

On comments and moderation

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There have been many new commentators in this blog of late and the vast majority have been very welcome. Some however seem to be unaware that there is a moderation policy, [available here](#). And some have an unusual style, as was evidenced yesterday. In that case let me explain some basic rules of etiquette that apply here even if they don't universally.

First, this blog is a spare time activity. I may produce a lot and respond to a great many comments a day but it's done in my spare time. Yesterday's blogging started at about 6am when I arrived at Ely station to go to Brussels and was pretty much done by the time I was heading out of St Pancras.

After that there was work done on three separate papers (involving quite a bit of data analysis and several thousand words written), liaison with two journalists, discussion with colleagues on a conference paper for next year and a two hour parliament hearing. I got back home a bit before 10. I admit I snuck in a snooze on the way. I know: it was slothful of me.

In that schedule commentators who are obstreperous, demand attention, question my professional integrity and who also post comments so far removed from current thinking that an essay length response would be required are not going to get fulsome replies, partly because they're irritating, and that's boring, but mainly because I know they won't change their mind whatever I say given their aggressive starting point.

So please feel free to comment, but note that some moderation helps. There are long term dissenters from my opinions who still appear here because they do it with some respect. That I am happy with: I have many warm blooded friends (as opposed to social media ones) where the basis of the friendship is political difference. That's because in those cases the simple fact is that despite the differences we respect each other. And I only get really fed up when people arrive here and offer abuse. I won't put up with that in non-social media life. And I won't here either.