BLUF Content Moderation Guide

A guide to moderating text and images for BLUF v4.6. This guide draws on and extends the information in the BLUF Daily Operations Manual.

Introduction

This guide is intended to assist volunteer moderators in approving photos for display on BLUF, and in dealing with reports - whether generated automatically by the system, or by other members.

Content moderation is important in keeping BLUF in good standing, both in legal terms and in terms of our reputation within the broader leather and kink communities. We do not wish to be seen as a space where people can bully or harass others, where some members feel unsafe, or where illegal material is shared.

Our content guidelines form the basis of moderation, and it's important to have a clear understanding of these, which apply equally to profile images, texts and (to a slightly lesser degree) to private messages sent on the site.

The guidelines are made up of the member rules, and the list of Unacceptable Content, which forms part of our Community Standards.

Later on in this document, we will provide detailed examples to clarify unacceptable material, and grey areas, to help ensure that all people moderating work to the same standards, as much as possible. This is vital, to ensure that everyone is treated fairly, and decisions can be justified.

Any form of moderation will be seen by some as an imposition of censorship. In drafting these guidelines we have have set out to ensure that we protect members from hate speech, protect the reputation of the club, and comply with our legal obligations, as explained by our lawyers.

There are, doubtless, other items that some would wish us to ban, or to restrict further. However, we are walking a line between freedom of expression, and legal obligations. Where material is not permitted, or very likely not to be permitted, in a country in which we operate, then it will not be permitted on BLUF, regardless of the country of the poster of material, or the viewer.

We are not Facebook, or Google; we do not have the resources to filter material on the fly, based on geography and different rules in different countries. For the most part, material will therefore not be permitted on BLUF if it would breach the law:

A. In the United Kingdom, where we are legally established
B. In Germany, which has very strict rules on certain symbols, and where we have sufficient presence that we can be considered to be operating there (as opposed to merely 'available').
C. In Estonia, where our legal representative for GDPR and operator of our EU store, is established.

Additionally, material will not be permitted if:

A. It amounts in our view to harassment or hate speech, directed at a specific person, or group of people.
B. It may expose us to considerable additional expense (for example, allowing sexually explicit material would increase our hosting costs).
C. It may expose us to legal jeopardy (eg libel).

Beyond these categories, choosing which items to ban almost is almost always a decision that involves politics of one sort or another. We believe we have a firm basis, backed by legal opinion, for the material that we have decided is not acceptable on BLUF.

Member rules

These are the current member rules, which were last updated in October 2022.

1. You must be at least 18 years old, and above the age of consent in the country in which you live.
2. Membership is at the discretion of the BLUF administrative team. We reserve the right to refuse membership for reasons other than non-compliance with dresscode, including, but not limited to, the belief that you intend to breach another of these rules.
3. You should treat other members with respect and dignity, both on the site and at BLUF events, including following such Codes of Conduct or Community Standards as may be published from time to time.
4. You must respect the privacy of other members. Do not pass on information, including images, that you have obtained from the BLUF site, without permission, or share your login details with non-members.
5. You must not use the BLUF.com site or other BLUF online areas, such as forums or chat rooms, to harass other people or groups of people, by sending them messages, adding comments about them to your profile, or in any other way. We reserve the right to edit profiles to remove offensive messages.
6. You must not use your BLUF account for commercial purposes, including but not limited to massage and/or sexual services.
7. You must not use BLUF messages to promote events, including community events, by sending unsolicited messages. Events can be promoted through the calendar and via our opt-in email lists.
8. Photos that you upload to the site should conform to the BLUF dress code. If you already have several photos in BLUF gear, we may at our discretion allow additional fetish photos to be added, or add them to your private gallery.
9. Photos should be of you, or include you. Passing off photos of other people as yourself, or impersonating someone else, is not allowed.
10. Photos of you or other parties wearing Nazi insignia or similar hate speech symbols are not permitted on BLUF.com or in other BLUF online spaces. Hate speech symbols include, but are not limited to, those in the ADL "Hate on display" database.
11. You must keep your email address up to date. If we are unable to contact you for an extended period, your BLUF membership may be terminated.
12. You must log in at least once a year. If you do not log in for more than a year, your BLUF membership may be terminated.
13. Your membership may be terminated if, in the opinion of the Directors of BLUF Ltd, you have brought the club into disrepute, or have taken actions that are or could be damaging to the club or to its reputation. Such actions may include breaching rules 3-10.
14. Membership of BLUF.com does not automatically guarantee entrance to BLUF events. Venues may impose their own rules, in addition to the BLUF dress code.
15. Membership of BLUF.com does not automatically guarantee access to, or membership of, other BLUF online spaces, which may have their own membership requirements (such as location) and/or moderation rules.
16. Membership of BLUF.com does not imply membership of BLUF Ltd within the meaning of the Companies Act.

Community Standards

This is our new statement of Community Standards.

BLUF strives to provide a space where all our members feel welcome, and foster an environment where the club is a leading participant in the broader leather and kink communities.

Accordingly, we are adopting this statement of our Community Standards, as an addendum to the existing Rules for BLUF members.

- We welcome and encourage those who wish to explore and enjoy their love of leather uniforms.
- Treat others with respect, both online and in person.
- Someone's worth is not determined by the cost or brand of their gear.
- Like many other clubs, much of what we do is done by volunteers, in their own time and often at their own expense. We should celebrate and encourage volunteering.
- No means no. If someone turns down a proposition, declines to respond to you, or asks you to stop contacting them, please respect their choice.
- Always respect the privacy of others; attending an event, having a profile on BLUF or on any other site does not necessarily imply anything about their sexuality or lifestyle.
- The use of hate symbols, speech or codes is not acceptable, whether in images, profile text, nicknames or messages, or at BLUF events.

Unacceptable content

While part of the fetish world, we also exist within a broader community and have legal and moral obligations with which we must comply. Our list of unacceptable material is therefore principally guided by the law, and the advice we have obtained on interpreting the relevant laws of countries in which we operate.

- Unacceptable material on BLUF includes, but is not limited to, symbols and texts found in the ADL "Hate On Display" database and in the German government publication "Rechtsextremismus: Symbole, Zeichen und verbotene Organisationen."
- We specifically do not permit the use of Nazi / SS symbols in images or texts, including coded or obfuscated references to such material.
- We do not allow the upload, sharing or publication of any material that is illegal under UK law, or of sexually explicit images, including photos of genitalia.
- We reserve the right to check text and images you upload against lists of known illegal material and to take appropriate action if infringing material is uploaded.
- Adding unacceptable material to your profile, sending it to other members in messages, or linking to it from your profile, may result in action being taken, up to and including the termination of membership.

In detail

The preceding pages set out the public-facing summary of our content guidelines. Here we will provide more detail. Note that while we previously applied this mostly to photographs, following our most recent legal advice, it also applies to profile text and nicknames.

Note that even this detailed guidance cannot be absolutely definitive; we can list things that should not be permitted, however there may be other situations that we have not encountered, and which should also not be permitted. Do not be afraid to ask for help from other moderators.

What are "coded or obfuscated references" ?

We make reference to this in the Community Standards.

By codes we mean short letter or number sequences, such as 88, 18, SS, and HH. Our legal advice is that we should take a "*very strict approach*" to these.

Generally, these are not permitted in profile texts or nicknames, and we should watch for their appearance in images as well. There may be some legitimate exceptions - for example, someone born in 1988 would now be 35, and might well use their birth year in a nickname. We can challenge this, and if necessary require official verification of date of birth (which is done securely).

The combination of some symbols with these can make that symbol unacceptable where it would otherwise not be so. For example, the Iron Cross has been used by the German military in many contexts, past and present. On its own, it's not necessarily a considered a hate symbol (see the ADL guide for more on this). However, if it appears in a context with other items, including codes such as 88, then it should be considered to be one.

Here are some additional examples, of how an image that might initially appear ok is in fact a coded reference:

• Someone wearing a uniform that is otherwise acceptable, but posing by a sign or notice indicating floor 18, or 88
• Someone wearing a uniform without insignia but featuring a book or other prop that has prominent Typography in the typeface 𝔉𝔯𝔞𝔨𝔱𝔲𝔯, or something resembling it, which was often used on publications of, or related to, the Third Reich.

In images, when we talk of obfuscation we generally mean blurring or otherwise obscuring symbols in such a way that it is obvious that that is being done. The key question here is, if you pointed at an image, or part of an image, and said "We all know what that is, right?" would others be inclined to agree with you?

So, these are examples of what is not permissible (note, this is not an exhaustive list):

• A sleeve of a jacket with a blurred area around the elbow, indicating an armband has been painted over or blurred to obscure it
• A red armband that has had the circle painted over to obscure a swastika
• A cap that has suspicious blurring in the area of the badge
• A red armband where only red parts can be seen, with nothing to indicate it is anything other than a Nazi armband
• Shirts or other clothing items in the background with a red armband on them, whether or not a swastika can be seen on them
• Partially hidden flags or other items that may, if viewed in full, have Nazi-era symbols on them
• Rank insignia badges used by the SS, featuring oak leaves, on the collars or shoulders of a jacket

In short, if someone's trying to be clever and hint at Nazi/SS symbols and insignia, we shouldn't let them get away with it.

