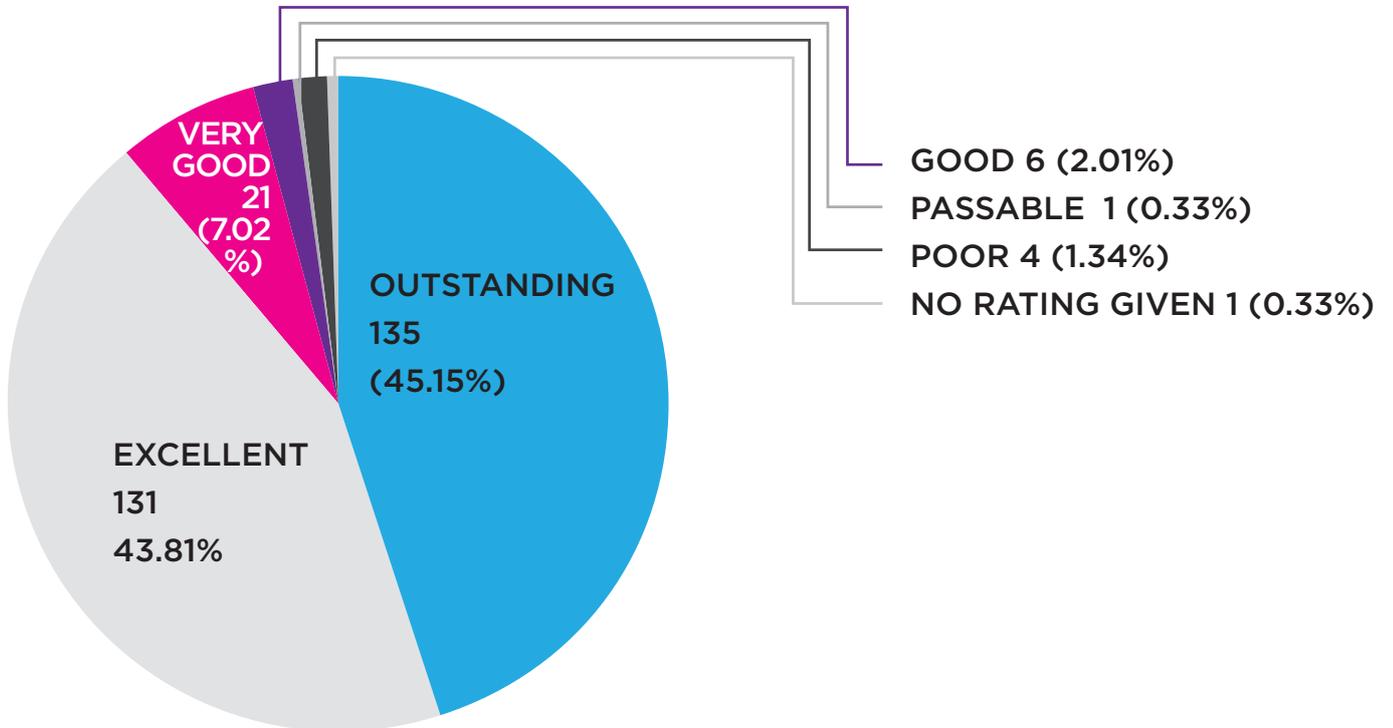
Below is information about all reviews received for events taking place in the period 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018.

LECTURES: REVIEWS RECEIVED: 3254



3, WHAT IS THE ARTS SOCIETY TONE OF VOICE?

STUDY DAYS: REVIEWS RECEIVED: 299



5 LECTURERS	GAVE 50-59 LECTURES
5 LECTURERS	GAVE 40-49 LECTURES
10 LECTURERS	GAVE 30-39 LECTURES
26 LECTURERS	GAVE 20-29 LECTURES
38 LECTURERS	GAVE 15-19 LECTURES
48 LECTURERS	GAVE 10-14 LECTURES
69 LECTURERS	GAVE 5-9 LECTURES
101 LECTURERS	GAVE 1-4 LECTURES
69 LECTURERS	GAVE 0

Of the 69 lecturers who gave no talks, 20 were established lecturers, 3 of whom were on sabbaticals. The remainder were newly accredited in 2017 or 2018.

BEHAVIOUR AND TONE OF VOICE GUIDELINES

3, WHAT IS THE ARTS SOCIETY TONE OF VOICE?

2. Keep it simple

Achieving real simplicity helps us concentrate on communicating what matters and shows we know what we're talking about.

We do:

Start any piece of communications with the single most important point

Keep our language easy to digest and avoid jargon or acronyms

Write simple sentences with a minimum of punctuation

Example: The re-worked Church Recording Microsite login details email

Good afternoon,
Thank you very much for your request for access to The Arts Society website

theartssociety.org

I have now created a login for you to access the website.

Your User Name is -
Your password is -

Please let me know if I can help with anything further.

Best wishes,

Existing example

Hi xxxx

Thank you for your login request.

