

SFJ HG5

Promote the agency and its services through the media



Overview

This standard is about working with the media to explain and promote your agency's work. The agency's work with the media will either be reactive - reacting to requests from the media for information from the agency in relation to a current or breaking local or national story or feature, or proactive - where the agency is initiating contact with the media in order to highlight and explain an aspect of its work.

The media with which the agency has contact may be press - both newspapers and trade/technical journals, radio or television and may be based locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.

There are three elements

- 1 Establish and maintain effective working relationships with the media
- 2 Promote the agency and its work through the media
- 3 Respond to requests for information from the media

Target group

This standard is relevant to those with responsibility for coordinating contact with the media.

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Performance criteria

Establish and maintain effective working relationships with the media

You must be able to:

- P1 maintain an accurate record of media organisations with which your organisation has contact, including their named contacts and their particular interests and specialisms
- P2 monitor your work and related agencies to identify forthcoming events that are likely to be of interest to the media
- P3 interact with the media to encourage effective relationships and communication, consistent with your role and responsibilities, that promote and explain the agency and its work
- P4 explain to key media contacts, how and where they can contact you, who else they can contact if you are not available and the limits on the information which it is possible to disclose to them
- P5 maintain accurate and complete records of your contacts with the media and the information exchanged
- P6 retain press releases and statements issued by your organisation and by other relevant agencies, copies of press cuttings and any recordings of radio and television transmissions relevant to your agency and its work
- P7 review and evaluate the media's coverage of issues relating to your agency and take the appropriate action to address any issues arising, within agreed timescales

Promote your agency and its work through the media

You must be able to:

- P8 monitor your agency's work, its planned activities and current media output to identify opportunities to promote the agency and its work
- P9 evaluate events and information that might be used to promote your agency and its work, and select those that are likely to be of value and interest to the public and media, and that are consistent with your agency's strategy and objectives
- P10 decide the media organisations to which information should be issued, and identify their copy deadlines and production schedules, and particular areas of interest
- P11 develop accurate and concise press releases which includes relevant information in an appropriate format and style
- P12 issue press releases to identified media organisations to meet their deadlines and production schedules

Respond to requests for information from the media

You must be able to:

- P13 respond to requests for information from the media following organisational guidelines
- P14 identify the information that the media representative is seeking from your agency, the purpose for their request and their deadline and

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timescales

- P15 gather accurate background information from within your agency, identifying the facts relevant to the request for information and the role of the agency
- P16 assess and identify potential for damage to your agency and its work
- P17 identify who needs to be involved in deciding how your agency should respond to requests
- P18 make an evaluation of the available information and decide with the relevant people whether it is appropriate for your agency to make a response and if so what your agency's response should be
- P19 identify the potential range of questions that may be asked and agree with the relevant people your agency's responses to them
- P20 agree effective strategies for handling situations when your agency and its spokesperson cannot help
- P21 respond to requests for information within agreed timescales, in line with your agency's agreed statement, policy, guidelines and statutory requirements
- P22 confirm key details in writing
- P23 promote your agency and its work where it is appropriate to do so
- P24 seek support and assistance from appropriate people where you are unsure of actions that you should take

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 legislation which relates to the work being undertaken by your agency and its impact for media relations, including issues associated with libel, defamation and confidentiality
- K2 the various forms of media, the timescales to which they work in relation to different types of event and the different approaches which they may take
- K3 codes of conduct and guidelines which apply to the conduct of the media
- K4 how to make complaints about the conduct of the media
- K5 how the media may distort the messages which your agency is attempting to give and why this may occur
- K6 the values, aims, objectives, policies and work of your agency, and how these influence the message and image that the agency wants to convey and the processes it uses in working with the media
- K7 the aims, objectives, policies and work of the media organisations identified as key to your agency
- K8 potential benefits and risks of building relationships with the media
- K9 ways of building and sustaining effective relationships with media contacts
- K10 the importance of being clear about the key messages one is trying to convey to the media and how to keep to those messages and avoid being drawn into disclosing more information than intended
- K11 the potential risks associated with inappropriate disclosure of information, including:
 - K11.1 to the agency
 - K11.2 to those using the services of the agency
 - K11.3 to relationships with other agencies
 - K11.4 to relationships with the media
- K12 the role and responsibilities of those acting as a spokesperson for the agency, and why it is important to maintain professional boundaries when speaking to the media and to not offer personal opinion
- K13 methods of gathering information from media contacts about what they already know without disclosing any information
- K14 why it is important to suggest calling back to respond to an initial query rather than giving an instant response, and the benefits that the additional time can provide
- K15 features of effective press releases, including:
 - K15.1 what media organisations look for in press releases
 - K15.2 how to structure them in a way that is likely to maximise interest, particularly in relation to issues that may not seem high profile and newsworthy
- K16 your work role and responsibilities and the level of authority which you have towards making decisions in working with the media

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- K17 sources of specialist advice and information to support dealing with the media, how to access these and how to identify when one needs support
- K18 the principles of effective equality, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice

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