Material not permitted by law

BLUF Ltd is based in the UK, but we are available in many countries worldwide. In drawing up these guidelines, we have obviously to take regard of UK law. We are also cognisant of our duties under the law of other countries. We consider ourselves to 'operate' in a country where we have regular organisers of events, or some form of official representation. As explained below, this means we consider three primary jurisdictions, the United Kingdom, Germany and Estonia.

United Kingdom

The principal regulations that concern us in the UK are the laws against 'extreme pornography.' This means that images that we consider to be in breach of those laws are not permitted on BLUF. For example, this would include images of severe SM showing serious bruising, cutting, or blood.

Messages or profile text that are likely to fall foul of hate speech regulations are also not permitted.

Similarly, soliciting for paid sexual encounters is illegal in the UK, and so is not allowed.

There may be other types of material that will not be permitted in future as legislation evolves, however we believe that the bulk (for example, proposed bans on content relating to eating disorders) is unlikely to be an issue for BLUF at present.

Germany

As referenced in the Community Standards, certain material is banned by German law. While the bulk of this relates to symbols from the Nazi era, other material is also included, including logos of newer far right organisations. These are some of the strongest laws of their type, and Germany is also the country with the second largest number of BLUF numbers.

The German law also includes a ban on certain specific greetings and slogans, and accordingly these will be blocked by the BLUF software automatically, resulting in either a failure to send a message, or a failure to update a profile.

In addition to right wing material, German law also forbids the display of the flag of the Communist Party of Germany, so this too is not permitted on BLUF.

Estonia

Our representation in the EU, for the purposes of Art 27. of the GDPR, is a company registered in Estonia, Nigel Whitfield OÜ. This company also operates the BLUF EU store. Accordingly, we consider it appropriate to give due consideration to the legal situation in Estonia.

Under current regulations, it is our understanding that the Z symbol, the Ribbon of St George, and USSR military uniforms can be considered 'disturbing use of hostile symbols' and may be punishable as a misdemeanour. Accordingly, those symbols are also not permitted on BLUF.

Material that may be legal, but not permitted on BLUF

We do not allow full nudity, including pictures of genitalia, or other sexually explicit images. Though not illegal, these items could potentially result in the site being classed as adult or pornographic, which would have adverse legal and financial consequences:

• We may be required to implement age verification more rigorously
• We may be required to use an adult hosting service, which is likely to cost substantially more
• We may lose access to our current payment and/or banking facilities, leading to a loss of income, or higher payment processing fees

Since the chief point of BLUF is leather uniforms, we don't view a prohibition on nudity and sexually explicit images to be too onerous.

We also do not allow the use of BLUF to promote intimate personal services, such as massage. These are often a front for sexual solicitation, which is illegal in the UK, and even if not, could result in similar adverse consequences as for nudity or sexually explicit images.

Harassment or disparagement of groups or individuals based on race, religion, body, or similar criteria is not acceptable. This also includes using a BLUF profile to urge people to to join protests against particular groups of people.

There is a general prohibition on the use of a BLUF account for commercial purposes. It is ok to mention, for example, that you run a coffee shop, or a hair salon. It is not reasonable to use your whole profile as an extended advert for a business.

How moderation works on BLUF

There are essentially two moderation systems on BLUF, one for photos, all of which are reviewed by volunteers before being allowed to be visible on the website, and one for text, which is reactive, ie a profile or message may be reported after it has been posted to the site.

We have volunteers who handle reports, and volunteers who handle photos. Some may do both, but different permissions are required for each, and different tools are provided.

This section provides an overview of how everything works. Later on in this guide, we will provide detailed instructions.

Moderating photos

Photo moderation is now a three or four stage process on BLUF, and each photo will be seen by at least two different people before it becomes visible on a profile. Private photos uploaded directly to a member's private gallery will be checked by one person only, but other photos uploaded may also be directed to the private gallery, if the moderators feel it's not appropriate for the main profile.

Photos on member profiles are classified as to whether or not they contain a recognisable face, and whether or not they meet the dress code.

Additionally all photos, including private photos, have content tags added. This allows us, should we be required to, to filter certain content from apps, and allows members to choose not to see certain types of content (photos containing smoking, for example, or guns) if they prefer to avoid it.

These are the stages of photo moderation:

1. Classification. In this stage, moderators see a single photo at random, with no details of who the member is or their other photos. They rate it as to whether it has a face, or meets the dresscode, or is unsuitable. Moderators will never be shown one of their own photos.
2. Approval. In this stage, a second moderator sees all the waiting photos for a particular member, plus a summary of how many photos are already on their profile, and how many of those meet the dresscode. They rate photos in the same way, with the additional option of moving the photo to the private gallery.
3. Resolution. If a photo meets the dresscode, and has been rated identically in the first two stages, it will be published on the profile. If it was determined to be unsuitable in both stages, it will be rejected. If it does not meet the dresscode, or the first and second ratings are different, it will be redisplayed, and the moderator will make a final decision to publish it, move it to the private gallery, or reject it.
4. Tagging. All photos are then displayed, one at a time, and a moderator applies content tags to them.

The stop list: unsuitable items in photos

- Nazi, SS and other hate symbols like 88. Pay attention to things like belt buckles, or to suspicious photoshopping in areas like upper arms, or shirt collars. Even a partially visible red armband should be considered unsuitable, regardless of whether or not a symbol or writing can be seen.
- Other symbols and slogans featured in the reference materials referred to previously, or in the 'Not permitted by law' section
- Explicit sexual content. Any visible genitals, including cock, balls, arsehole.
- Violent content. Bleeding, cutting, scenes of extreme SM. These may cause legal issues.

Things to watch out for

• Books, backgrounds and other props. Pay attention to the background and to items being held or close to the member. Watch out for banned symbols, or for other dubious material. If you see book titles using typical 1930s era typography (typefaces like 𝔉𝔯𝔞𝔨𝔱𝔲𝔯), it may be wise to search for them - we don't want to accidentally publish photos of people holding Third Reich publications, even if they don't have a swastika on them.
• Remember that in some cases - some German belt buckles, for example - there may be very similar items, some with Nazi era symbols on, and some without. So do not immediately assume an item is ok because it looks like something you've seen before.

Questionable items

We aim to ensure that the majority of images visible on profiles reflect what people come to BLUF for - men in leather uniforms. However, our members also have multiple interests, and if we do not provide for some of those images to be available in some way on BLUF, members will have to switch to another app or site to share them with each other.

So, at the second stage of approval, we exercise a certain amount of leeway. The system will flag up if someone has more than five non-dress code images on their profile, and the number of images of each type. If they already have over 100 dresscode photos, it may be acceptable to have more than five non-dresscode ones, for instance. If they only have one dresscode image, then it's not reasonable to add more non-dresscode photos to the profile.

All non-dress code photos on the profile should still have some fetish element, and there are certain items that are specifically excluded in the dresscode, and so should always be filed in the private gallery. These are the current guidelines for making a decision. Where there is a choice between private or not, the decision should be based on the current mix of photos.

• Trainers, jeans, other casual clothing. Casual clothing doesn't get on profiles. You might have the greatest uniform in the world, but if you're wearing trainers, it's a private photo. A leather top half with jeans is a private photo. Always rate as private.
• Chaps, non-uniform biker gear, harnesses. These should generally not be visible on profiles, though an exception can sometimes be made for one or two examples of biker gear, especially if on a bike. Rate as private, or neither/face in limited quantities
• Bare chests, other non-sexual nudity. Generally people don't come to BLUF for this. A leather jacket with no shirt on underneath, or a shirt that's not fully done up may be acceptable occasionally, but a completely bare torso is not. Rate as private, or neither/face in limited quantities
• T shirts. Strictly according to the letter of the dresscode, these are not allowed, but we've tended to be reasonably generous, especially if combined with say a jacket and Sam Browne. By preference, plain shirts or fetish brands can be rated face/neither as appropriate. Other brands, or overly colourful/busy designs should be rated Private
• Sloppiness. A uniform is a smart thing. If someone can't be bothered to tuck their shirt into their trousers, it's not a uniform. Rate as face/neither.
• Odd materials. A fabric uniform is acceptable if it has breeches, not otherwise. Items that look like they are made of spandex, rubber, PVC and other materials should not be rated as dresscode or both. Rate as private or as face/neither, in limited quantities.

Dresscode notes

In rating photos, these are the general guidelines for face and dresscode:

• Consider a photo to have a clear view of the face if you feel that someone could be recognised from it
• A head and shoulders shot that just shows a face and a leather shirt with a tie is a face photo.
• If there are additional elements, such as jacket, cap, Sam Browne belt, it can qualify as dresscode
• A photo of just gloves, or just boots, or just trousers, is not a dresscode photo.
• A photo of gear laid out on a bed, or hanging up, is not a dresscode photo. A dresscode photo should be of a member wearing the gear.

