

Guidelines to interacting with The Edinburgh Reporter

Our policy on comments and interacting with us and our journalists is simple and straightforward. On the first occasion that you comment then your comment will be pre-moderated. On subsequent occasions the comment will be published, but remains liable to editing or moderation so that it complies with these guidelines.

There are 10 simple guidelines which we expect all participants of The Edinburgh Reporter to abide by.

1. We welcome debate and dissent, but personal attacks (on authors, other users or any individual), persistent trolling and mindless abuse will not be tolerated. The key to maintaining The Edinburgh Reporter as an inviting space is to focus on intelligent discussion of topics.
2. We acknowledge criticism of content published here, but we will not allow persistent misrepresentation of Edinburgh Reporter participants to be published on our website. For the sake of robust debate, we will distinguish between constructive, focused argument and smear tactics.
3. We understand that people often feel strongly about issues debated on the site, but we will consider removing any content that others might find extremely offensive or threatening. Please respect other people's views and beliefs and consider your impact on others when making your contribution.
4. We reserve the right to redirect or curtail conversations which descend into flame-wars based on ingrained partisanship or generalisations. We don't want to stop people discussing topics they are enthusiastic about, but we do ask users to find ways of sharing their views that do not feel divisive, threatening or toxic to

others.

5. We will not tolerate racism, sexism, homophobia or other forms of hate-speech, or contributions that could be interpreted as such. We recognise the difference between criticising a particular government, organisation, community or belief and attacking people on the basis of their race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age.
6. We will remove any content that may put us in legal jeopardy, such as potentially defamatory postings, or material posted in potential breach of copyright.
7. We will remove any postings that are obviously commercial or otherwise spam-like on our website. Our aim is that this website should provide a space for people to interact with our content and each other. We actively discourage commercial entities passing themselves off as individuals, in order to post advertising material or links. This may also apply to people or organisations who frequently post propaganda or external links without adding substantively to the quality of the discussion on The Edinburgh Reporter.
8. Keep it relevant. We know that some conversations can be wide-ranging, but if you post something which is unrelated to the original topic ("off-topic") then it may be removed, in order to keep the thread on track. This also applies to queries or comments about moderation, which should not be posted as comments.
9. Be aware that you may be misunderstood, so try to be clear about what you are saying, and expect that people may understand your contribution differently than you intended. Remember that text isn't always a great medium for conversation: tone of voice (sarcasm, humour and so on) doesn't always come across when using words on a screen. You can help to keep The Edinburgh Reporter community areas open to all viewpoints by maintaining a reasonable tone, even in unreasonable circumstances.
10. The platform is ours, but the conversation belongs to

everybody. We want this to be a welcoming space for intelligent discussion, and we expect participants to help us achieve this by notifying us of potential problems and helping each other to keep conversations inviting and appropriate. If you spot something problematic in community interaction areas, please report it by emailing us at Editor@theedinburghreporter.co.uk

When we all take responsibility for maintaining an appropriate and constructive environment, the debate itself is improved and everyone benefits.