Committed to High Quality, Open-Source Analysis.

Leeds Policy Institute Media and Communications Style Handbook.

Leeds Policy Institute

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1. Background of the Society

Leeds Policy Institute Society is an upcoming political organisation involved in writing research and policy papers for members of parliament as well as the media and press. We are dedicated to generating data-driven, non-partisan research that delves into issues directly impacting the North of England.

All published research conclusions are screened through our rigorous academic quality assurance checks, where papers are reviewed by our expert Academic Advisory Council as well as other student think tanks across the country. All published research conclusions are that of the individual authors and are not reflective of the society as a whole.

On top of excellent research quality, we rely on a strong media presence that targets both social media channels as well as traditional newspapers to publicise our research. As such, the purpose of this document is to serve as a handbook for you, or talented Media and Comms staff member, to properly execute all of the objectives specified within your role description. Here, you will be provided with the general philosophy of the Media and Comms department, the why we do what we do, before reading into the how. The how includes ready-made templates for social media, media coverage, and press release posts, as well as information pertaining to various organisational areas and where Media and Communications lies in publicising the outputs of these think tank branches. We have also added grammar resources and our organisational view on the usage of **ChatGPT** and other AI-assisted writing tools.

2. Media and Communications Philosophy

As a grassroots student think tank, our society wins through ensuring that our excellent research stays in discussion circles. Established think tanks such as the IEA, IPPR, NEF, and CPS did not gain their fame overnight, they did so through two channels: Marketing and Public Affairs. Even now, these think tanks still continue to target these areas.

Good Media and Communications rests on three pillars: Frequency, Recyclability, and Topicality.

Frequency:

Frequency is the quantity of periodicity between marketing materials circulated by the Media and Communications department. This is important as something you don't see as an outsider are all of the press releases that think tanks send that fail and don't live to see themselves in print. It's easy to forget that this does happen, anyone who knows of the IEA will have seen them circulated in various right-wing newspapers (The Telegraph is a popular one). The automatic assumption it seems, is that they must have at least *some* street cred (and perhaps a few good connections).

But we're not going to get into the media and press *purely* through having good street cred. Again, there are many good press releases that are sent out that *should* have gone into print. Thus, we have to target frequency. If we throw *enough* stuff out there, at least something will stick. Oh, and we also create a more consistent brand image.

Frequency is important and is derived from speed, fortunately, this document has various templates to make sure that you can be one speedy marketer.

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Recyclability:

Recyclability is where one reuses old research and breathes a fresh bit of life into it. We do this by keeping track of the various happenings happening in the news and when we come across something relevant to a paper, blog, or maybe even and old press release, we make a post. By doing so, we show our stakeholders that our research stays relevant, and, if the happening happens to align with our conclusions, it makes us look quite smart – maybe not visionaries – but still pretty good for a student think tank.

We recommend making a habit of checking in with the news. Make use of your university FT subscription if you have one, and make sure that all LPI social media accounts follow other publications that may be of interest.

Topicality:

Out of all three, topicality is perhaps the trickiest pillar to hit. This is because topicality itself relies on frequency; it only looks good if we do it regularly. By implication, this also means that topicality requires speed, but while frequency requires speed to increase the number of materials circulated, topicality requires speed so that we can give opinions on matters happening right now before other think tanks. That's bloody difficult.

There is also one final pillar that is separate from these three as it links to internal affairs of the think tank (it's also a lot less boring), and that's the Student Experience pillar.

Student Experience:

Last but certainly not least, Media and Communications cannot forget its role in enhancing the think tanks student experience. This involves the planning of social events that are accessible to all students and ensuring that social events are properly communicated through the societies internal newsletter as well as dedicated social media channels.

While LPI aims to be an influential institution through the research that it publishes, we must also recognise that we are at the end of the day, a student think tank. Out of other societies at the University of Leeds, the amount of time that LPI asks for is quite a lot, so it's important to keep a good sense of community through the running of regular social events.

3. Media and Communications Structure

While LPI aims to be an influential institution through the research that it publishes, we must also recognise that we are at the end of the day, a student think tank. Out of other societies at the University of Leeds, the amount of time that LPI asks for is quite a lot, so it's important to keep a good sense of community through the running of regular social events.