Photo tagging

To ensure that we are able to comply with anticipated demands from the app stores, photos are not visible in the BLUF apps until they have been reviewed for content.

These are the current definitions for the photo tags. Note that the first option is used internally only, and not visible outside certain admin contexts. The items in bold can be selected by members in the Content filtering option, allowing them to have photos with those tags hidden by default.

- Person of colour. Depending on where you come from, this may not always be obvious; do the best you can. If you recognise a member that may give some extra context - eg a hispanic person will likely be tagged if they are in the US, but a Spanish person in the EU probably not.
- **Guns**. Should be obvious
- **Other weapons**. Typically knives, crossbows. Not considered necessary for nightsticks, baseball bats.
- Violence/Hard SM. If there are signs of a severe beating, select this, though note also the UK prohibition on 'extreme SM'
- Breath/medical play. If a gas mask features, include this option, as well as other more obvious breath play.
- Bondage. Restrictive bondage; a collar or chain on its own doesn't require this tag
- Bulge/crotch. Not necessarily just a close-up; a distant picture where lighting highlights the crotch, or where someone is deliberately grabbing themselves, will also qualify
- Nipples/arse/nudity. A bare chest on its own doesn't count, but if you can see nipples, yes. Also use this for anything else that might scare censorious prudes at the app stores.
- **Smoking**. Generally the act of smoking applies. Cigars in a jacket pocket don't meet the criteria, but a cigar in an ashtray has probably been lit, and so it would.
- **Poppers/drugs**. Small brown bottles, anything that looks like it could be drug related.
- **Alcohol**. Bottles, glasses, that look like the probably contain alcoholic drinks.

In the tagging section of the admin console, hitting Enter on its own will mark the photo as ok, with no tags applied.

Moderating text

Text moderation on BLUF refers to dealing with both messages and profile text. Prohibited content includes the text representations covered by the rules previously laid out.

Some text moderation happens automatically, while others rely on reports from members, usually either reporting problematic content that has previously been missed, or harassment.

Messages

Automatic moderation is applied to messages and profiles when

A. They contain content that is illegal, such as symbols or phrases banned by law. Attempting to send a message with this content will display an error explaining that the content is illegal in some countries where BLUF operates.
B. The contain content that is not supported on BLUF. This error will be returned chiefly when trying to send messages containing unicode 'pseudo-fonts', which are sometimes used to make the appearance of messages or profiles look different. However, this causes serious problems for screen reading tools, and so such messages are no longer supported, from BLUF version 4.6, returning an 'unsupported content' error.

The software is also capable of warning users that the message they sent may breach our guidelines, based on matching certain filters. When this message is displayed, the user has option of sending the message anyway, or editing it. However, **this feature is not enabled at present**.

Profiles

Profiles are subject to the same automatic moderation cases A and B as messages; it is not possible to update a profile to include illegal or unsupported content in a profile update. The update will fail, and the profile will remain as it is.

Additionally, when a profile update is saved, a score - called the NP score - is calculated for it, based on checking the content for banned and problematic phrases, and an automatic report may be generated for the moderators, summarising any issues found with the profile.

If the NP score is sufficiently high, the profile will be temporarily hidden from search results and lists of online users, but will otherwise be able to interact as normal (ie, if you know the number of a profile, you can go directly to it, but you can't find it by searching).

When a profile update is saved, the profile checker will run automatically and display the results to the member, so they will be able to see straight away if there is an issue they can address.

Since any automated system is liable to false positives, the moderator tools provide an option to override the NP score of a profile, and make it visible once again.

In addition to automatic reporting, members can report another member, and optionally block them at the same time. When a member is reported by another member, they can select from a range of reasons, including inappropriate profile text, inappropriate images, harassment, or other.

Reporting a member makes it possible for the moderators to review the messages exchanged between those two members, to better assess the course of action that can be take.

The new moderator tools have been designed to allow both auto-generated and user-submitted reports to be dealt with easily and effectively, without allowing any of the access to unrelated personal information that was required in previous software versions, to try and ensure privacy and data protection rules are properly respected.

Tools available for moderators

Before delving into a detailed explanation of how to use the tools, here's a quick summary of what they offer.

Our aim should always be for a friendly resolution, ideally with members taking the responsibility of ensuring their profile adheres to the Community Standards, and hopefully the majority will be encouraged to do so by the profile checking tool highlighting issues with their profile when it's updated.

Obviously, some users will not respond well to being reported. For that reason, messages sent from the moderation tool all appear to come from a "BLUF Moderators" user and do not contain any information to identify which user sent them. However, all messages, and their senders are logged with each report, so that any moderator should be able to pick up an open report and see who has taken what actions, or sent what messages.

The moderator panel provides a summary of a report, which may be a description from a member, or a list of problematic content flagged up by the system. These are the other key elements

- Actions log. All actions taken are logged here, and a moderator can add an additional note at any time.
- Messages. All messages exchanged between the parties to a report and the moderators can be reviewed and, if necessary, translated to the moderator's own language.
- Profile. When a report is generated, the text of the profile will be saved. It can be viewed alongside the current profile, so moderators can see if changes have been made already, and any problems will be highlighted. Tools available allow a nickname to be reset if it contains inappropriate content, and the profile text can be edited manually, or reverted to the version saved when the report was created.
- Images. Profile images can be viewed, and selected images can either be deleted, or referred for re-classification.
- Conversations. Where a member has reported another member, recent messages between them can be viewed and, if necessary, translated automatically to the moderator's language.
- Actions. Messages can be sent to the member (and, if relevant, to the complainant). A selection of pre-set messages are provided, which will be sent in the recipient's selected language (English, German, French, Spanish), or the moderator can enter a custom message. Profile visibility can be changed, and blocks put in place between members.

Profile visibility

Moderators can set a member's profile visibility to normal, shadow, restricted or prohibited.

- Normal. The member can use the site normally.
- Shadow. The member can use the site normally, but will not appear in online lists or search results.
- Restricted. The member profile cannot be viewed, and they cannot view other profiles.
- Prohibited. The member cannot sign in to the site.

We should aim to restrict accounts as little as possible, but if members are not willing to abide by the Community Standards, the stronger restrictions may help persuade them.

Report actions

A moderator can leave a report open, if more information is forthcoming, or a response from a member is expected. It can be closed with no action taken, closed, ignoring the NP score, which means that false positives are ignored. Alternatively a report can be closed and shadow banned.

So, you want to be a moderator?

BLUF always needs people to be moderators, whether for photos or text. We already have a reasonable number of photo moderators, but as the text moderation tools are new, we need to recruit members who are willing to help.

- You must have been a member of BLUF for at least three years. We think people need to have been a part of the community for some time before they can make the sort of decisions that may be involved.
- You must have a working knowledge of English. Although the moderator tools can translate information to other languages, the tools themselves, and the documentation, like this, are all in English. This is particularly important for moderating text.
- You must have two-factor authentication enabled on your BLUF account, if you want to use any of the website moderation tools.
- You must exercise the privileges of moderation following the rules and procedures in this guide, without bias, to the best of your ability.
- You must agree to the privacy statement included below.

Moderator privacy statement

As a moderator, you may see personal and private information, potentially including intimate images, or conversations between other members. It is of the utmost importance that we respect the privacy of our members, whether or not they have been reported for potentially infringing BLUF rules or Community Standards.

You agree that you will not disclose any information obtained during your work as a moderator to other people, with the following exceptions:

A. **To other BLUF Community Moderators, via the notes on a report, or in the BLUF chat room provided for moderators, or to the Directors of BLUF Ltd via email.**
B. **Where required by law, or if you reasonably believe it is necessary to do so in order to prevent crime or serious injury.**

Information obtained during your work as a moderator includes the result of any report submitted, and the actions taken as a result. As a general principle, the outcome of a complaint against a BLUF member is still a private matter, and in the cases where it is necessary for a public statement to be made, that is the responsibility of the Directors, and not of individual moderators.

Remember that breaching these principles of privacy may expose you and/or BLUF to legal consequences, against which BLUF Ltd cannot indemnify you.

If you wish to become a BLUF Community Moderator, please contact webmaster@bluf.com via email, and explain whether you wish to assist with moderating photos, or texts, or both.

You must also confirm in your email that you have read, understand and agree to the Moderator privacy statement in bold text above, and that you have read and understand the rules and guidelines set out in this guide.

Being accepted as a Community Moderator is a privilege on BLUF, not a right, and in the interests of keeping the team to a manageable size, we may not be able to accept all who offer their time. In selecting members, we will aim to create a reasonable geographic spread to ensure that material can be reviewed in a reasonable time, no matter when it is uploaded to the site.

Photo classification using the BLUF app

One of the most important tasks on BLUF is photo classification, which is the first stage of approval of uploaded photos.

To make this as easy as possible to do, it is built in to the BLUF app, and will be available if you have appropriate permissions assigned to your BLUF account. To start, open the app, tap the logo to open the menu and tap the Your account option.

You will see a message similar to one of the following:

You can classify member photos via the app, but there are none waiting. Please check later.

