

Agora

content guidelines :

How to write for us

Agora is the UK's open forum for foreign policy. We provide a platform for people who are knowledgeable and passionate about international affairs. We believe that engaging a more diverse range of people in foreign policy discussions is the best way to improve public understanding of international affairs and develop innovative proposals that help solve the global challenges of the 21st Century and achieve a more stable, fair, and prosperous world.

To find our more, follow us on social media @Agorathinktank and visit agorathinktank.org.



Introduction

This guide is designed to help contributors wanting to write for Agora. We issue guidelines to writers to be transparent about what we do and do not publish, to smooth the process of proofing and editing, and to maintain a level of consistency and quality in our published content.

Agora publishes work which is:

- Related to foreign policy or international affairs
- On topics of relevance or interest to the UK and its policy makers
- Falls within the scope of one of our [Research Programmes](#)
- Says something original or thought-provoking, by either highlighting an under-reported issue or adding a new perspective to a better known one
- Is well researched, intelligently argued, and well written

All content submitted to Agora is judged on the merits of the ideas it contains and the language used to express them, and never on the background or identity of the writer.

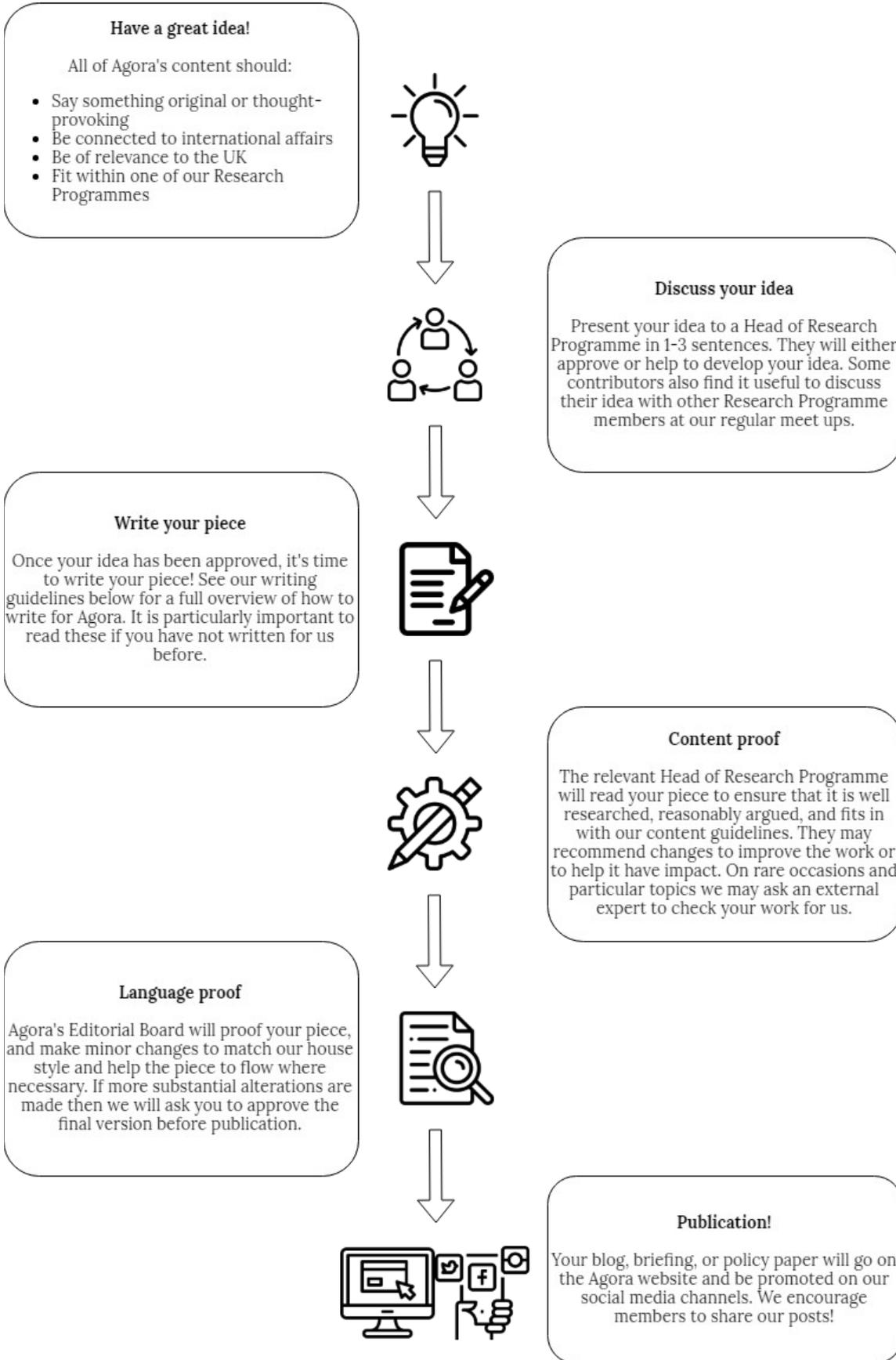
We publish content in three formats: [blogs](#), [briefings](#), and [policy papers](#).

All content should be submitted as an editable Google doc. Please do not attempt to format your work yourself, beyond bolding and italics.

We want everything that Agora publishes to be clearly and concisely written. If you are not a native-level English speaker or are not a confident writer then we recommend that you have someone read over your work before you submit it to us. Our Editorial Board should not have to rewrite work.

If in doubt about how to write for or submit to us then speak to the relevant Research Programme head or visit our [website](#) to see examples of previously published work.

