

Media & Press Policy

Accurate. Independent. Accountable.

Right First Time UK Ltd | Company No. 17493370 | Updated: 13 October 2026 | Version 1.1

Core standard: only authorised people speak officially for RFTUK. Accuracy takes priority over speed; children, confidential cases and vulnerable contributors require particular care.

1. Purpose and scope

This policy governs media enquiries, interviews, public statements, press releases, photographs, filming, podcasts, social media approaches and documentary contributions made on behalf of Right First Time UK Ltd (RFTUK). It applies to Directors, authorised Campaign Leaders, Campaigners, Volunteers, employees, contractors and anyone speaking officially for RFTUK.

RFTUK supports lawful public-interest scrutiny and constructive media engagement while protecting accuracy, independence, confidentiality, safeguarding, privacy and the fairness of complaints or legal proceedings.

2. Independence and who may speak for RFTUK

RFTUK is a non-party-political company limited by guarantee. Media work must further its public-benefit objects, not promote a party, candidate or private interest. RFTUK also respects the editorial independence of journalists and does not trade information or access for favourable coverage.

Only an authorised person may speak in RFTUK's name. Directors may act within their legal and delegated authority; Campaign Leaders may speak for their approved campaign within the authority actually given. Volunteers, Campaigners, Public Members and subscribers do not gain spokesperson authority merely through participation. Individuals remain free to express their personal views provided they do not present them as RFTUK's official position.

Representatives must describe their roles truthfully and must not claim a regulated professional, statutory or governmental status they do not hold.

3. Media enquiries and verification

Journalists and publishers should use the organisational contact route at <https://rightfirsttimeuk.com/contact-us.php>. Relevant requests should identify the publication, reporter, questions, deadline and intended use. Higher-risk enquiries involving children, restricted case material or confidential evidence may require proportionate verification of the requester's identity.

Significant enquiries, documents supplied, responses, spokespersons and relevant deadlines should be recorded securely. A short media deadline does not override necessary accuracy, legal or safeguarding checks.

4. Evidence, press releases and official statements

RFTUK should check important facts against reliable evidence, preferably primary or official sources. Press releases must identify RFTUK, their date, subject and a contact route, and must not make claims stronger than the supporting material.

Statements, headlines, captions, thumbnails and quotations must distinguish verified facts, allegations, lived experience, estimates, opinion and RFTUK analysis. Where evidence is incomplete, say so; never invent figures, official findings or endorsements. Strong, lawful criticism of public policy is compatible with these standards.

5. Interviews and authorised briefings

Before a significant interview, the representative should know the outlet, subject, whether it is live or recorded, the available evidence, key questions, likely legal or safeguarding issues, and what cannot be disclosed. Written or accessible briefings should be supplied where appropriate.

A spokesperson may decline to answer a question that cannot be addressed accurately or lawfully and may offer to verify facts afterwards. Live interviews require particular care; recorded interviews may be edited by an independent publisher. RFTUK does not assume a right to approve a journalist's full report unless expressly agreed.

6. Recording, embargoes and source conversations

Any recording made by RFTUK must be lawful, proportionate, appropriately explained to participants where practical, securely stored and separately assessed before publication. Recording a meeting does not automatically make its contents public.

Agree the meaning of “on the record”, “background” and “off the record” before sharing sensitive information. Do not assume confidentiality arises by describing a disclosure as off the record afterwards. For embargoes, specify a clear date, time, time zone and conditions. Exclusive access may be arranged where legitimate but must not purchase favourable coverage or compromise independence.

7. Accuracy, corrections and right of reply

RFTUK should promptly correct verified material inaccuracies in its own statements and notify affected media contacts where proportionate. A correction should address the significance and likely reach of the error; publication records should be retained where needed for accountability.

Before making a serious adverse allegation about an identifiable person or organisation, consider whether fairness calls for a meaningful opportunity to respond and a reasonable response period. Lack of reply is not proof that an allegation is true.

Correction requests about others’ coverage should identify the disputed statement and supply evidence. RFTUK should not demand removal merely because reporting is critical or expresses a different opinion.

8. Defamation, proceedings and legal review

Media activity must comply with applicable defamation, contempt, confidentiality, copyright and reporting-restriction law. Calling an allegation a matter of “public interest” does not itself guarantee a defence. Serious claims should be supported by a documented evidential basis and escalated for appropriate review.

Distinguish an allegation or arrest from a finding, conviction, acquittal or judgment. Active proceedings may need extra care to avoid prejudice and unlawful disclosure.

9. Privacy and personal information

Public interest in a story does not automatically remove personal privacy or data-protection rights. Use the minimum necessary personal details, confirm a lawful basis for handling and sharing information, and consider the effect of exposing addresses, health information, private correspondence or third-party records.

Documents supplied to journalists must be checked for sensitive text, tracked changes, hidden metadata, embedded files and effective redaction. Receipt or possession of a confidential or leaked document does not establish permission to distribute it.

10. Children, families and court material

Children’s identity, welfare and future safety require particular protection. Do not assume a parent’s willingness to speak permits publication of a child’s identity, location or sensitive information. Interviews, photography and filming must consider legal permissions, safeguarding and age-appropriate understanding.

Family-court documents and private proceedings may be subject to statutory restrictions, reporting-restriction orders and court-specific Transparency Orders. Permission for an accredited journalist to report does not grant RFTUK or the public unrestricted publication rights. Check the actual court order and obtain appropriate review before sharing case material.

11. Vulnerable contributors, safeguarding and trauma

Do not pressure someone experiencing disability, distress, bereavement, abuse or hardship to take part in publicity. Explain likely publicity, online permanence and the limited control RFTUK has over an independent outlet’s editing. Offer reasonable adjustments, support, breaks or a companion where suitable.