There are photos waiting to be classified. Tap here to start. Photos waiting: 6

In the first instance, there is nothing waiting to be done. In the second case, there are photos you can review, so you should tap the message. Note that you may not be shown all the waiting photos - you will never be asked to classify your own images, and if someone else is classifying photos at the same time, the number may change while you are working.

After tapping, you'll see a brief reminder of what you need to do, followed by a screen like this.
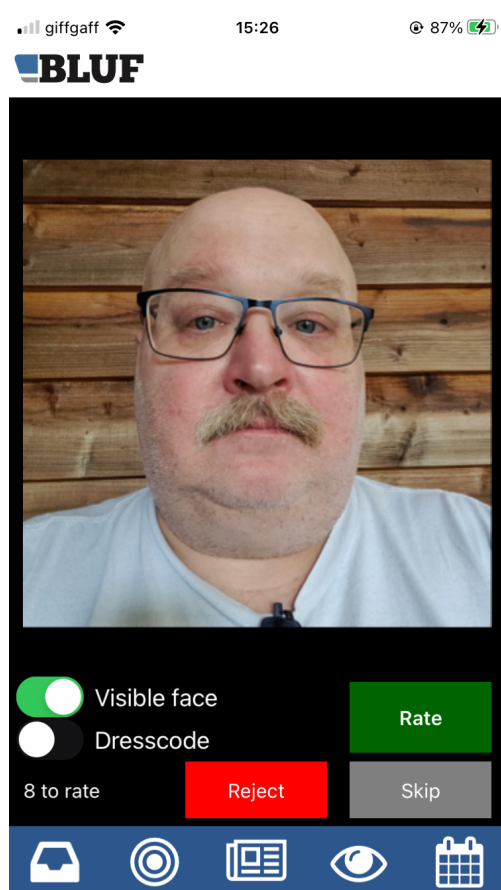
The screen is essentially the same on iPhone (pictured) and Android. On Android, there are tick boxes, rather than switches for the Visible Face and Dresscode options.

If you think a photo is unsuitable (see the Stop List earlier), tap the red Reject button.

If you do not want to make a decision on this image, tap the grey Skip button, and another will be displayed, if available.

Otherwise, select the options for Visible Face or Dresscode, based on the image content, and then tap the green Rate button to save your rating. Another photo will be displayed, if available.

You can pinch to zoom in on the photo, and move the zoomed area around, if you want to check on particular details, like belt buckles and so on.

To quit classifying photos, just tap one of the navigation buttons at the bottom of the screen, or select an option from the app's menu.

Obviously, it's best to get classification right, but don't panic if you make a mistake. When there are several images in a row that are rated the same, it's easy for muscle memory to take over. That's why there are multiple steps to the process. Mismatching ratings will mean an image is flagged up for double-checking at the next stage.

Photo classification using the BLUF website

To access classification on the web site, you need to sign in to the BLUF admin tools. When you first sign in to the website, you will see an admin status banner, which includes a link to the admin tools. You can also access them by choosing Admin tools from the site's BLUF menu. (If you do not see these options, then your account does not have any admin permissions applied).

When first entering Admin, you will be prompted for secondary authentication. This will either be a code number from your Authenticator app, a prompt in the BLUF app on your phone, or a request to activate your security key, depending on the security settings you chose for your account.

The first page you see on signing in to Admin is the index page. In the centre column under the heading Waiting tasks, you'll see a list of all the admin tasks waiting (you will probably only have permission for a couple of these).

If there are photos waiting to be classified, there will be a number next to the link "Photos to classify." Either click the link or select the Photos menu and then Classify. You will see a screen like this (there is a reminder of the instructions at the top of the page).
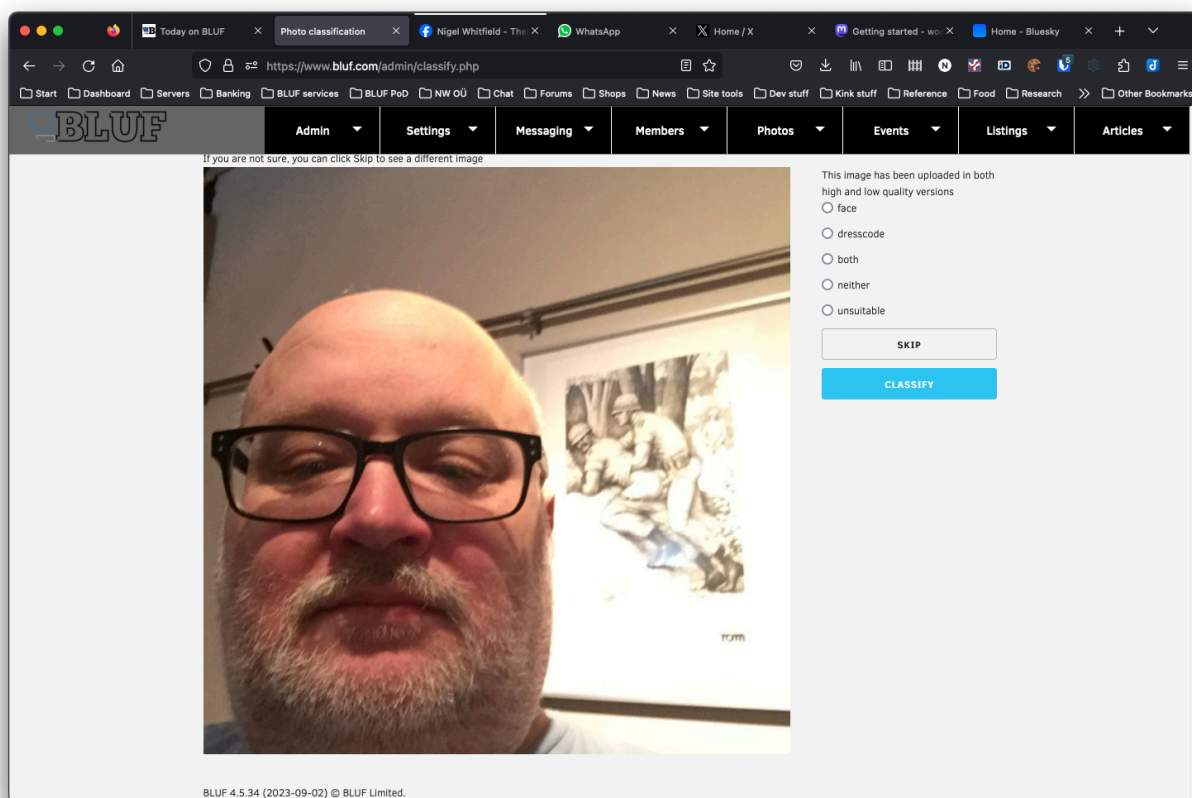

There are five radio buttons next to the photo, labelled face, dresscode, both, neither and unsuitable. Click the appropriate one for this image - both means "face and dresscode" - and then click Classify to go on to the next image, or click Skip if you want to skip past this image without classifying it, and go on to the next one.

Use the Unsuitable option for photos that feature items on the stop list.

Once more, while it's best to be accurate, sometimes muscle memory takes over; don't worry too much if you make a mistake. That's why everything is rated twice.

Photo approval using the BLUF website

To access photo approval, sing in to BLUF Admin as described in the previous section. You can access photos waiting for approval either via the Photos to approve link in the list of waiting tasks, or by selecting Approve from the Photos menu. This is the top of the page, showing the summary of what's on a profile, and the first image waiting for approval.
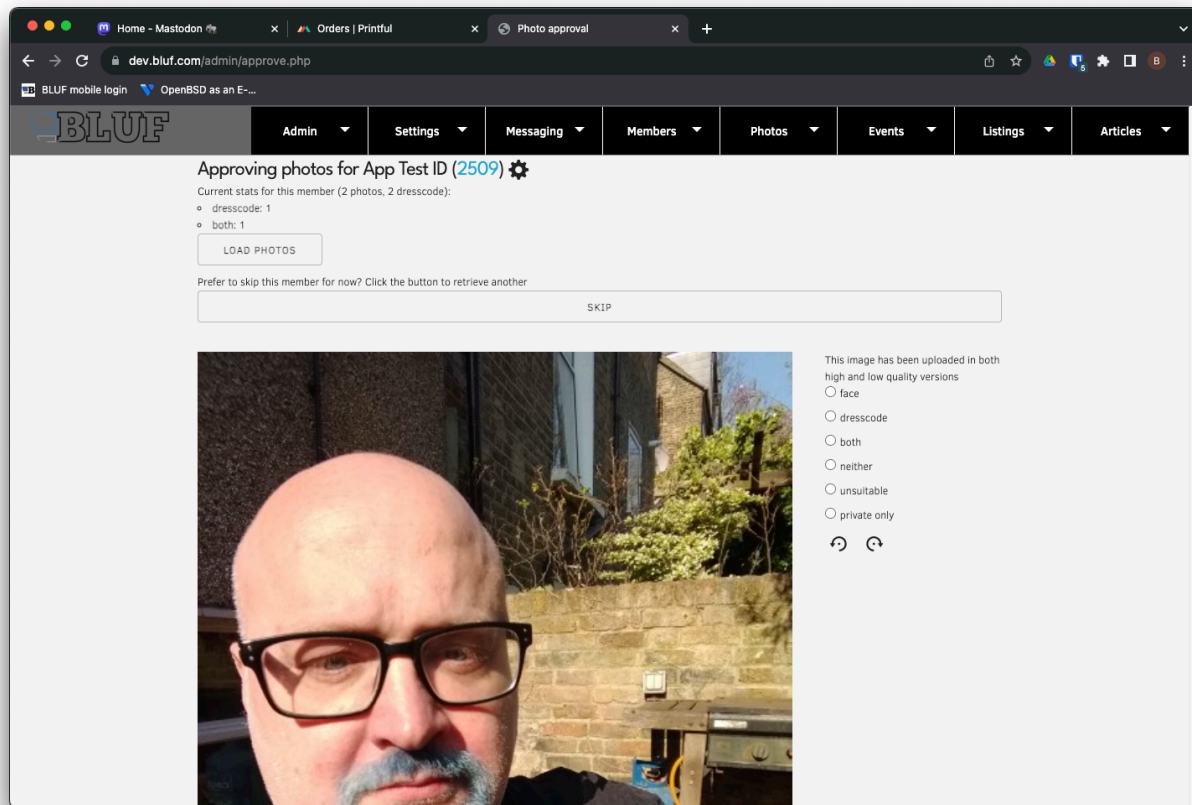
The stats at the top let you know the current mix of images on someone's profile, and additionally will include a warning if there are more than five non-dress code images. You can click the Load photos button to view the existing profile photos on the same page.

