

IOSH Forum Moderator Job description

The Role of a Moderator

The IOSH Forums

The IOSH forums are the most frequently used area of the IOSH website and present a window both for professional discussion and the profession in general. The forums are open to the worldwide public 24/7 for members and non-members, practitioners and non-practitioners alike.

Use of the forums is controlled by the Acceptable Use Guidelines (AUGs) - www.iosh.co.uk/AUGs - which every user agrees to when they register to use the forums. These are part of the overall Terms of Use of IOSH's website.

Being a Moderator

To ensure the integrity and standards of the moderating service are maintained, IOSH use the voluntary services of members who share the wish to achieve these standards. The moderators are responsible for applying the AUGs and removing posts. They normally do this as a team, using email, sometimes telephone, to discuss moderating decisions with at least one other team member before carrying out the action agreed eg, contacting a forum user by IOSH email. At times, very straightforward or emergency actions may be taken by a Moderator on their own initiative.

Being an Observer

Moderators in training are called Observers and carry out a valuable role monitoring the forums for breaches of the AUGs and taking part in Moderating team discussions. The Observer period usually lasts for a minimum of 6 months but this can vary due to circumstances.

The AUGs

There are three distinct responsibilities in applying the Acceptable Use Guidelines (AUGs):

- The Forums:
The AUGs set the parameters within which users of the forums can operate. However it is the skill of the Moderators and Observers that allows flexibility while maintaining the integrity of the service.
- IOSH:
It is important that the Forums reflect IOSH's standards as a professional, chartered body, in the public domain. The Moderators and Observers help IOSH to ensure the AUGs are observed.
- The Users:
Users, whether members or other interested parties, are entitled to a professional level of dialogue that engenders mutual respect amongst those visiting and using the forums. By skilfully applying the AUGs, the Moderators and Observers can protect users.

Summary of requirements: Stage 1 – being an Observer

Role requirement	Essential	Desirable
Membership category of CMIOSH or CFIOSH	x	
An indication that the applicant has used and preferably contributed to IOSH forums		x
A statement by the applicant indicating their reasons for wanting to become a Moderator	x	
A minimum commitment of 4 hours a week to reading threads and working with the moderating team and staff, mainly by email, sometimes by telephone	x	

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	Role requirement	Essential	Desirable
	Willingness to discuss interpretation of the AUGs with other moderators	x	
	Agreement to maintain the confidentiality of discussions between the moderating team and between team members and staff	x	
	Access to a telephone and PC with Internet connection	x	
	Attendance at an annual face-to-face meeting for those able to attend		x

	Role requirements after progress to Moderator	Essential	Desirable
	Actioning Moderating decisions eg, contacting forum users, locking threads, removing messages etc	x	
	Maintaining housekeeping of actioned Moderator discussions	x	
	Use of the IOSH supplied email address when actioning Moderator decisions	x	

How do I apply to become a Moderator?

There are two stages to becoming a Moderator:

- **Stage 1:** Submit the application form for validation. Once allocated a mentor from the Moderating team, you'll act as a Forum Observer supporting the work of the team for 6 months.
- **Stage 2:** Complete the Observer assessment with two Moderators and an independent member of the Communications and International Affairs Committee. The assessment does not require an interview but one or more of the assessors will contact you by phone. The assessment form used is included below for information.

A successful assessment means you become an active Moderator.

Criteria for Stage 2 assessment

Role requirement	Essential	Desirable
Demonstrate the role requirements for Stage 1 have been met	x	
Identify a corporate objective(s) and show how the forums fit into achieving this	x	
Demonstrate integrity and the ability to work in a team	x	
Agree to action Moderator decisions using the IOSH email address and maintain housekeeping	x	

For how long do I commit to being a Moderator?

Currently, for a maximum period of three years. However, our intention in introducing a reserve list is to enable much shorter periods of commitment by rotating Moderators between the active team and the reserve list.

Every year, we ask each Moderator to indicate if they wish to continue for another year or if they wish to stand down. After three years, if a Moderator wishes to continue, there is the option to be re-appointed for a further three years, after which a Moderator has to stand down.

Would you like to know more about becoming a Moderator?

Contact the Web Administrator at webteam@iosh.co.uk including your membership number or phone +44 (0)116 257 3143.

If you're interested in volunteering for this role:

- after closing this file, complete the volunteer form on the website
- we'll send you a Moderator application form (stage 1)

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- copy the form onto your pc, complete it and email it to webteam@iosh.co.uk

Stage 2 assessment

Please state your responses in the space provided using examples from your own experience. This may include experience you have gained either as part of your work or personal life, including any voluntary work you may have been involved in. It should, where possible, also include examples from your time as a forum Observer.

Knowledge of IOSH
1. Please view IOSH's vision and corporate plan at www.iosh.co.uk/corporatestrategy to read what IOSH is aiming to achieve for the next few years. How can we ensure that the discussion forums reflect the overall direction of IOSH as an organisation?
Personal
2. Please provide an example of when you have had to demonstrate integrity and maintain confidentiality.
3. Please give an example of an occasion where you've had to implement a majority decision with which you haven't agreed and how you handled it?
4. What conflict of interest might you expect personally as a moderator and how would you handle it?
Communication skills and knowledge about moderating
5. We regularly have complaints from members who think moderators are being too strict in applying the Acceptable Use Guidelines (AUGs) but equally regularly, we have complaints from those who think moderators are not being strict enough and the forums are bringing IOSH into disrepute. What is your view of the AUGs and how they are applied?
6. Scenario 1 (supplied with assessment) What would be your response and briefly describe how you would deal with this?
7. Scenario 2 (supplied with assessment) What would be your response and briefly describe how you would deal with this?
8. Please use this section to include any additional comments in support of your application.
9. Do you agree to implement Moderator decisions when delegated eg, email a forum user using the IOSH email address?