Your login details are below:

Username -
Password -

Have a good weekend.

New version

3, WHAT IS THE ARTS SOCIETY TONE OF VOICE?

3. Act natural

We do:

- Use genuine stories about our work, especially those involving a human angle
- Tailor and personalise messages
- Use everyday language to show there are people behind our words

For example:

Introduce who you are when you answer the phone:

“Good morning, The Arts Society, it’s XX speaking”

4. Be curious

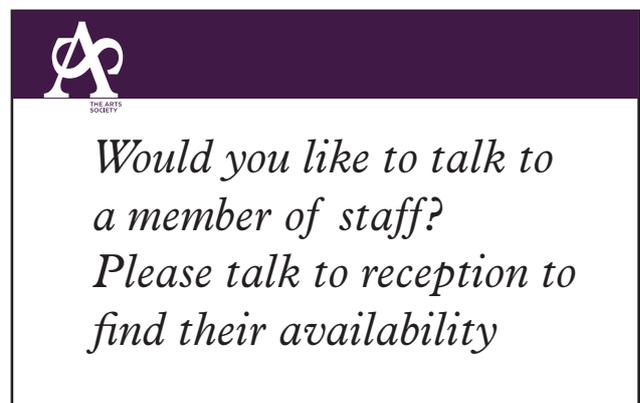
We do:

- Ask questions to appear curious, engage people and to create dialogue
- Talk directly to people - include personal words and phrases that imply working together - with you, we, our, yours
- Keep the tone positive

Example: A friendly and more inquisitive reception sign



Existing



New version

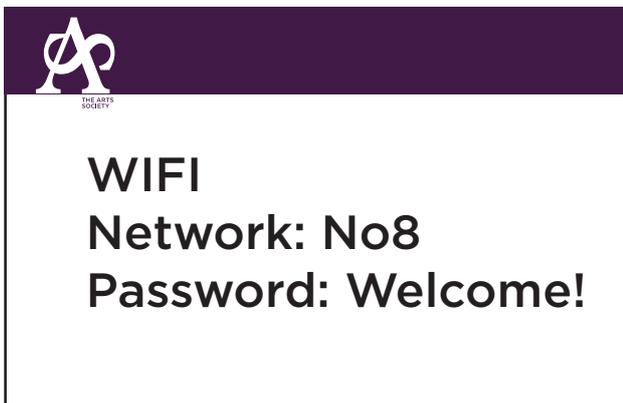
3, WHAT IS THE ARTS SOCIETY TONE OF VOICE?

5. Make an impression

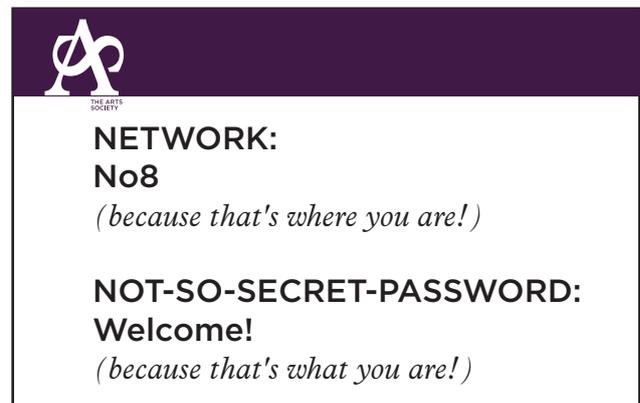
We do:

- Start strong with bold, fresh and relevant statements
- Find new and creative ways of explaining things and unexpected angles to approach subjects
- Create dynamic, rhythms by varying sentence and paragraph lengths and selectively repeating sounds and words

Example: The Wifi sign



Existing



New version

A few tips inspired by the great George Orwell...

These writing tips don't make a distinction between writing and speaking.

1. Never use a long word where a short one will do
2. If its is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out
3. Never use the passive where you can use the active
4. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent

3, WHAT IS THE ARTS SOCIETY TONE OF VOICE?

THE ARTS SOCIETY OMELETTE

We have consulted a few experts and used their knowledge to bring you the perfect omelette recipe.

(Serves 6)

1. Take 10 fresh free-range eggs that you bought from Henry from your local farmer's market and whisk together in an artisan bowl bought from The British Museum.
2. Season with salt and pepper and a filling of your choice. May we recommend manchego, chorizo and paprika for an international flavour. Or for a more classic option add mature cheddar cheese and field mushrooms. Mix well.
3. Take out your favourite non-stick pan and heat up some butter (salted or unsalted according to your preference) on a medium heat taking care not to burn it.
4. Pour the mixture gently into the pan, letting it cook on one side. Once cooked, carefully flip it over and warm on the other side.
5. Serve on a warmed Emma Bridgewater plate, garnish with salad and herbs from the garden. Bon appétit!

Enjoy with friends, old and new, over a lively discussion. We recommend pairing this with a chilled white Rioja or if you are making this for a special occasion, a bottle of Cava.

If you have any queries please contact our friendly team at The Arts Society House.