That being said, our department also fulfils several front-facing functions including speaker outreach, society partnerships, external and internal newsletters, social media management, the writing of press releases and media coverage articles, as well as article writing. Our department also manages the editorial wing of LPI for both articles and research papers and is also responsible for sending research to select Parliamentary Committees to maximise outreach.

This is a lot of information to put into words, so the best way to show it is through some cool diagrams including our departments organogram as well as a RACI matrix defined below:

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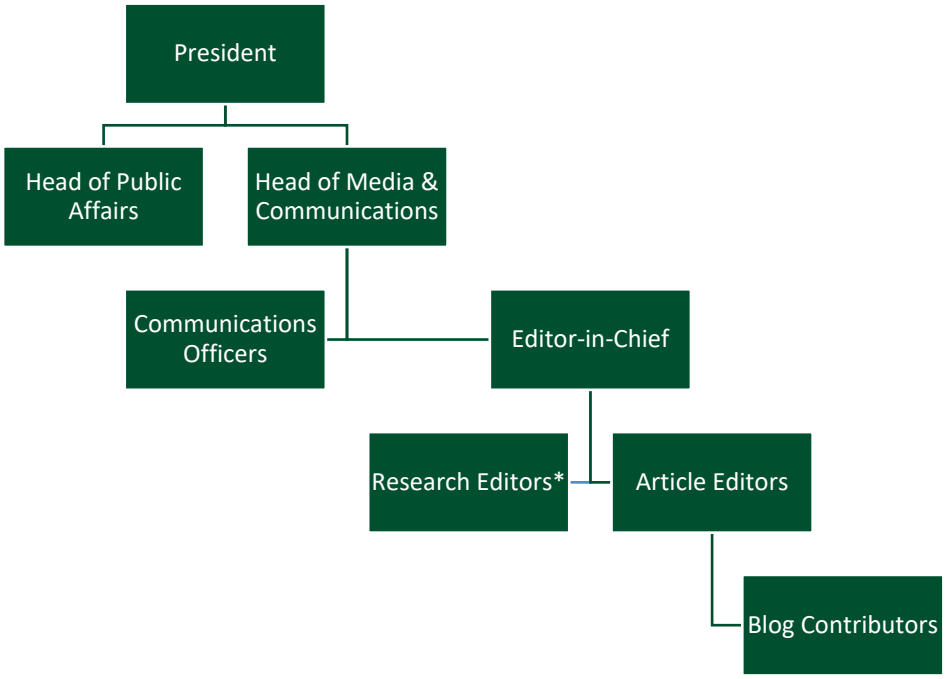

**Research Editors report jointly to the Head of Research and Editor-in-Chief.*

Taks/Stakeholders	President	Vice President	Head of Research	Head of Data Analysis	Head of Media & Communications	Head of Public Affairs	Communications Officers	Editor-In-Chief	Research Editors	Article Editors	Blog Contributors
Events Management	I	I	I	I	R	C	I	I	I	I	I
Speaker Outreach	I	I	I	I	C	R	I	I	I	I	I
Society Partnerships	I	I	I	I	C	R	I	I	I	I	I
External Newsletters	I	I	I	I	A	I	R	I	C	I	I
Internal Newsletters	I	I	I	I	A	I	R	I	C	I	I
Alumni Newsletters	C	I	I	I	A	I	R	I	C	I	I
Editing (Research Reports)	I	I	C	C	I	I	I	A	R	I	I
Editing (Articles)	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	A	I	R	I
Social Media Management	I	I	I	I	A	I	R	I	C	C	I
Media Coverage	I	I	I	I	A	I	R	I	I	I	I
Press Releases	I	I	C	I	A	R	I	C	C	I	I
Article Writing	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	C	I	A	R
Parliamentary Committees	C	A	C	C	I	R	I	C	C	I	I

RACI

R - Responsible
The people who take action to get the task done. They are responsible for the work or making the decision. You can have more than one person responsible for a task, but to make the decision-making process effective, try having one person responsible for a single task.

A - Accountable
The person who owns the task or deliverable. They might not get the work done themselves, but they are responsible for making sure it is finalized. To avoid confusion and the diffusion of responsibility, it's better to have one accountable person per project task.

C - Consulted
The person, role, or group who will help complete the task. They will have two-way communication with the people responsible for the task by providing input and feedback over the task completion.