The production process



Blogs

Blogs are shorter opinion pieces, in a more journalistic tone. They may relate to current affairs, but are by no means required to and may instead simply discuss or give a perspective on an issue.

A good blog will clearly and concisely make a single point or argument. Although they will probably adopt and argue a position, it is important to remain measured and justify the points made. Unlike an essay, the aim is not to demonstrate knowledge.

The language used should be accessible, avoiding the use technical terms without explanation.

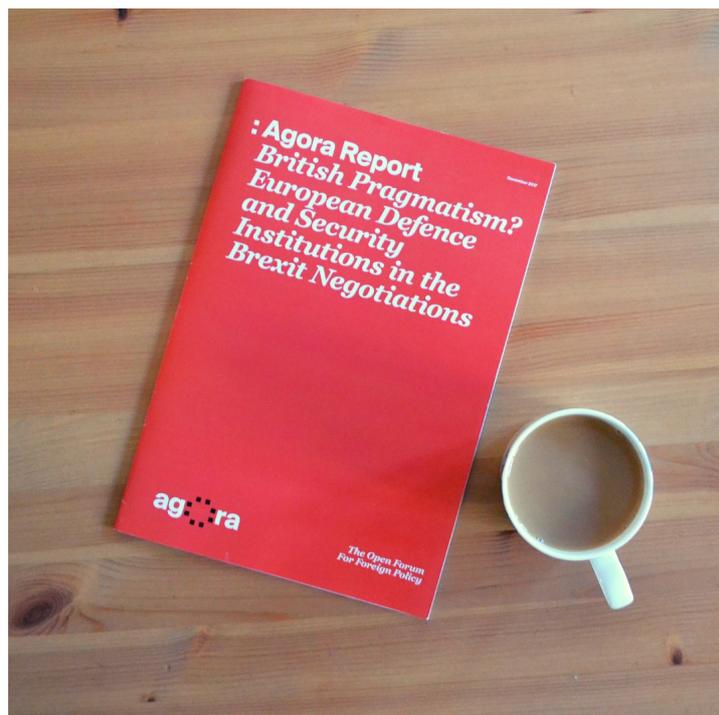
Blogs must be between 500-800 words. They should be submitted in the following form:

Headline – Keep it short and catchy.

Sub-heading – One or two sentences which say why the blog is relevant and sum up the core argument of the blog.

Main body – The blog itself. Try to write in short paragraphs. You may use in-text headings to break up the body of the blog if you wish.

By-line – One sentence about yourself, such as where you work or study.



Briefings

Briefings are longer, factual pieces that outline what you need to know on an issue or event in international affairs. They should enrich the reader's knowledge and understanding of a topic by providing explanation and analysis.

They should be analytical as well as descriptive, seeking to add something to the debate around a topic, but unlike our blogs and policy papers should not advance a particular position. Briefings are not academic work and will focus on concrete policies and events, not theory.

Although more detailed pieces, the language should remain clear and concise, avoiding the use of technical terms without explanation. References, for example to statistics and reports of events, may be useful. Use endnotes for references. Do not include footnotes of any kind.

Briefings are likely to be between 4-8 pages. They should be submitted in the following form:

Title

Executive summary – A summary of the entire publication, which must touch on the briefing's context, key points, and conclusions. This will also be used on the website as the 'blog' which links to the full publication.

Introduction – What is the context that the briefing sits in? Why is your work relevant and of interest?

Main body – The core content of the briefing, broken down in to thematic sections with sub-headings. Make sure that the sections follow logically on from one another, as with an essay.

Conclusions – What are the key points and main lessons from the briefing?

About the author – A short paragraph on yourself.

Endnotes – A list of sources referenced in the main text of the briefing. References should be numbered in-text and presented using Harvard style in end notes, in order that they appear in the text.

Eg. In text: The UK-Australia FTA is estimated to boost British GDP by just 0.08% between now and 2035 [1].

Endnotes:

[1] Department for International Trade. (2022). Impact assessment of the Free Trade Agreement between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Australia. p. 24. Available:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073969/impact-assessment-of-the-free-trade-agreement-between-the-united-kingdom-of-great-britain-and-northern-ireland-and-australia.pdf

NB. Publishing briefings with Agora is one of the benefits of membership, so do make sure you've [joined our community](#) before submitting your draft.

Policy papers

Policy papers are longer, more analytical research pieces which make concrete policy proposals for UK policy makers.

As with a briefing, they will examine the background and main facets of a challenge in the field of international affairs. However, the objective of these papers should also be to recommend innovative solutions which UK policy makers could put in to practice in the real world.

Although more detailed pieces, the language should remain clear and concise, avoiding the use of technical terms without explanation. References, for example to statistics and reports of events, may be useful. Use endnotes for references. Do not include footnotes of any kind.

Policy papers are likely to be between 8-12 pages. They should be submitted in the following form:

Title

Executive summary – A summary of the entire publication, which must touch on the briefing's context, key points, and conclusions. This will also be used on the website as the 'blog' which links to the full publication.

Introduction – What is the context that the briefing sits in? Why is your work relevant and of interest?

Main body – The core content of the briefing, broken down in to thematic sections with sub-headings. Make sure that the sections follow logically on from one another, as with an essay. This section of the policy paper should explore and analyse the challenge which you are seeking to tackle.

Conclusions – What are the key points and main lessons from the briefing?

Policy proposals – Specific recommendations to UK policy makers working in foreign policy or international affairs. These must address the challenge outlined earlier in the policy paper, and be both original and deliverable.

About the author – A short paragraph on yourself.

Endnotes – A list of sources referenced in the main text of the briefing. References should be numbered in-text and presented using Harvard style in end notes, in order that they appear in the text.

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