

Search

Menu

[Home](#) > [About us](#) > [What we do](#)

What we do

The Government Communication Service is the professional body for public service communicators working in government departments, agencies and arm's length bodies.

Communication is one of the 4 main levers of government alongside legislation, regulation and taxation.

Our goal is to provide an exceptional standard of professional practice to support the government, implementing the priorities of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet to build a stronger economy, a fairer society, a United Kingdom and a global Britain.

On this page

- [who we are](#)
- [mission](#)
- [history](#)
- [communication function](#)
- [strategic partnerships](#)

In this section

- [What we do](#)
- [Our awards](#)
- [Our communication channels](#)
- [Volunteer for GCS](#)

Related content

- [Government Communication Service: our strategy for 2022 to 2025](#)

Who we are

We are over 7,000 professional communicators from across the UK, supporting and promoting the work of 25 ministerial departments, 21 non-ministerial departments and over 300 agencies and other public bodies: [list of organisations on GOV.UK](#).

We are a community of brilliant communications professionals, serving the public across the United Kingdom: from Whitehall to Whitehaven, Inverness to Cardiff and Belfast – we work in all regions of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Overseas, GCS International (GCSI) works with foreign governments to build their communications capability.

Membership: [join the professional body for government communication professionals](#).

Watch the GCS Showreel: Performance with Purpose (2 minutes)



GCS showreel: Performance with purpose
Cabinet Office

02:22

Mission

Our mission is to deliver world-class public service communications which support ministers' priorities, enable the efficient and effective operation of public services, and improve people's lives.

It is held to account for the implementation of the annual UK Government Communications Plan.

[UK Government Communications Plan](#)

Our aim is to be a visible, trusted, strategic partner across government. GCS has expertise in all communication disciplines.

We design, plan and deliver world-class media work, public-facing campaigns and stakeholder and internal communications.

History

Government communication dates back to the First World War, when the use of information proved crucial to victory.

In the century since, the profession has grown and evolved, using advertising, the media and in recent years social media to inform and educate citizens and uphold our democracy.

We're still changing – for example, the Rapid Response Unit, set up in April 2018, deals with the problems and dangers posed by 'fake news'.

Read [Alexander McKenna's 100 Years of Government Communications History](#) to find out more.

Communication function

The Government Communication Service (GCS) is one of 14 functions that operate across the Civil Service.

Led by Chief Executive of Government Communication, [Simon Baugh](#), GCS is governed through departmental Directors of Communication and the [GCS Board](#), which is chaired by the Minister for the Constitution. The board makes recommendations on the direction, operation and development of the profession and holds us to account for the implementation of our major campaigns.

We carry out our work in accordance with the [Civil Service Code](#), and our [Propriety Guidance](#) and without political bias. We abide by legislation that affects our work such as data protection, Welsh language, disability discrimination, freedom of information and copyright.

We bring together people, processes, and specialist expertise within and across government. We work in partnership to ensure we set the highest standards of communication practice across the following key areas:

- embracing our commitment to [professional development](#), skills and standards, as well as setting clear career pathways with our curriculum
- implementing outstanding campaigns, following the [OASIS \(Objective, Audience insight, Strategy, Implementation, Scoring/evaluation\) campaign framework](#)
- evaluating the outcomes and impact of every campaign utilising the [Evaluation Framework 2.0](#)
- maximising technology to gain audience insights, develop the best ideas, implement strategies and achieve maximum impact
- engaging our staff through strategic [internal communication](#) excellence
- exemplifying Civil Service leadership behaviours
- upholding the highest ethical standards through the [Civil Service Code](#) and [diversity and inclusion policies](#)
- improving delivery through the five core disciplines set out in the [Modern Communication Operating Model \(MCOM\)](#)

Strategic partnership

We partner closely with organisations in the public, private and third-party sectors in pursuit of the greatest cost-efficiency and impact.

GCS works with professional bodies and organisations across the public sector to:

- improve collaboration and partnership across public service communications programmes
- share best practices and raise capability across public service communications, learning from the best
- improve professional development and support UK public service communications professionals across all organisations.

Initiatives include:

- [COV Advisory Council](#)
- [Public Sector Communications Academy 2019](#)

Published 5 March 2020
Last updated 27 June 2024



[News](#) [Blog](#) [Publications](#) [Webinars](#)

[Accessibility statement](#) [Privacy notice](#) [Cookies notice](#) [Cookie Preference Centre](#)
[Contact us](#)

OGI

All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except where otherwise stated

© Crown copyright