



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Digital Transformation Unit
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
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Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

13 August 2014

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0690-14

Thank you for your email of 16 July 2014, asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked for:

“...information under the Act with regards to Facebook and Twitter guidance officially issued by the Foreign Office. Any release of this information would contribute significantly to the public understanding of government operations and activities, and would not be for commercial interests.”

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested.

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request. Under section 21 of the Act, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you.

The official FCO guidance on the use of social media, including Twitter and Facebook, is our social media policy which is available online at <http://blogs.fco.gov.uk/digitaldiplomacy/social-media-policy/>. This is in addition to central government guidance which is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-media-guidance-for-civil-servants>.

Social media is key to the FCO's communications efforts and allows us to provide real time channels to deliver our messages directly. This guidance is used to enable staff to take full advantage of the opportunities social media presents for them in their roles and is aimed at staff with varying levels of social media proficiency.

I have answered each of your additional questions below:

1. Are there plans for any accounts to be registered for official tweets from new Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond, similar to that of his predecessor, William Hague?

The latest UK foreign policy updates from the FCO and the Foreign Secretary can be found on the FCO Twitter account - [@ForeignOffice](#).

2. Can you confirm how many official social media accounts are awaiting approval as of the date of this request?

6 requests for official social media accounts were outstanding as of 16 July 2014.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless it is exempt. The information we have supplied to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

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Yours sincerely,

Digital Transformation Unit



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