

The ANU Observer

Content Approval Policy

1. Conflicts of Interest

Any Editor determined to have a conflict of interest on content as per the Conflicts of Interest policy may not act as an Editor approving that article, or act in any stage of the editorial process.

2. News

2.1. Priority

Assigned news articles shall, at time of assignation to a reporter, be given one of two colour codes signifying the need for haste of publication of that news article.

- 2.1.1. There shall be two priorities of news, **Red** and **Green**.
- 2.1.2. Priority shall be based upon the urgency of publication of the article, and not the potential readership or journalistic significance of the content of the article.
- 2.1.3. **Red** articles shall be those which require or would greatly benefit from publication within 24 hours of assignation.
- 2.1.4. Reasons for urgency of publication include but are not limited to:
 - a) Potential for severe misinformation among the public in the absence of the article;
 - b) Reasonable expectation of the publication of the same or a very similar story by a rival publication or publication of relevant information on social media;
 - c) The immediate potential for the information being reported to become outdated or significantly altered within a short span of time;
 - d) A risk to public safety during the time in which an article is not published which can be ameliorated or informed by urgent publication; or
 - e) A reasonable and justifiable need amongst students or a subset of students to have the information as soon as possible.

2.2. Priority Assignment

- 2.2.1. Articles shall be presumed **green** by default.
- 2.2.2. Articles may be assigned **red** by a decision of no less than two Editors.
- 2.2.3. Notification of a decision to assign an article **red** must be provided to the Editorial Board as soon as possible.
- 2.2.4. Any Editor may veto the assignation of an article as **red**.

2.2.4.1. Where this occurs the Editorial Board will decide on the article's colour status as soon as is reasonably practicable.

2.3. **Approval of Green articles**

2.3.1. News articles with a Green priority must be approved by two Editors, neither of whom can be an author of the article.

2.3.2. Before approving a **green** article, an approving Editor must ensure that the article has followed the editorial process stipulated in appendix A part 1.

2.4. **Approval of red articles**

2.4.1. News articles with a **red** priority must be approved by a single Editor, who cannot be the author of the article.

2.4.2. Before approving a **red** article, an approving Editor must ensure that the article has followed the editorial process stipulated in appendix A part 2.

3. **Analysis**

3.1. **Definition**

3.1.1. Includes, but is not limited to;

3.1.1.1. Explainers

3.1.1.2. Analysis

3.1.1.3. Editorial Blogs

3.2. **Approval**

3.2.1. Analysis pieces must be approved by two Editors, neither of whom can be an author of the article.

3.2.2. Before approving an analysis piece, an approving Editor must ensure that the article has followed the editorial process stipulated in appendix A part 3.

4. **Other Content**

4.1. **Liveblogs**

4.1.1. The creation and publication of a liveblog as a whole is subject to the approval of two Editors.

4.1.2. Any member of the News Team may publish content on a Liveblog without prior permission of any Editor.

4.1.2.1. Should the Officer or a reasonable person in their position believe that the content may be controversial, require fact-checking, or otherwise require oversight, they are obliged to seek that oversight from an Editor.

4.2. **Social media posts**

4.2.1. Written posts on social media, including images with text, are considered to act as articles for the purpose of this policy, and will be assigned a red or green priority.

4.2.2. Other posts are governed under the Social Media Policy.

4.3. **Editorial Publications**

4.3.1. A statement made on behalf of the Observer Editorial Board which claims the Board's position on an issue must be unanimously supported by all members of the Observer Editorial board.

4.4. Miscellaneous

Any content not here covered that could reasonably be considered to be written content published by The ANU Observer shall require approval by two Editors.