Next to each photo there will be a note indicating if it is available in high and low quality versions, or just a low quality version. If a photo is only available in low quality, and appears badly pixellated, it may be better to reject it as unsuitable.

The first five options for rating a photo are the same as in the Classification screen. The sixth option, 'private only' will add the photo to the member's private gallery, so it can be shown with selected other members, but will not be generally published on the profile.

The two buttons below allow you to rotate a photo left or right if it does not appear correctly.

As you scroll down the page, you will see all the photos currently waiting for this member, so you can rate them all in one go.

If any images that you mark as unsuitable contain banned content - eg forbidden symbols - tick the box marked 'Tick if rejected images included hate symbols.'

This will ensure that all images for the member in question are forced into resolution mode in future, for a double check that they have not tried to do the same again.

Click the Approve button to save your ratings, and accept or reject images as necessary.

Photo resolution using the BLUF web site

The photo resolution process is at the same link as photo approvals, and uses the same screens. After all waiting photos have been processed, the page reloads with a banner at the top indicating it's in resolution mode. The button at the bottom of the screen says 'Resolve' rather than approve.

Additionally, next to each image, the rating applied by the two people who have viewed it so far will be displayed, together with a warning if the member has been marked for photo review (ie, when rejecting images previously, some of them included hate symbols).

The photos you will have to resolve will be:

A. All photos of members flagged for additional review
B. All photos marked solely as 'face'
C. All photos marked solely as 'neither'
D. Any photos where the first and second ratings differ

For photos in category A, review carefully to make sure there are no banned items, including those that have been deliberately obfuscated.

For photos in categories B and C, consider the balance of photos on the profile, and whether adding this image to the profile will result in too low a proportion of leather or fetish material.

If the photo is of things like leather gear - gloves, boots, uniform laid out on a bed - it can usually go on the profile.

If it is gear, but not leather - rubber, and so on, it should be marked as private.

If a face photo is overly casual - a bright T shirt, sports or business attire, or a holiday snap, for example, it should usually be marked as private.

For photos in category D, consider both the ratings that have been given to it, and decide which is the most appropriate, giving weight to the same points as above, and to the overall balance of images on the profile already.

What is "overall balance" ?

We want the majority of photos on BLUF to be at least leather, and preferably meeting the dresscode. However, note that photos may be classified as face where there is a lot of leather, but it's not possible to classify them as 'dresscode' simply because only the head and shoulders can be seen.

Almost every member should have a face photo. The software presently prevents members who have a photo classified as 'face' or 'both' from removing the last face photo from their profile, and we require all new members to have a face photo.

However, there are two exceptions, and these may sometimes give rise to complaints:

A. Members who joined the club before we made a face photo mandatory. We encourage these members to have a face photo, and if they add some, they will not be able to delete the last one. However, we don't presently feel it reasonable to tell people that they can no longer remain a member, if they have been one for so long without a face photo.
B. In very limited cases, we may approve a new member request to not have a face photo, or to only have a private one, at our discretion. Valid reasons may be, for example, where someone has a public profile such that being visible on BLUF could cause them serious problems, or where someone works in a profession where being known as a member of BLUF could cause problems. These exceptions are, and will remain, extremely rare.

Photo tagging on the BLUF web site

If you have permission to tag photos, you can access this page by clicking on Photos to tag from the list of Waiting Tasks, or by selecting Tag from the photos menu.

You will see a screen like this (with the tinted box displaying a photo, removed here for privacy reasons):
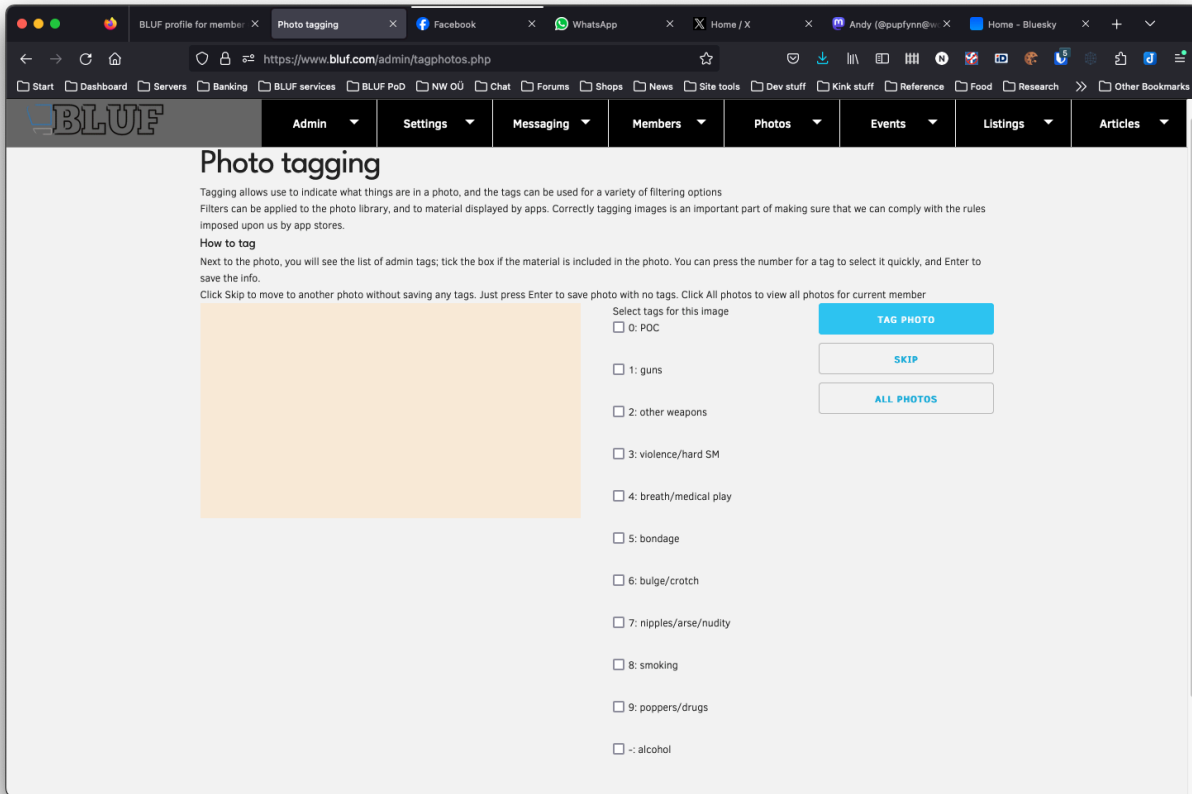
Tagging has been designed to be done quickly by using the numeric keypad, but you can use the mouse to tick the relevant tags, if you prefer, and then click Tag Photo.

If you don't want to tag a photo, click Skip to load another.

If none of the tags apply to an image, just click Tag Photo, or press Enter on the numeric keypad.

To quickly select a tag, use the numeric pad on your keyboard and press the number corresponding to the tag. For example, for a photo containing bondage and smoking, you would just need to press 5, 8 then Enter to mark both categories and save the tags.

The All Photos button will allow you to manage all photos for a member, if you have permissions.

The page will work through all profile photos that are waiting to be tagged, and then present all private photos that are waiting for tags.

Dealing with reported users on BLUF

In this section, we explain how to use the reports system to deal with members who have been reported, either by the automated system, or by another member.

Note that this tool has changed substantially, and the Community Standards are newly introduced. So it is likely that we may need to amend some of the processes outlined here as the system beds in. If there are any substantial revisions, a new version of this document will be produced, and moderators will be advised via email and the moderator chat room.

