

# Honorarium Submission Guide

Provided for officers and members of The ANU Observer by the Arbitration Panel

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## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and a template for submissions to the Arbitration Panel regarding Honoraria or Stipend. This guidance is intended to assist in crafting submissions which have the maximum possible utility to the Panel.

This document does **not** specify conditions for submissions to be accepted by the panel. The panel is bound to consider all submissions, regardless of format or content. This document simply provides potential submitters with a framework for making informed submissions given the typical considerations and priorities of the Panel.

## What is the Arbitration Panel?

The Arbitration Panel is the dispute referral and adjudication body for The ANU Observer. It has three primary duties:

1. hearing and adjudicating disputes from officers or members regarding the conduct of officers or the content of articles,
2. interpreting the constitution or regulations in the case that there is dispute over their meaning, and
3. awarding honoraria and stipends to officers for their conduct.

This document discusses the third duty.

The Arbitration Panel is appointed at General Meetings of the association by a supermajority of members present. The Arbitration Panel is, at present, composed of ex-editors who have an in-depth knowledge of the duties and functions of officers currently within the association.

## The Purpose of Honoraria

Honoraria is awarded to officers of the association who go **above and beyond** the duties expected of them in their role. The monetary reward represents recognition on the part of the organisation that the officer has exceeded all expectations.

Conduct considered above and beyond is **not**:

- Performing the duties in the position description to the expected standard.

- Performing duties for which the officer is already being awarded a stipend.
- Simply exceeding the number of hours per week expected of a role (persuasive submissions tend to link hard work to outcomes).

Conduct which **could be** considered above and beyond includes:

- Performing the prescribed duties of the role to an exceptional standard.
- Voluntarily taking on duties outside of the role description or expectations.
- Assisting the organisation in a holistic fashion.
- Completing specific tasks considered to be of exceptional difficulty or requiring exceptional dedication

This guidance provides a baseline and should not be taken as exclusive. A submission can seek honoraria for performance outside these examples, however we advise this submission be **justified** in terms of conduct above and beyond expectations.

## What is a submission?

A submission is any contact made with the Arbitration Panel which requests their action on a matter. In the context of honoraria, a submission is a request that a specific officer be considered for honorarium. Typically, that submission includes a dollar amount, though it is perfectly valid to make a submission without discussing amounts.

While the Panel typically distributes honoraria amounts to officers and the public, submissions are **secret**. This is to allow full frankness on the part of submissions without risking conflict, or jeopardizing any ongoing editorial process with discussions of duties.

A submission can be made regarding many officers, or one. The Panel weighs these submissions equally based on the evidence provided. Historically, the Panel has received and considered submissions ranging from suggested allocations for the entire pool, through to requests that a single officer be compensated without reference to an amount. We advise that submissions of large lists state whether any officers not mentioned are being excluded intentionally, or are simply not part of the submission. As a general principle, omitting officers from a submission is not considered by the Panel to be a submission that those officers not receive honoraria.

Submissions can also be made jointly or in collaboration with others. Submissions made jointly are no more or less valid than those made in isolation, with the exception of potentially offering more perspectives for personal observation. If making a joint submission, the Panel recommends the inclusion of all submittants in the relevant email so as to verify all are aware and participating.

## Who can make a submission?

Any member of The ANU Observer can make a submission to the Arbitration Panel regarding honoraria. Membership of The ANU Observer extends to every student of the ANU who has not specifically opted out of membership.

The Panel encourages anyone who is interested to submit. Even a small piece of information can form a broader understanding of an officer's conduct and therefore the basis for honorarium payment.

Officers can nominate themselves for honoraria. This typically results in the evaluation exclusively of evidence in the form of published work rather than personal accounts of the officer's own achievements. Persuasive submissions let their work speak for themselves, and the Panel may take into account the interests one might have in making a submission for one's self.

## Providing Evidence

The Arbitration Panel uses an evidentiary basis to award honoraria. Our process involves two steps:

1. Establishing whether conduct described in a submission is "above and beyond"
2. Establishing an evidence base for the conduct described.

As such, submissions are aided by provision of as much evidence as possible.

Examples of possible evidence includes:

- Work produced by the individual
- Minutes from meetings
- Community impact of work produced by the individual
- Specific first hand anecdotal accounts by the submitter.