I - Informed
The people, roles, or groups that need to be up to date on the task's progress. They will not have two-way communication, but it's essential to keep them informed since they will be affected by the final outcome of the task/project.

**President, VP, and Head of Research are marked pink as they are not within our core department.*

The above RACI matrix lists the roles within our department as well as their respective responsibility levels for specific tasks and products. We include the President, Vice President, and Head of Research roles within our departmental RACI matrices are roles such as the Editor-in-Chief and the Research Editors have significant spillover to these areas in the work that they do.

4. Product List

The list of products that our department offers can be split into the following three categories: Internal Engagement, External Engagement, and Research. These categories are based on the target customer.

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- **Social Media Management**
  - **Specification:** Manage the society's Instagram and LinkedIn channels to improve student engagement and research dissemination. Content includes media coverage, press releases, articles, reports, podcast episodes, event reminders, and other society updates. The department will encourage all society members to reshare LinkedIn content.
  - **Accountable (A):** Head of Media & Communications
  - **Responsible (R):** Communications Officers
  - **Consulted (C):** Editor-in-Chief, Research Editors, Article Editors
  - **Informed (I):** President, Vice President, Head of Research, Head of Data Analysis, Head of Public Affairs, Blog Contributors
- **Media Coverage**
  - **Specification:** Create and publish articles on the website whenever society staff are published, quoted, or mentioned in an external publication. This should occur on at least a weekly basis.
  - **Accountable (A):** Head of Media & Communications
  - **Responsible (R):** Head of Public Affairs
  - **Consulted (C):** President, Vice President, Head of Research, Editor-in-Chief
  - **Informed (I):** Head of Data Analysis, Communications Officers, Research Editors, Article Editors, Blog Contributors
- **External Newsletter**
  - **Specification:** A monthly newsletter sent to external website subscribers. The content covers the best media coverage mentions, top articles, new podcast episodes, and recently released reports.
  - **Accountable (A):** Head of Media & Communications
  - **Responsible (R):** Communications Officers
  - **Consulted (C):** Editor-in-Chief, Article Editors
  - **Informed (I):** President, Vice President, Head of Research, Head of Data Analysis, Head of Public Affairs, Research Editors, Blog Contributors
- **In-person Advertisement**
  - **Specification:** Set up and run stalls to physically disseminate research and promote the society, such as at the freshers' fair or on campus around report publishing days.
  - ***Note:*** *This specific task is not on the RACI matrix. The RACI below is based on the most similar task, "Events Management."*
  - **Accountable (A):** Head of Media & Communications
  - **Responsible (R):** Head of Public Affairs
  - **Consulted (C):** President, Vice President
  - **Informed (I):** Head of Research, Head of Data Analysis, Communications Officers, Editor-in-Chief, Research Editors, Article Editors, Blog Contributors

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Public Affairs

- **Press Releases**
  - **Specification:** Write articles under 300 words with quotes from upcoming reports and send them to journalists before the report's publication date. This can also be used to target new economic data in collaboration with the Data Team. The Head of Public Affairs is responsible for writing them.
  - **Accountable (A):** Head of Media & Communications
  - **Responsible (R):** Head of Public Affairs
  - **Consulted (C):** Head of Research, Head of Data Analysis, Editor-in-Chief
  - **Informed (I):** President, Vice President, Communications Officers, Research Editors, Article Editors, Blog Contributors
- **Society Partnerships**
  - **Specification:** Work with other societies to partner on and deliver higher-quality events with better turnout.
  - **Accountable (A):** Head of Public Affairs
  - **Responsible (R):** *None specified in RACI chart*
  - **Consulted (C):** Head of Media & Communications
  - **Informed (I):** President, Vice President, Head of Research, Head of Data Analysis, Communications Officers, Editor-in-Chief, Research Editors, Article Editors, Blog Contributors
- **Networking**
  - **Specification:** Find and engage key stakeholders outside the think tank's current influence to expand its professional network for potential funding, speakers, and general expertise.
  - ***Note:*** *This product is not listed on the provided RACI matrix. A RACI assignment should be defined.*