Reports can be accessed by clicking Open reports in the Waiting tasks list, or by choosing Reports from the Members menu.

On first opening the page, a privacy reminder will be displayed:

Remember that the reports system gives you access to information, including in some cases private messages, which is considered personal. You must not discuss reports with people other than other Moderators, or share any information obtained in the course of moderation. To do so may create both civil and criminal liabilities. We must ALWAYS treat privacy seriously, even where members may be breaching other rules

Click OK to dismiss the reminder, and you will see the list of reports, which looks something like this:

For each report you can see the source (either 'auto' or a BLUF number), the member reported, the reason, and some details. If there are new messages regarding a report, the number unread will be shown.

For auto-generated reports, it is possible to close them directly from this screen, by ticking the box in the Case close column, and then Close Selected Reports

You may typically do this if there are lots of reports to handle, and it appears a relatively minor infringement. However, it's recommended that each report is viewed before being closed.

The detail report page has several sections, not all of which are automatically displayed. Starting on the next page, we'll look through them, and explain how to deal with reported users, beginning with a report that is automatically generated by the system.

An example automatic report

This is a typical automatic report, generated in this case by a profile being updated to include the number 88.
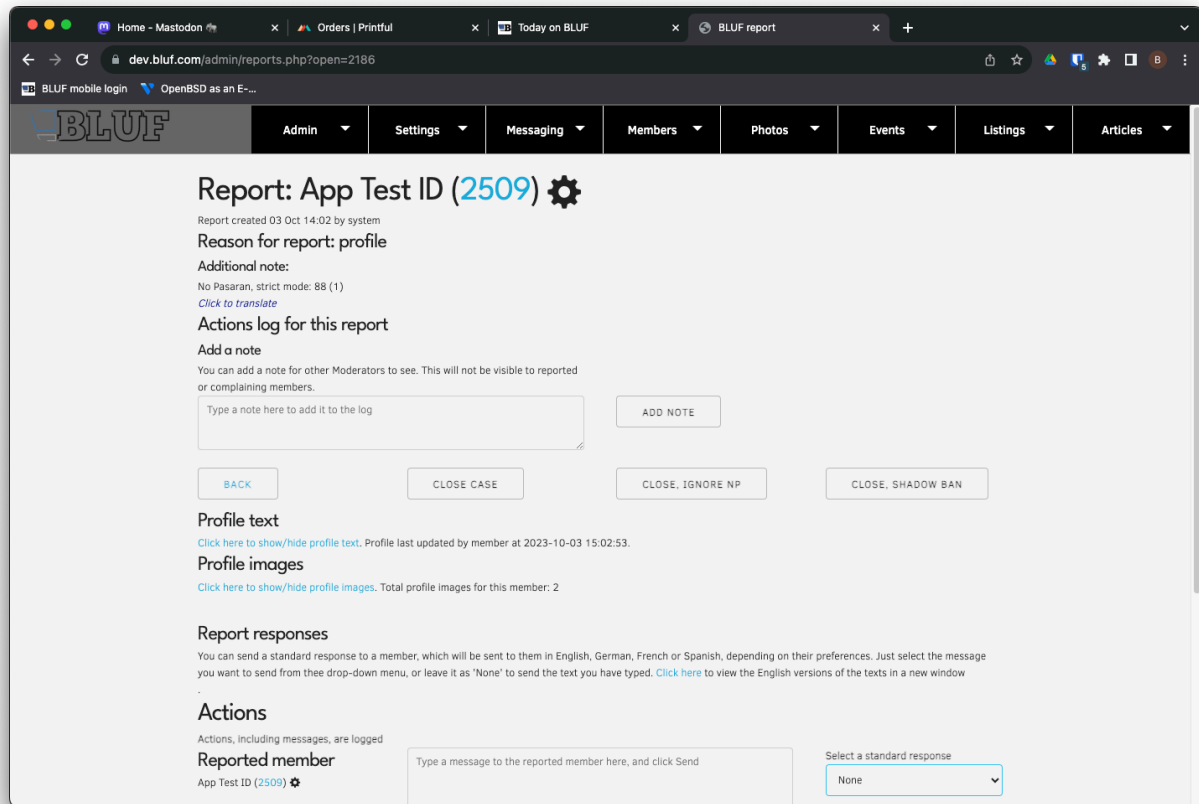
For a report such as this the note will say something like "No Pasaran, strict mode: 88 (1)". No Pasaran is our profile checking tool, and this indicates that the word or phrase 88 was found once. If other problematic phrases are found, those too will be included, with the number of times for each.

If a report was submitted by a user, and is not in your own language, you can translate the details using the link provided.

Next is the action log. This will start empty, but will have a line added to it each time a moderator takes an action. You can also add a note, for example if you want to flag something up to other moderators, or ask for a second opinion. A BLUF number and name will be listed next to each action taken on a report.

Next are quick buttons; Back to go back to the list of reports. Close case will close the report with no further actions being taken.

Close, Ignore NP is used to tell the system to ignore the score assigned to a profile. This is used if, for example, the system has flagged profile content, but it's not used in an inappropriate way. For example, someone may write "I dislike nazi role play, and people with SS or 88 in their nickname," which could potentially trigger a shadow ban, or make their profile subject to content filters that some users have turned on. Using this option ensures their profile is displayed correctly, without issue.

Conversely, Close, Shadow Ban will do the opposite; it closes the case, but makes the profile invisible in search results and online lists.

Next are headings for Profile Text and Profile Images. In the case of profile text, the date of the last update is shown, so you can tell easily if the profile has been updated since the report was sent.

Click the link to show the profile, and a screen similar to this is will be displayed:
On the left is the profile text at the time the report was created, while on the right is the profile text as it is now. Any items detected by the scanner will be highlighted in yellow.

If the user has a nickname that is not appropriate, click Reset Nickname and it will be changed to be BLUF#xxx, where xxx is replaced by their BLUF number. The Ignore NP and Shadow ban options have the same function (but without closing the report) as the two Close buttons above.

If you wish to edit a user's profile text, click Edit profile. This should be considered as a last resort, as we should always try to persuade users to update their profile voluntarily. You will be reminded of this via a pop-up message when you select Edit Profile.

After editing a profile to remove material, you **must** inform the member using the standard text provided.

If you click Confirm the profile text will be loaded into an editor.

You can edit the profile here. Try to make edits as simple as possible, and confine yourself to material that breeches the guidelines or things like fixing links or language tags.

The Save button will ask you to confirm that you want to replace the profile with your new version. If you click Revert, you can return the profile to the version originally reported. Clicking Cancel leaves the editor, without making any changes.

When to edit a profile

A mentioned, **editing a profile is something that should be done as little as possible.** We should normally ask users, via one of the standard messages, to update their profile to remove problematic content. They can use the Profile Check tool to see the results.

The following are situations where you may wish to edit a profile

• Where the user has made a simple technical error with links or language tags, you may edit it to fix them. You should inform them that you have done so.
• Where a profile contains text or links that may create a real risk of legal jeopardy if not removed as soon as possible (eg, links to illegal content, extremely offensive hate speech)
• Where a user has been asked to update their profile to remove content, but has either refused, or has not done so within a reasonable time (usually at least a couple of days)

Below the Profile text section, you will see the option to hide or display profile images. When displayed, you will see something like this:
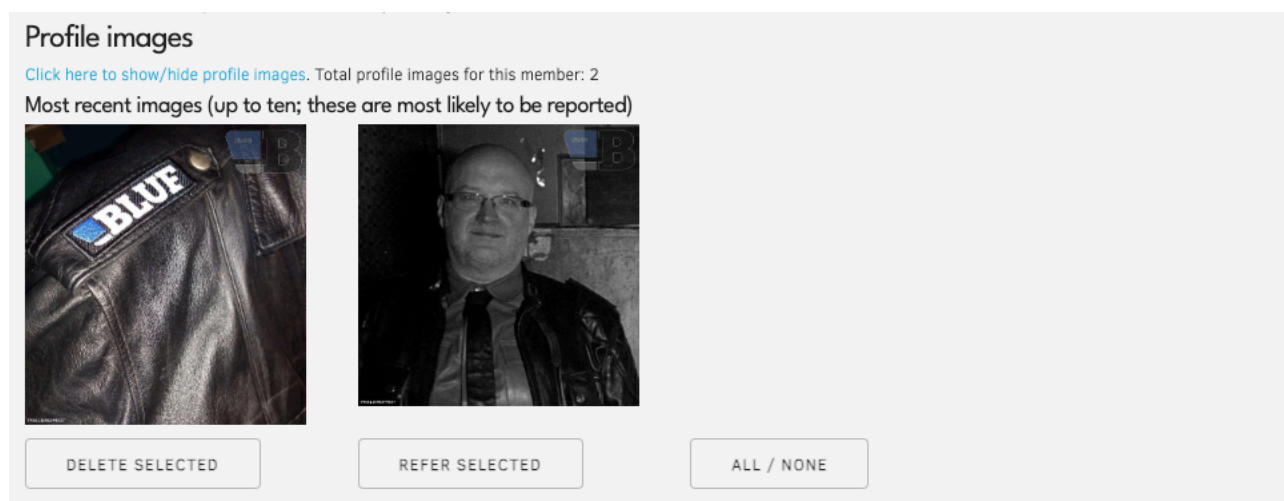
By default, only the most recent ten images added to a profile are shown, as these are probably those most likely to generate a complaint. If there are more than ten images, then a Load mode button will appear, which will load the remaining images.