### Highlighting quality work

Honoraria is frequently awarded based on the quality of work. The Arbitration Panel can and does make its own judgements regarding the quality of work created, and uses that information in concert with the written arguments in submissions.

However, not every aspect of work done is publicly visible. As such, the Panel encourages specificity when describing the work done by an officer.

### Examples

Below are some examples of non-specific praise, and more useful alternatives.

**(Note: these examples are fictional and not from real submissions)**

|                       |                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Generic Praise</b> | <b>Argument with Evidence</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>“As well as writing many great articles, Trevor has contributed to source cultivation to an extent beyond what is expected of reporters”</p> | <p>“Trevor has developed several sources in ANUSA, two on-campus halls of residence, and the ANU academic staff. He has used these sources to generate the following articles which I consider to be of exceptional quality:<br/>[links to articles]”</p>  |
| <p>“Tracy has been a valued member of the Digital Team and has really put the work in in terms of learning new skills”</p>                      | <p>“Tracy entered her role with a strong background in photography but no experience in streaming or editing. In the past six months she has consistently volunteered to be included in video projects in order to improve her skills and is now a capable videographer. Through this time she continued to produce quality photography work including:<br/>[links to albums or article photos]</p>  |
| <p>“Taliesin has been amazing at going to events and attending protests and has done more than anyone else on the team”</p>                     | <p>“Taliesin has attended the following events:<br/>- SRC 2, 4, 5 and 7<br/>- Protest against cuts<br/>- Protest against 2x spacing in essays<br/>- Counter-protest in favour of essay spacing<br/>- Vice Chancellor’s address</p> <p>He was only asked to report on 4 of these but volunteered to show up at the others to provide assistance and support. He has also filled in for reporters who were unable to attend on at least 3 occasions. Furthermore he makes himself available to the digital team to help with streaming or photography as required.</p> |
| <p>“Tiffany has stepped up from the typical reporter role and helped with editing and proofreading of articles”</p>                             | <p>“In addition to consistently submitting her articles by deadline,<br/>[links to articles]<br/>Tiffany has volunteered to assist with editing and proofreading. She has contributed to editing on the following articles:<br/>[list]<br/>And proof reading on the following:<br/>[list]”</p>   |

### Arguments from Observation

The Panel acknowledges that not every example of exceptional conduct can be shown through published work or through specific facts, there are holistic contributions to the team which are difficult to quantify. This might include an experienced photographer consistently being a mentoring presence to newer photographers, or a reporter making a substantial effort to build communication with photographers and ensure a smooth article production process. A significant portion of the Panel's evidence for decisions therefore comes from the personal accounts of individuals making submissions.

Submitters should note that the Panel does not base honoraria on averages of submitted amounts, or make assessments based purely on the volume of submissions for a given officer. Additional submissions are useful if they provide new information and perspectives, or affirm an argument from observation or experience. For example, the personal perspective of the work of an officer from both a member of the Executive and from an officer who has recently joined provides a more balanced perspective from which to evaluate the officer's conduct.

When making arguments from personal observation or opinion, ensure that these arguments are still rooted in specifics as much as possible, rather than relying on superlatives.

## Negative Submissions

It is possible to make negative submissions regarding stipend or honoraria for officers. This is most commonly done (though still rarely) regarding stipends. Stipends for executives, unlike honoraria, are provided for the **described duties** of the officer, not for conduct above and beyond. As such, a negative submission regarding stipend should detail ways in which the executive has not performed their described duties. These submissions can be considered in the same light as honoraria and therefore the above guidelines regarding evidence and specificity are applicable.

Negative submission regarding stipends are taken seriously by the Panel and will be thoroughly considered. This may include interviews by the Panel with officers. However, we do not wish to discourage negative submissions. If you have a genuine conviction that a stipend-receiving officer has not completed their duties, you are encouraged to convey this to the Panel for due consideration, and reminded that submissions are known only to Panel Members. As stated above, the Panel is independent from the executive of Observer and is fully autonomous from Observer where privacy of its records is concerned.

Negative submissions regarding honoraria are even less common but not unprecedented. If you firmly believe that a person has not exceeded their duties, and believe they may be receiving submissions for honorarium, you are able to make a submission disputing the honorarium of that individual. However, it should be noted that honoraria cannot be disputed after it has been awarded.

All negative submissions should remain professional. Unprofessional submissions will not be considered.