Socials and Student Engagement

- **Internal Newsletter**
  - **Specification:** A regular internal email sent to all staff and members. It contains a showcase of recently published articles and media mentions, links to interesting external publications, event and social reminders, committee meeting minutes for transparency, and other relevant news like sponsor internships.
  - **Accountable (A):** Head of Media & Communications
  - **Responsible (R):** Communications Officers
  - **Consulted (C):** President, Vice President, Head of Research, Editor-in-Chief
  - **Informed (I):** Head of Data Analysis, Head of Public Affairs, Research Editors, Article Editors, Blog Contributors
- **Event Planning and Hosting (Events Management)**
  - **Specification:** Plan and execute speaker and social events to improve the student experience. The Head of Public Affairs is primarily responsible for finding speakers, with support from the wider department.
  - **Accountable (A):** Head of Media & Communications
  - **Responsible (R):** Head of Public Affairs

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- **Consulted (C):** President, Vice President
- **Informed (I):** Head of Research, Head of Data Analysis, Communications Officers, Editor-in-Chief, Research Editors, Article Editors, Blog Contributors

Editorial and Article Writing

- **Article Writing**
  - **Specification:** The creation of articles, op-eds, and blog posts for publication on the society's platforms. Blog Contributors are responsible for the primary writing, with oversight and final approval from the Article Editors.
  - **Accountable (A):** Article Editors
  - **Responsible (R):** Blog Contributors
  - **Consulted (C):** Editor-in-Chief
  - **Informed (I):** President, Vice President, Head of Research, Head of Data Analysis, Head of Media & Communications, Head of Public Affairs, Communications Officers, Research Editors
- **Editing (Articles)**
  - **Specification:** The editorial process for all standard articles and blog posts. This includes reviewing for clarity, accuracy, grammar, and adherence to the society's style guide to prepare them for publication.
  - **Accountable (A):** Editor-in-Chief
  - **Responsible (R):** Article Editors
  - **Consulted (C):** Head of Media & Communications
  - **Informed (I):** President, Vice President, Head of Research, Head of Data Analysis, Head of Public Affairs, Communications Officers, Research Editors, Blog Contributors
- **Editing (Research Reports)**
  - **Specification:** The specialised editorial process for long-form research reports. This involves a thorough review of methodology, data presentation, arguments, and formatting to ensure the highest standard of quality.
  - **Accountable (A):** Editor-in-Chief
  - **Responsible (R):** Research Editors
  - **Consulted (C):** Head of Research, Head of Data Analysis
  - **Informed (I):** President, Vice President, Head of Media & Communications, Head of Public Affairs, Communications Officers, Article Editors, Blog Contributors

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5. Social Media Templates

Below is a list of post templates for various LPI social media channels (note that all emojis appear properly on social media channels):

LinkedIn:

- Blog articles:
  - Format 1:

    ✍ "[Enter Quote from the Article Here]"

    LPI's [Title Here] @[Article Author] on [*custom text here related to the article*]

    Read the full article here ⤵

    [LINK TO ARTICLE]

  - Format 2:

    [Relevant Emoji] [Custom text related to article]

    📝 "[Enter Quote from Article Here]"

    LPI's [Title Here] @[Article Author] writes/talks on/about/etc. […] 👇

    [LINK TO ARTICLE]

- Papers:
  - Format 1: Thread:

    📝 "[Paper Quote Here – Collect from Press Releases]"

    LPIs new [Policy Area Name Here] paper, [Paper Title Here], discusses/gives insight/etc. [custom text here..]

    Authors: [Author list]

    You can read the full paper below ⤵

    [LINK TO PAPER]

    *This post should be prepared to be a thread on both Twitter and LinkedIn, please see **this** and **this** example for last years papers and the comments, copy these formats. All quotes should be collected from the Press Releases made by the Head of Public Affairs as this is faster than reading a whole paper.

- Media Coverage:
  - Format 1:

    ✍ "[Enter Quote from the Article Here]"

    LPIs [Title Here] [Name Here] has been featured/has written for/has been quoted by [Publication Name]

    You can read the full article here 👇

    [LINK TO ARTICLE]

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- Press Releases:
    - Format 1:

      🗣️ "[Enter Quote from Press Release Here]"

      LPIs [Title Here] [Name Here] comments on/warns/states/highlights [custom text]

      You can read the full comment below 👇

      [LINK TO ARTICLE]

Instagram:

- Speaker / Event Post:

    - Format 1:

      Join us for an insightful Speaker Event: "Talking Monetarism with Damian Pudner"! 🎤

      Damian, an ex-city banker, heterodox academic and ex-Director of the International Institute of Monetary Research with over 25 years of experience at leading investment banks and hedge funds like UBS, Merrill Lynch, and Morgan Stanley, will be delivering a lecture on monetary policy.

