



Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

Melbourne Anglican Diocesan Corporation

Policy	Editorial policy
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Approved by	Editorial Committee
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1. Policy Statement

This policy outlines the editorial policies of *The Melbourne Anglican* including both online and print offerings.

2. Scope

This policy extends to all people employed or contracted by the Media and Communications team at the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

3. Policy Guidelines

The purpose of The Melbourne Anglican is to support the diocese's mission of Making the Word of God fully known.

We do this through reflecting the life of the church, and driving/supporting conversations relevant to the Anglican church and its community, and those wishing to share in the life of the body of the church.

We exist to serve those people and evolving communities associated with the Anglican faith in the Melbourne diocese and beyond.

The Melbourne Anglican will aim to reflect the diversity of the Anglican Church within Melbourne and beyond, including cultural background, age, language, gender, churchmanship and geography.

Through its content *The Melbourne Anglican* aims to carry out its mission, which supports the diocese's mission. This means its content will be geared primarily to



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interest, support, connect and celebrate members of Anglican churches in Melbourne.

Our coverage adheres to the following policies. We expect our editor, journalists and any contributors - paid or unpaid - to adhere to these points.

- 5.1. *The Melbourne Anglican* will **seek to represent the diversity of members of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne** in all aspects of life, including but not limited to, viewpoint, age, gender, cultural and linguistic background and church background.
- 5.2. *The Melbourne Anglican* will **incorporate balance** in its coverage of controversial or disputed topics, aiming to represent a range of viewpoints held on issues within the Anglican Church in Australia and facilitate conversation. This does not require that every perspective receives equal time, nor that every facet of every argument is presented.
- 5.3. *The Melbourne Anglican* recognises that sometimes criticism will be made of the actions or decisions of people and organisations, within and outside the diocese, as part of a healthy debate about topics. It commits to approaching any person or organisation **offering them a chance to respond to criticism prior to publication of any story, opinion piece or letter**. *The Melbourne Anglican* will **not publish personal attacks on individuals**.
- 5.4. *The Melbourne Anglican* will **not publish any material that could be libellous or defamatory**.
- 5.5. *The Melbourne Anglican* will seek to **report with respect** for all people and groups forming the subject of the material, and prioritise contributed content which does the same. This means asking people how they would prefer to be referred to in stories, and adhering to language guidelines from peak bodies around reporting on topics such as disability, family violence, suicide and LGBTIQ+ issues, where they are relevant and do not contradict another aspect of the editorial policy.
- 5.6. *The Melbourne Anglican* will **not publish points of view that stigmatise any particular group in society based on its characteristics**. This includes but is not limited to views that **are racist, sexist, homophobic or transphobic**. The Melbourne Anglican respects that members of the church hold a range of views on issues such as same-sex marriage, the ordination of women, the role



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of women in the church and the family, and gender identity. It will seek to incorporate a balance of viewpoints on these issues, but requires that any position be argued respectfully and without stigmatising any parties involved.

- 5.7. *The Melbourne Anglican* will **seek to ensure accuracy** in all its reported material, including reported facts or information, interviews and quotations, and in any contributed material, including opinion pieces, letters to the editor and contributed articles, both paid and unpaid. This may require publishing a correction or clarification if inaccurate information is published, which should be done as quickly as possible.
- 5.8. **Opinion pieces and letters** will be published at the discretion of the editor, who will base his or her decision on a range of factors including but not limited to relevance, interest value for readers, prior coverage of issues, balance of views and space available.
- 5.9. *The Melbourne Anglican* will **seek to be transparent** about how editorial decisions have been made, including where times allows, responding to reasonable queries about how coverage has been determined and why decisions have been made. *The Melbourne Anglican* welcomes constructive criticism, and will always seek to evaluate its merit and take action for change if necessary.
- 5.10. *The Melbourne Anglican* **aims to support the community of believers that makes up the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne**, through covering relevant topics, issues and events, and celebrating the people involved in the Diocese of Melbourne. However the team may not be able to cover every topic, or attend every event, to which it is invited. Decisions around coverage will be made by the editor and journalists, taking into account a range of factors, including but not limited to news value, interest to readers, and team capacity and availability
- 5.11. *The Melbourne Anglican* commits to being transparent about what material covered in an interview will be used for. It may be appropriate to talk through the finished story with parties involved ahead of publication, where they material is sensitive or where reporting may put people at risk (eg reporting of family violence, or reporting on missionaries in a sensitive location), or where the material is complex and often misunderstood. Journalists may forward on direct quotes from interviews. In situations where this may pose a problem, journalists should refer the request to the editor.



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- 5.12. Coverage of topics, initiatives or organisations, will remain **independent of any advertising purchased**, and will be made at the editor's discretion. Likewise *The Melbourne Anglican* cannot commit to mentioning all organisations involved in supporting an initiative or program, or the sponsors of any event, organisation or program. Decisions around information included are made at the discretion of journalists and the editor, based on considerations including but not limited to relevance, news value, interest and available space.
- 5.13. Any content published under content-sharing agreements will be credited to the original source.
- 5.14. *The Melbourne Anglican* will not sell advertising to organisations or individuals promoting religions other than Christianity or belief systems other than Christianity, using the beliefs laid out Apostles and Nicaean Creed as a basis to determine this.
- 5.15. *The Melbourne Anglican* will not sell advertising to organisations or individuals promoting behaviours that conflict with standards of behaviour outlined for Christians in the Bible, including but not limited to gambling, prostitution or sex work.
- 5.16. Position and prominence of advertising is at the discretion of TMA designer and editor, unless a specific agreement has been made, such as special rates paid to secure specific advertising location.
- 5.17. Sponsored stories will be clearly identified as being paid content, both online and in print.