You can select an image by clicking on it, and unselect by clicking again. Selected images will have a dotted red border added to them. You can select all images, or none of them, using the All/None button.

To remove an image, click Delete Selected. If you think an image needs to be reviewed, click Refer Selected, which will send it back to the photo moderation team.

We aim to make sure images are classified correctly in the first place, but if an image featuring inappropriate material does find its way to a profile, then you should delete it, and send the member one of the standard responses to let them know what action has been taken.

Below the images section, you will find Report responses. This is for messages between the moderators and reported (or complaining) members. Like the other sections, it can be toggled on or off by clicking a link.

To send a message to the member, type it in the box and click Send. It will be delivered to their BLUF inbox as a message from BLUF Moderator Team.

You should not include information in the message that identifies who you are. This is to ensure privacy, and that you can use BLUF as normal when not moderating content. All messages regarding reports are delivered back to the moderator tools, where they can be dealt with effectively.

Standard responses

For common tasks, instead of writing a message yourself, you should select a standard response. These will automatically be delivered to members in the language they selected for the BLUF website (English, German, French or Spanish). You should use these wherever possible.

These are the available texts. Each will be prefixed with a heading, and a reminder to reply to the message with a response. The BLUF logo will also be included in these messages, to show it's an official message.

It will, hopefully, be obvious when to use each of these responses.

REQUEST profile update

Your profile has been reviewed by our Moderators, and we believe that it contains content that may breach the BLUF Community Standards. Please update your profile at the earliest opportunity. The Profile Check tool on your own page will highlight areas that may be of concern.

REQUEST more info

You have reported another member for harassment. We will review the messages you have exchanged with them, however if you have additional details to share, please reply to this message.

INFO about community standards

The BLUF Community Standards are intended to protect both individual members, and the club as a whole. You can find a link to them at the bottom of every page of the web site. You can also download our detailed guide for Moderators from https://bluf.com/docs

NOTIFY content removed

We have removed content from your profile that we believe may breach the BLUF Community Standards.

NOTIFY profile visibility

We have restricted the visibility of your profile as it contains material that breaches our Community Standards.

WARN about harassment

Please remember that the BLUF Community Standards require you to treat other members with respect, and not to harass or abuse them. If you believe something is wrong with someone's profile, please report it rather than dealing with it yourself. If you have personal issues with someone, please use the block tool.

WARN about politeness

BLUF Moderators are volunteers, and we would kindly ask that you engage with them constructively and politely. Abusing the Moderator team may result in your account being restricted or deleted.

THANKS for reporting

Thank you for your report. We are investigating and will take appropriate action. Please note that Data Protection rules usually prevent us from providing you with full details of actions taken by our Moderators against another member.

Setting a profile status

Below the responses box, you'll find an option to set the status of a profile to normal, shadow, restricted, or prohibited.

- Normal. This allows the user to use the BLUF site as normal.
- Shadow. The user can use the site as normal, but will not appear in lists of online members, or in search results. Set an account to this state if there is inappropriate material that you have asked them to remove.
- Restricted. The user can sign in to the site, and use messaging, but they cannot view other profiles, and nor can their own profile be used. This can be used as a sanction if they are not willing to remove content from their profile after a request.
- Prohibited. The user will not be able to sign in to the site, and will be asked to contact the webmaster. This is a last resort action. Use only if a user has published material on their profile that is grossly offensive, or illegal, has been extremely abusive in response to requests to update their profiles or has established a history of harassing other members.

Report messages

When there are messages attached to a report, you will see an additional section on the page, headed Messages regarding this report, with an indication of whether or not there are new messages.

You can click to expand this section, as with the other parts of a report. If there are unread messages from a member regarding the report, this section will be automatically expanded when the report is viewed.

For messages from members, you can also click to have them automatically translated into your own language.
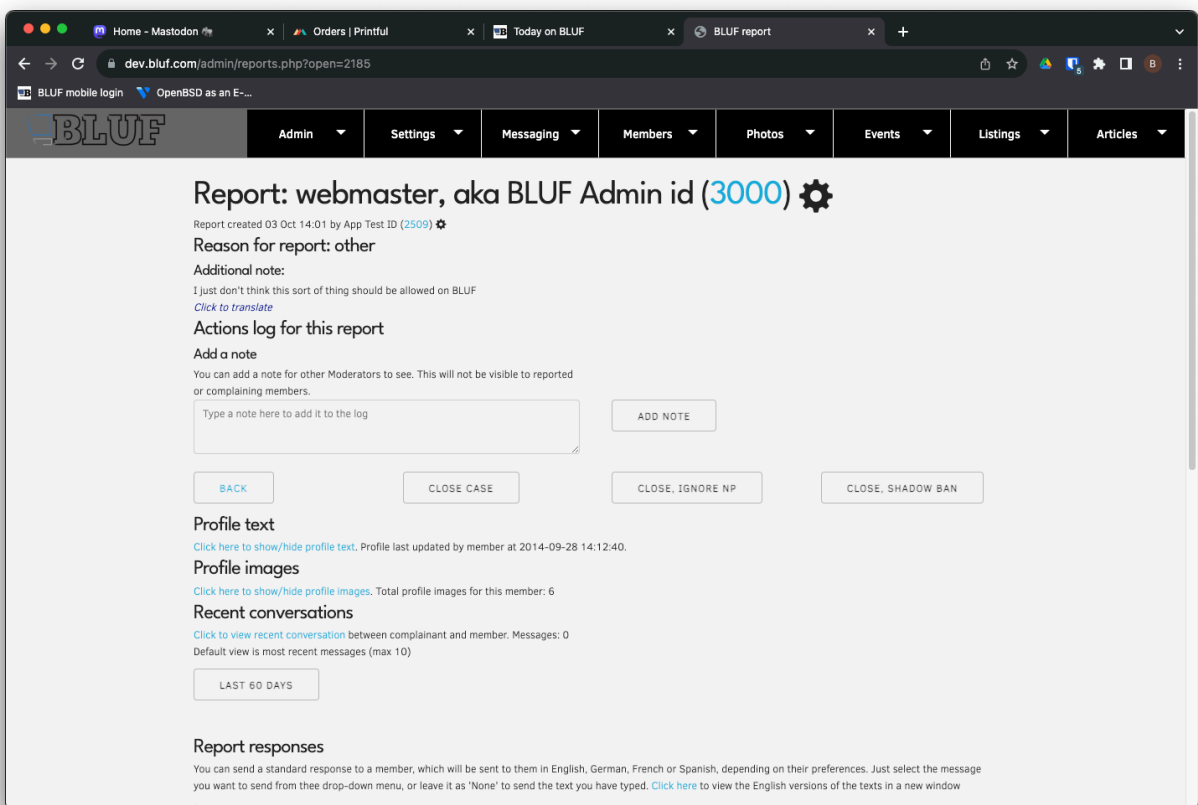

An example user report

A report generated by another user has the same elements as an auto-generated report, but with some additions.

First, if the member has been reported by other members within the last twelve months, there will be a note telling you how many times, and a link to click to view all those reports.

Secondly, there will be a Recent conversations section on the report page, which can be expanded to view messages between the reported member and the complaining member. By default, the most recent ten messages will be displayed, and you can click a button to load instead the most recent sixty days of messages.

Next to each message, you will see a translate button, allowing you to read it in your own language if necessary, though always bear in mind that a translation may lack some of the nuance of the original.

This should be sufficient to establish whether or not a report of harassment is accurate. Note that it is not unknown for a member to report someone for harassment when they appear to be the instigator.

Do not be afraid to ask for additional information or clarification. Some reports of harassment can appear to be a simple case of someone being approached by someone that they don't want to talk to. This does not generally constitute harassment sufficient to issue someone with a warning, let alone to remove them from the site.

However, it is always possible that there is other history between people which provides additional context to the messages exchanged.

Always remember you have a duty of utmost privacy with regard to any messages between members that you are able to view as a moderator.

The second new item is in the Report responses section, where you can send messages to the complaining member, as well as to the reported member. You can also, if necessary, update the account status of the complaining member, which may be necessary if they are creating a malicious report.

Pay attention to make sure you are sending responses to the correct member, and do not share private information.

Finally, you can impose a block between members, or remove an existing on. Any existing block will be displayed, with its expiry date. To remove a block, enter 0 as the number of days. Otherwise, enter a number, like 365 for a one year block.

Things to consider when dealing with reports

It's impossible to give a complete guide to all the possible situations that may arise, but this section is intended to give broad guidance.