      🗓️ Wednesday, October 15th

      ⏰ 15:00 - 16:30

      📍 Newlyn SR (1.01)

      Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable insights! Event is available to non-LPI members.

- Social Post:

    - Format 1:

      🤜 Missed our GIAG? No worries. Pop along to our pub quiz social this Friday at the Library Pub, Leeds.

      📣 If you can't make it don't worry! (We know there's a lot going on this week) There's plenty of other events coming up too such as speakers and another pub trip!

      💰 Our memberships are still on sale, so make sure to grab one while you have the chance and apply to our roles 📝

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6. Media Coverage Templates

Media coverage posts will be displayed on the website and will have the following structure, the opening to the media coverage should be no more than two lines. After this, you should add some key quotes from the article:

> Leeds Policy Institute [Title Here] [Name Here] has [written/quoted] [for/in/by] [Name of Publication] [about/explaining/highlighting etc.] summarise the article.
>
> [Publication/Author Name] [quoted/wrote]:
>
> > *"Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam vel orci ac leo ultrices auctor. Donec ac mauris velit. Curabitur et mauris nec nisi tempor sollicitudin.*
> >
> > *"Cras sed ipsum cursus, convallis nisl nec, gravida ante. Interdum et malesuada fames ac ante ipsum primis in faucibus. Vestibulum at erat eget ex fermentum rhoncus eget tempus velit.*
> >
> > *"Curabitur eu venenatis nunc, sed viverra odio. Fusce varius tincidunt velit. Vivamus in leo tortor. Nulla maximus augue at orci semper tempus."*
>
> You can read the full article **here**. [Add link to article, if someone has been quoted in various publications, you can also add additional mentions down in this bit.] [Title Here] [Name Here] [Give Author/Authors if it is a paper]. All media and research output produced by the Leeds Policy Institute Society are the views of individual authors and not the corporate position of Leeds Policy Institute or the University of Leeds itself.

We must present the output of the think tank cohesively; to do so, the media coverage page should ALWAYS have this information, or an appropriate variant of the information, displayed.

Remember, the media coverage bottom section needs to keep in mind that:

- The media must be aware that the think-tank and its conclusions reflect the combined perspectives of a large conglomerate of diverse members (e.g. authors and researchers must have profiles reflecting their political background, perspectives, etc.)
- Despite our best efforts, residual bias will always exist.
- The combined perspectives of researchers and writers effectively eliminate radical perspectives and ideologically skewed proposals.
- Whilst research output is not the place for opinions – typically analysing possible paths -, our communications allow for more opinionated perspectives reflecting certain officialised recommendations.

Media coverage releases should be written in a style that has **Search Engine Optimisation** in mind.

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7. Press Release Templates

Press release posts are important as they convey the key parts of our research to the press and media. As such, press releases must be succinct, and, most importantly, informative. Press releases should have the viewers in mind as different research conclusions will be palatable for different sides of the political aisle and so your writing should use a non-neutral tone to persuade targeted journalists. Following this, a key quotes section and a notes section where links to updates and stipulations can be added. For additional guidance, please see our selection of old press releases here.

Format 1: Yearly Papers

[Title]

[Subheading]

[Author(s)]

- [Bullet Point 1 – Summary of ideas of paper]
- [Bullet Point 2 – Summary of ideas of paper]
- [Bullet Point 3 – Summary of ideas of paper]
- [Bullet Point 4 - Summary of ideas of paper]

[Short sentence that will hook journalists…]

New research from Leeds Policy Institute (LPI) finds […]. LPI's new paper finds that […]

> *Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut egestas accumsan tellus, id venenatis mauris. Nam a dui dapibus, faucibus tellus vel, semper nunc. Etiam at nibh tellus. Curabitur ullamcorper ornare ligula, eu cursus enim pellentesque vel. Aenean in odio non lectus eleifend sagittis. Nullam ut hendrerit magna. Curabitur lobortis, leo vel ullamcorper tempor, sem ante aliquam mauris, laoreet venenatis justo nibh quis ex. Maecenas id orci justo. Morbi tortor nisi,*

[Custom Text here]

> *rutrum, arcu magna viverra lorem, sed sagittis felis arcu non justo. Vivamus pellentesque tristique mi eget interdum. Integer dignissim turpis mi. Sed ullamcorper nulla in lacinia tristique. Aenean a faucibus ligula. Donec est mauris, dignissim nec dignissim vel, bibendum sed tortor. Maecenas accumsan congue massa et pretium,* the report states.

