

# Kumoricon

Behind the Scenes => Mod Squad => Topic started by: JeffT on April 13, 2008, 10:37:29 PM

Title: **Moderation policies**

Post by: **JeffT on April 13, 2008, 10:37:29 PM**

## General

- Moderators should enforce the code of conduct and other special cases as noted below.
- Moderators can use discretion in strictness of enforcement, exceptions, and in unique situations not covered by the code of conduct in which a moderator may need to step in.
- Possible actions to take for violations of the rules or other moderation needs:
  - Delete the post or thread in question.
  - Lock the thread in question but leave it in place.
  - Edit out a section of a user's post. (In this case, add a minimal note to the end of the post explaining what was edited, why, and the moderator's username.)
  - Send a private warning, request, or explanation to the user.
  - If multiple users are involved, publicly warn users in general.
  - In extreme cases or repeated lesser cases (after warning), temporarily ban the user.
  - In more extreme cases, permanently ban the user.
- Helpful other actions for moderators to perform:
  - Moving threads posted in the wrong forum area to the correct area.
  - Modifying uninformative subject lines.
  - For posts posted by staff in their official capacity only, editing posts to reflect updated information. Unless it is in tabular or database-style format and the user already expects changes from other moderators, add a note explaining the edit if you are not the original poster.
  - Sticky or unsticky threads as needed, or requested by staff relating to their official duties.

## Moderator guidelines

- When you take action, post in the Mod Squad what you did. If a section of a post has been edited out, include it here. When "deleting" a post or thread, move it here. If you send a private message to the user, post the text and its reply, if they send one.
- If editing a post, follow these guidelines:
  - Edits should only remove, not add or replace content, with the exception of posts posted by staff in their official capacity (see above guideline pertaining to this).
  - Be sure to add the moderator's note explaining what was edited, why, and the moderator's username.
  - Be sure that it is clear what sections of the post are those posted by the original user, and those written by the moderator.
- Refrain from:
  - Adding commentary to a user's post except as necessary to explain an edit.
  - Publicly warning a user over an incident that involves only that user, except in unique circumstances when it may be warranted.
  - Editing other users' posts for "improvements" such as spelling or grammar (except for subject lines if necessary).
- On the subject of content deletion:
  - Whenever these guidelines refer to "deleting" content, posts, or threads, this actually means moving them to a private area accessible only to other moderators (Mod Squad or Memory Hole).
  - Moderators should not permanently delete content completely, except for spam bot posts.

## Special cases

- Spam (bots): If it is certain that a spam message is a bot post or otherwise massively spammed to many forums, these posters can have their accounts deleted. Otherwise, treat as spam posted by humans.
- Spam (human): The rules don't prohibit some promotion of one's own ventures, if they are participating members or potential participating members of the community—such as dealer's tables, art, one's own anime ventures, or other items relating to anime, gaming, and Japanese culture. However, posting of completely off-topic advertising material, especially by new users, is inappropriate. These can be deleted or edited out. Only ban the account if it is flagrantly spamming and completely off-topic, apparently spammed to multiple forums.
- Private message spam: Private message spam is strictly forbidden and will in most cases lead to the immediate banning of the user, the deletion of the unread private messages if they can be identified, and the deletion of the user's public posts relating to the content of the private messages.

- **Illegal content, particularly unlicensed anime goods:** Generally, links to unlicensed (meaning unofficial) goods that compete with commercial releases or potential commercial releases are not allowed (even if the property has not been licensed in the US). This includes bootlegs, fansubs, and pirated merchandise. Original fan works are fine. "Original fan works" means original drawings, stories, etc. of existing commercial characters and franchises. This is because original fan works do not in general compete with official specific items and both American and Japanese companies have a long history of allowing and even encouraging these items, such as fanart. (This delineation also applies to our exhibitors' hall: Bootlegs are not allowed but fanart is.)
- **Controversial subjects, particularly religion and politics:** Generally, religious and political discussions are not allowed, even in the "off-topic" forum. Slight topic drift in a topic that doesn't start out this way may be ok, but it should be avoided.
- **Account deletion:** Simple Machines Forum provides a means to request account deletion. Generally, we don't do this; the expectation when you post to an Internet forum is that it remains there permanently. Evaluate on a case-by-case basis. If a user is banned, do not delete the account unless it was a spam bot, invasion, or otherwise throwaway account.
- **Content retention:** Generally, keep threads online indefinitely. Do not purge or lock old threads, and do not delete content that is simply out of date. Do not use the "edit" feature to delete content from any posts besides your own except in the case when you must remove it, in which case, re-post it in the Mod Squad.
- **Other moderator violating the rules:** Rather than move or moderate the post yourself, please contact the user directly and come to an agreement, or post about it in the Mod Squad, or contact the chair, vice chair, or director of publicity to escalate the issue if needed.

## **Other Moderator Tasks**

In your spare time, as a moderator, you can do the following:

- Propose changes to forum organization or the addition of new areas.
- Propose new user post category titles.
- Propose new names for the "off-topic forum", or updated forum description text.
- Propose changes to policy or to the code of conduct based on your experience with moderating the forum.

## **Forum Policy Issues**

- **New accounts:** Due to problems with bots, invasion attempts, and spammers in the past, administrators must approve all new forum accounts. This is usually done at least daily.
- **Under age 13 users:** As required by US law for any Internet service that collects users' private data such as email addresses, we ask users when they subscribe if they are under age 13. If so, they must mail in a form (Kumoricon address provided) with a parent signature before we approve their account.
- **Editing posts:** The forum allows users to edit their posts only for up to 7 days after posting. Previously, there was no time limit. This time limit may be increased if there is enough desire. Staff can request edits to their posts if it is part of their official staff duties. Conversely, forum users who also happen to be moderators should not edit their own posts older than this unless the edits are related to official staff duties.

## **Moderator Staff Policy**

- All moderators should be staff. Generally, moderators are expected to regularly perform moderation duties and sign up for the staff position of "Forum Moderator" in addition to any other staff positions they may have. In exceptions to this case, all people with moderator access should still have some other staff position.
- The general exception to the above rule is that moderators from a given membership year can continue moderating after elections on a volunteer basis and still subject to the staff policies, subject to director approval, until the time when the new or continuing director begins accepting moderators for the next membership year.
- All Kumoricon board members have moderator access, which is consistent with their ability to make decisions on behalf of Kumoricon. This is not an expectation that all board members are taking on moderation as a full-time responsibility; but they have the access in case the need arises to deal with problems.
- All people with moderator access should be familiar with the moderation policies and follow them.

## **Terminology and Forum Areas**

- **"Spam":** Bulk, unsolicited content. This can refer to posts, private messages, or email.
- **"Off-Topic Forum":** The official name for this forum area, which rotates through humorous names. If you must, the name "random forum" is also acceptable, but this is not the official name. :) Avoid the name "spam forum", as this is inaccurate.
- **"Mod Squad":** Forum area for discussing moderator issues.
- **"Memory Hole":** Forum area where posts or threads from other areas are moved to "delete" them.