Take a firm line on banned symbols

Our legal advice on codes like 88, SS, HH and so on is that we should take the strongest possible stance, however you should take note of context - it's reasonable for someone to say "No interest at all in 88 style politics." If a member is insistent that it's just a reference to a date, consider the plausibility of this, based on their photos, and consider asking them to submit age verification info. We can do this for many countries, and the system involves a third party provider (Stripe), who verifies official documents. Contact the webmaster if you think this needs to be done.

Do not accuse people of having a particular politics

Not everyone who uses some of these symbols considers themselves far right. Sometimes people also use them innocently (the // symbol in particular can be used unwittingly); other times they consider it a sex thing, and nothing more. If requesting the removal of such material, it is likely to be more productive to simply explain to people that they're banned, than to accuse them of being a Nazi.

Avoid being drawn into "he started it" discussions

Sometimes reports of harassment are not what they seem. However, we should not get drawn into intractable disputes between people who just don't like each other. We can, though, expect BLUF members to behave like adults. We can put a block in place between people if they're incapable of being civil to each other.

Racially charged insults should be escalated

If a member is harassing another one using insults related to race, ethnicity or nationality, this should be brought to the attention of the site admin as soon as possible. This form of harassment is particularly nasty, and is likely to result in removal from the club, and a permanent ban from rejoining. Besides the more obvious, this can also include (and has done in the past) things like attacking German members for the imagined actions of their ancestors in WW2. At the very least, the first action when this sort of thing comes to light should be to restrict the account of the offending member.

Some items are flagged to moderators, but not to members

From time to time, you may come across auto-generated reports for items like 'privacy notice', 'all lives matter', which are not highlighted to users. These 'soft' reports indicate something that's either unnecessary (like copy and pasted privacy notices, as there is such a notice on every page of the site) or that while relatively innocent may, in our experience, upset others. Use your judgement as to whether or not it's worth a gentle request to a member to re-phrase things.

Members have a legal right to see their data

Be mindful of data protection, and do not add information that could bring BLUF into legal jeopardy. Members have a right to obtain information about them, and whatever your personal feelings about someone involved in a report, they should not be committed to BLUF records.

Detail example 1. A harassment report

This example shows how you might handle a harassment report, from signing in to BLUF, to resolution.

Sign in to the website as usual. Click the BLUF menu and select Admin tools. If you are using a security key, activate it when your web browser prompts you. If you are using an Authenticator app, open it, select your BLUF account, and type the number shown into the pop-up box on BLUF.

From the Waiting tasks list, click on Open Reports. When the list of reports appears, click read the privacy warning, and then click OK to dismiss it.

Click the View button next to a harassment report. If any other moderators have taken actions, you will see them logged. For now, we're assuming this is a new report, so nothing has yet been done.

Scroll down to Recent conversations to see messages exchanged between the reported member and the complaining member; click to view the messages. If they are not in your own language, use the Translate button next to each one to see what it says.

If the messages do indicate harassment, then scroll down to Actions, and in the section for the reported member, select 'WARN about harassment' and click Send.

If they do not, or things are unclear, go to the section for the complaining member, select 'REQUEST more info' and click Send.

Just below, you will see if there is a block between the members. If there is, you probably don't need to take any further action now. However, is there is no block, enter 365 in the box and click the Block button.

Now, click Back to return to the list of reports; if either member responds, the number of responses will show in the list.

Later, re-open the report to view responses. They will be in the section 'Messages regarding this report,' which will auto-expand if there are new messages. Review any responses and decide if further action is necessary.

In an ideal world, the reported member will agree to behave, and no further action is necessary. You can then close the report.

If they respond abusively, send the standard message 'WARN about politeness'

If they continue to be abusive, you may wish to discuss with other moderators whether or not their account should be restricted, or further action taken. You should also check at the top of the report to see if they have been reported by other members in the last twelve months. Multiple reports for harassment may indicate a pattern of behaviour that warrants stronger action.

Detail example 2. Inappropriate profile content

This example shows how you might deal with inappropriate content, such as 88, SS references. Sign in to the BLUF website, as per the first example, and access the list of reports.

Click View to open the report.

If the report was submitted by another member, rather than by the system, scroll down to the Actions section, and send the THANKS for reporting message.

Click to view the profile text. Pay most attention to the version on the right; this will be the latest version of the profile, with any problematic content highlighted.

If it appears to be a false alert - for example, someone has entered 1.88 as their height, and the system has flagged that - then you can the IGNORE NP button to tell the system to ignore it.

However, if there are multiple items that breach the guidelines, then scroll down to the Actions section again and send REQUEST profile update to the reported member. Depending on the severity of the content, you may want to also click the SHADOW button to that the profile is not visible online or in searches (note that the system will do this automatically for serious cases anyway).

You can now return to the list, and wait for a response from the reporting member.

If the member simply amends their profile without responding, you will not see a notification on the list, so you should review any waiting reports periodically, and see if the profile has been updated. If it has, and it now meets the Community Standards, then you can close the report.

If the member responds and asks for further clarification, you can refer them to the community standards, and this guide, with the standard INFO about Community Standards response, or you can explain to them what the issue is, and how you would like it fixed.

If the nickname is problematic, ask the user if they would change it to something that meets our guidelines. If the refuse, you can use the Reset nickname button to do that for them. Similarly, if they refuse to edit their profile, you may wish to edit it to remove offending content.

Note, as mentioned previously, this should be a last resort. We should encourage people to edit their own profiles to keep in line with the Community Standards.

If a member refuses to update their profile, or adds offensive material back after it has been removed, restrict their account, and discuss further actions with other moderators.

Appendix 1. Matters arising elsewhere

Sometimes, members will report a someone for behaviour that has happened elsewhere. This is an extremely problematic area.

The site rules contain a fairly general clause about bringing the club into disrepute. This would, in our opinion, include things like sharing material that linked the BLUF logo or club name with Nazi material, outright racism, or something similarly serious.

It should not include legitimate criticism, whatever your opinion of it, of BLUF policies in general. For instance, during a heated discussion about gun imagery on Facebook, some members reported screenshots of conversations on Instagram in which people on one side or another shared their opinions of me, of BLUF, or of other parties to the conversation.

It is unreasonable to expect that everyone in the club shares the same point of view, and they are entitled to free speech.

What happens in other cases? If a member harasses another via WhatsApp, say? Or is pestering them on another site? Or at a non-BLUF event?

We do not have jurisdiction over other sites, or events, obviously. And it is hard to accept that BLUF members agree by joining the club that we can take action regarding things that they do outside of BLUF, in the rest of their life, as long as that does not spill over into 'Bringing the club into disrepute.'

So, broadly speaking, in a case that involves actions outside of BLUF, you should in the first instance reply to the complainant asking for as much information as possible; that could include links to material, or transcripts of conversations, for example.

As much as is possible, this information should be recorded in the Notes section of a report, so that any other moderator who looks at it can see what's going on.

In many cases, you will have to resign yourself to disappointing all sides in a complaint of this nature; unless an offence has been particularly egregious, there is likely little more we can reasonably do than warn the reported member about their behaviour. And the complainant will probably be disappointed we didn't go further than a block.

Activities that may give sufficient grounds to use the 'disrepute' rule to remove a member could include proven cases of physical or sexual assault, racially aggravated actions, and illegal actions.

However, such an action should not generally be taken without discussion with at least one BLUF Director.

Appendix 2. Technical info on codes for profiles and messaging

One of the reasons mentioned earlier for amending a profile is to fix codes in a profile for a member, for example if they have tried to make their profile multilingual, but made a mistake with the special tags.

To help you do that, this section explains the codes that can be used in profiles and messages.

Multilingual profiles

Profiles can have multiple languages, and the site will display the correct one to visitors.
Each section starts with a code in square brackets on a line of its own. Sometimes people use the wrong sort of bracket, or put the code in upper or mixed case. The codes only work when in lower case

[en] for English, [de] for German, [fr] for French or [es] for Spanish.

Markdown in profiles

BLUF profiles can also support markdown, which allows people to use things like bold, italic and create links. One common mistake people make is to try adding a hashtag to their profile, which MarkDown interprets as a large heading, since # is the symbol for starting a heading.

A link in Markdown looks like this

[this is the text to click](https://bluf.com)

Links to profiles

Both profiles and messages support linking to other BLUF profiles automatically. The link will reflect the nickname of the member, and on the website will also change colour when someone is online.

To make or fix a link, all it needs is an @ either side of the member number. So to link to the author's profile, the code is @3@

The most common mistake is missing the closing @ symbol.

Links to BLUF content

Profile and messages support links to BLUF content, such as venues, clubs, shops, and events. For example, The Backstreet is item number 1 in our database of venues (the number is usually the last part of the link to an item in the listings). Adding the code /v1 to a message or Profile will create a link to The Backstreet. Similarly, adding the code /e4661 will create a link to the calendar entry for Darklands 2024.

These are the supported items at present:

/b   BLUF blog post
/c   clubs
/d   BLUF discount offer
/l   BLUF local group
/m   BLUF magazine article
/n   BLUF news item
/p   photographers
/s   shops
/t   forum thread
/v   venues