LPIs [Title Here] and Paper Author, [Name Here], said:

> *"Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut egestas accumsan tellus, id venenatis mauris. Nam a dui dapibus, faucibus tellus vel, semper nunc. Etiam at nibh tellus. Curabitur ullamcorper ornare ligula, eu cursus enim pellentesque vel. Aenean in odio non lectus eleifend sagittis. Nullam ut hendrerit magna. Curabitur lobortis, leo vel ullamcorper tempor"*

*Additional quotes should be added here

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Notes to Editors:

- [Custom Text Here – Relevant information for newspaper editors]
- [Custom Text Here – Why is the paper important]
- [Custom Text Here – Why is the paper important]

CONTACT: thinktank@luu.group / 07895 958710

A full copy of [PAPER NAME HERE], can be read here.

About Leeds Policy Institute:

Leeds Policy Institute (LPI) is a UK-based and student-led Think Tank affiliated with Leeds University Union (a registered UK charity). It is dedicated to undertaking empirically driven and non-partisan policy research that centres on both local and national issues.

Our 6 Policy Areas for 2025/26 are:

- Macro Policy
- Foreign Policy
- Social Policy
- Labour Policy
- Energy & Infrastructure
- Markets Research

Established in April 2023, the Leeds Policy Institute (LPI) endeavours to facilitate the engagement of young individuals in ongoing policy dialogues. Through initiatives encompassing funding for informative speaker engagements, publication of student-authored articles, and collaborative delivery of skill-enhancing workshops in conjunction with the university, LPI seeks to empower its student members and contribute to the betterment of society.

Press releases should be written in a style that has **Search Engine Optimisation** and the target political audience in mind.

Format 2: Quote on new release/new data etc.

[Title]

[Subheading]

[Author(s)]

- [Bullet Point 1 – Summary of key quote]
- [Bullet Point 2 – Summary of key quote]

[Short sentence that will hook journalists…]

In response to/ in relation to/ etc. LPIs [Title Here] [Name Here] finds that/states:

> *Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut egestas accumsan tellus, id venenatis mauris. Nam a dui dapibus, faucibus tellus vel, semper nunc. Etiam at nibh tellus. Curabitur ullamcorper ornare ligula, eu cursus enim pellentesque vel. Aenean in odio non*

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lectus eleifend sagittis. Nullam ut hendrerit magna. Curabitur lobortis, leo vel ullamcorper tempor, sem ante aliquam mauris, laoreet venenatis justo nibh quis ex. Maecenas id orci justo. Morbi tortor nisi,

[Custom Text here]

Notes to Editors:

- [Custom Text Here – Relevant information for newspaper editors]

CONTACT: thinktank@luu.group / 07895 958710

A full copy of [PRESS RELEASE], can be read here.

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8. ChatGPT Guidelines:

Given how AI still struggles with factual information, its uses in the context of a think tank are limited. We ask our writers to limit the AI usage as follows:

- Limit AI usage for Quoting:
    - Do not, under any circumstances, use AI to find quotes for press releases, media coverage pieces, and social media posts.
    - This is because AI can and will make up passages that do not exist, especially from long papers.
    - It is very important that you do not use it for quoting, it is poor form to misquote your peers in the think tank, at best it makes the think tank look unprofessional and at worse it will give you extra work down the road as you will have to correct errors.

- Use it to paraphrase and to point you in the right direction:

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- You may use AI to paraphrase when making social media posts, press releases, and media coverage articles as it will be able to give summaries of what the key points of an article are.
- Still, AI may not find what a human actually finds interesting, this means that it may be a good idea to use it to point you I the right direction.

You should try to fact-check its responses whenever possible, but ChatGPT generally does a good job of giving general directions. It is, however, generally not good at giving you the correct citations and sometimes exact paper names that you may request.

When writing your prompt, be very specific with your word choice. make the scope of what you want to cover very well defined, and the content very clear, using keywords related to the topic under discussion.

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