Appendix A - Editorial Process

Part 1 - Green Articles

For stories written by a reporter or senior reporter

1. A **reporter** writes the article in collaboration with the **Editor** who assigned the article (**Editor 1**).
2. **Editor 1** performs a **first edit**.
3. **Editor 1** returns the article to the **reporter** for feedback.
 - a. The **reporter** may at this time dispute any changes to the article. In such a case the **reporter** and **Editor 1** must attempt to resolve the dispute.
 - b. Should the dispute be unresolved, the **reporter** may request another **Editor** take on the role of primary editor and replace **Editor 1**. At such a time, the Editorial Board will decide whether the article should proceed, and if so, under which **Editor**. At such a time the process will return to **step 2** under this process.
4. **Editor 1** will request another **Editor** to work on the article (**Editor 2**). **Editor 2** will perform a **second edit**.
 - a. **Editor 2** will return the article to the **reporter** for feedback, in the event of a dispute, refer to to process for dispute with **Editor 1**.
5. A member of the **News Team**, previously uninvolved with the process will perform a **proof**.
 - a. Said member will return the article to the **reporter** for feedback.

Someone previously uninvolved in the process runs **proof**, gets feedback from **reporter**, signs off.

Editor y and **Editor x** sign off on final print article

Green process for story by Editor

Editor 1 writes autonomously

Editor 2 runs edit, gets feedback from Editor 1

Someone previously uninvolved in the process runs **proof**, gets feedback from **Editor 1**, signs off.

Editor 2 and **Editor x** sign off on final print article.

First Edit

A first edit is a thorough critique and analysis of the article. It should address:

- **Journalistic nature** - does it deserve to be published, is it newsworthy, is it a useful addition to the public conversation.

- **Information present** - ensuring that all information in the piece is relevant, and that there is no absent information.
- **Structure** - does it flow well, should paragraphs be moved around, deleted, or added. Is it too long or too short.
 - News Stories should generally be between 200-800 words, although this can be amended at the discretion of the Editor.
- **Language** - is the piece well written, do the words used accurately describe events, is it engaging without being hyperbolic.
- **Bias** - does the piece present a fair and accurate picture of all sides, and does it provide the best form of any arguments provided.
- **Conflicts of Interest** - does the reporter have any conflicts with any person or matter discussed in the piece?
- **Sourcing** - are all claims fact-checked and the Editor understands the origin of all statements made.

Second Edit

A second edit is a broader analysis of an article from a greater distance, which ensures any flaws in the article that might be missed are identified. It should address:

- **Journalistic nature**
- **Information present**
- **Bias**
- **Conflicts of interest**
- **Sourcing**

A second edit should generally attempt to avoid detailed comments on the structure, language and prose of a piece wherever possible, so as not to greatly delay the process of an article. The second edit should only mention these things when the Editor feels they create issues in the above areas.

Part 2 - Red Articles

The process for approval of Red Articles is as follows:

1. The assigned **reporter** researches and writes the article
2. An **Editor** conducts a combined edit, fact-check and proof.
 - a. Any part of this step may be completed by another member of the News Team at the discretion of the **Editor** or **Editorial Board**.
 - b. These alterations do not require the approval of the **reporter**.
3. A single **Editor** signs off on the final publication.

Part 3 - Analysis

1. The writing process for Analysis pieces will be the collaborative effort of a **writing team**. The **writing team** will include;
 - a. No less than two members of the **News Team**,
 - b. And no less than one **Editor (Editor 1)**.
2. An **Editor** not involved in writing (**Editor 2**) performs a **first edit**.
3. **Editor 2** returns the article to the **writing team** for feedback.

- a. The **writing team** led by **Editor 1** may at this time dispute any changes to the article. In such a case the **writing team** and **Editor 2** must attempt to resolve the dispute.
 - b. Should the dispute be unresolved, the **writing team** may request another **Editor** take on the role of primary editor and replace **Editor 2**. At such a time, the Editorial Board will decide whether the article should proceed, and if so, under which **Editor**. At such a time the process will return to **step 2** under this process.
4. **Editor 2** will request another **Editor** to work on the article (**Editor 3**). **Editor 3** will perform a **second edit**.
 - a. **Editor 3** will return the article to the **writing team** for feedback, in the event of a dispute, refer to to process for dispute with **Editor 2**.
5. A member of the **News Team**, previously uninvolved with the process will perform a dedicated **fact check**.
 - a. Said member will return the article to the **writing team** for feedback.
6. A member of the **News Team**, previously uninvolved with the process will perform a **proof**.
 - a. Said member will return the article to the **reporter** for feedback.
7. **Editor y** and **Editor x**, one of whom not having been involved up till this point, sign off on final print article for publication.