Safeguarding concerns must be dealt with through the safeguarding process rather than delayed for a media opportunity. Do not promise absolute confidentiality where lawfully sharing information is necessary to protect someone. In immediate danger call 999.

12. Sources, leaks and whistleblowers

Requests to protect source identity should be considered carefully, with access restricted on a need-to-know basis where lawful. RFTUK must not promise journalistic source privilege, immunity or confidentiality that it cannot guarantee. Serious allegations from anonymous sources should be corroborated where reasonably possible.

Leaked or confidential records need a separate check of authenticity, obligations of confidence, privacy, family-court restrictions, copyright and public-interest justification before any disclosure.

13. Quotes, images, AI and synthetic media

Quotes must be accurate and must not be fabricated, reconstructed or shortened in a way that changes meaning. Images, video clips and captions should not misrepresent a person, event or endorsement.

AI-assisted drafting, transcripts, accessibility or illustrations require human review. Synthetic media must not deceptively portray a real person as saying or doing something they did not; realistic altered or synthetic material must be identified where applicable law or platform rules require it. AI-generated illustrations are not documentary evidence.

14. Political interviews and election-period media

RFTUK may discuss parties, politicians, candidates, policies and public decisions as part of evidence-led issue campaigning. Official communications must not become party or candidate advertising or tell the public how to vote on behalf of RFTUK.

A comparison of candidate or party positions should use a fair, transparent method without misleading omissions. During regulated election or referendum periods, assess whether communications, paid promotions, coordinated activity or publication costs fall within non-party campaigning rules. Apply digital imprints wherever the current rules require them; check Electoral Commission guidance before publication.

15. Partnerships, sponsorship and paid media

Media partnerships, sponsored content, production help and paid advertisements must not buy control over RFTUK's findings or distort evidence. Material commercial arrangements, gifts or conflicts should be declared where necessary to avoid misleading the public.

Paid placement must not be presented as independent editorial endorsement. Political advertising and election-period activity may require separate legal and platform checks.

16. Responding to incidents and crisis communications

For major safeguarding, data, cyber, financial or legal incidents, public statements must be coordinated by authorised persons and prioritise verified facts, people's safety, applicable notification duties and practical updates. Do not conceal known serious issues, speculate about blame or reveal confidential investigations just to meet a press deadline.

17. Social media, volunteers and boundaries

Media enquiries arriving through social media should be moved to the organisational contact route when appropriate, without disclosing case details publicly. Personal disputes with journalists must not be conducted using official RFTUK accounts.

Volunteers and supporters may express lawful personal opinions, but must not misuse confidential information, RFTUK branding or safeguarding data or falsely claim to speak for the company.

18. PCS and parent confidentiality

The Parent Contribution Service (PCS) is operated by Right First Time UK Ltd; it is not a separate legal entity merely because it uses that name. PCS offers information, calculation, communication, voluntary agreements and record-keeping; it does not itself receive, hold or transfer parent-to-parent contributions or exercise statutory maintenance-enforcement powers.

Private parent or child data, messages, payment records and safeguarding information must not be given to the media without a lawful basis and appropriate authorisation. Case studies should normally be anonymised unless informed publication consent and safeguarding assessment justify identification.

19. Publisher complaints and external regulation

Where a publisher has made a material error, use its corrections or complaints route as appropriate. IPSO regulates participating publishers only; Ofcom may deal with certain regulated broadcasting complaints. Not every publisher belongs to the same complaints scheme, and court remedies have separate requirements and time limits.

RFTUK may draw voluntarily on the IPSO Editors' Code for accuracy, privacy, children and fair correction, but does not claim IPSO membership or special journalistic legal status by doing so.

20. Complaints about RFTUK media conduct

Concerns about RFTUK statements, filming, interviews, quotes, privacy, harassment or a failure to correct information may be raised through <https://rightfirsttimeuk.com/contact-us.php> or by emailing complaints@rightfirsttimeuk.com. Serious matters should be reviewed as independently and fairly as practicable under the Complaints Policy.

Relevant drafts, recordings, correspondence and evidence should be preserved where necessary. Retaliation merely for raising a genuine concern in good faith is not acceptable.

21. Related policies and approvals

Read this document alongside the Evidence, Research, Publication & Corrections Policy; Lobbying Parliament & Political Independence Policy; Safeguarding Policy; Data Protection & GDPR Policy; AI Images, Video & Visual Content Policy; Equality & Reasonable Adjustments Policy; Conflict of Interest Policy; Community Standards; Complaints Policy; and the Company's registered Articles of Association.

A media statement cannot override legal duties, a court order, the registered Articles or a restriction placed on information by another person or body.

22. Governance, review and company information

RFTUK will review this policy at least annually, and earlier following material changes in media law, family-court reporting, electoral requirements, safeguarding practice, technology or its activities. Higher-risk publications need a current assessment when made.

RFTUK is the public name of Right First Time UK Ltd, a non-profit private company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales, company number 17493370. Statutory membership and public supporter membership are separate under the registered Articles. The company may make genuinely authorised, reasonable payments and reimburse expenses in accordance with its Articles; this policy does not alter those rights or duties.

Official and professional references

[IPSO Editors' Code of Practice](#)

[Defamation Act 2013, section 4](#)

[HMCTS family court transparency guidance](#)

[Electoral Commission digital imprint guidance](#)

[ICO accuracy principle](#)

Legal entity: Right First Time UK Ltd | Company No. 17493370 | Private company limited by guarantee | Non-profit

Contact: <https://rightfirsttimeuk.com/contact-us.php>

Complaints: complaints@rightfirsttimeuk.com

This policy sets organisational standards; the registered Articles of Association govern constitutional rights and obligations.