

# FACT CHECKING

## Skills and Steps

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# Learning Objectives

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- **Understand the steps to fact-check a claim**
- **Be able to independently conduct a comprehensive fact-check**

# Fact-checking Methodology

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- We could classify fact-checking methodology into **4** main steps that are common to all fact-checking

# 1

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## **Selection process**

- **the processes by which fact checkers choose what claims to evaluate.**

# Sourcing for claims

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- **Fact-checkers examine a wide range of political actors and groups, including both elected and non-elected government officials, political candidates, media pundits, special interest groups and people of large mass followership**
- **Through persuasive products such as political and business advertisements, false news spreads and so it is the job of the fact-checker to ask critical questions when determining what to fact-check.**

# Choose the claim(s)

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- **Is the statement actually checkable? Opinions are (as a principle) not fact-checkable!**
- **Are there facts to support/contest the claim?**
- **Is the topic significant enough to influence public opinions?**
- **Was the statement made by a public figure (a person with large followership)?**
- **Would a typical person hear or read the statement and wonder: Is that true?**
- **Is the statement likely to be passed on and repeated by others?**

# 2

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## Research methods

- the basic techniques and types of sources that fact checkers most commonly use when conducting research on claims, as well as the official rules and editorial policies that govern their approaches.

# Research Methods

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- Having assigned the claim, contact the speaker, or their office. *We make it necessary to communicate with the speaker – via email, text, call or even visits.*
- **FOI works!**
- Once the claim has been confirmed, embark on comprehensive research with preeminence given to original and reliable sources.



# Original Sources

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- **Original sources provide first-hand testimony or direct evidence concerning a topic under investigation.**
- **They are usually created by witnesses or recorders who experienced the events or conditions being documented and are often created at the time when the events or conditions occurred.**
- **They can include autobiographies, memoirs and oral histories recorded later in any format: original, in microfilm/microfiche, in digital format, or in published format.**

# Reliable Sources

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- **Reliable sources refer to information that can be trusted.**
- **They include unbiased sources and studies that disclose everything about how the study was conceived and designed.**
- **Reliable sources also include organizations which are largely considered trustworthy. For instance, the World Health Organization can be, to a large extent, trusted to provide data on health-related surveys.**

# 3

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## Writing

- the art of drafting the fact-check to reflect basic principles, including the structure.

# Write the fact-check

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- Armed with sufficient information, the fact check is written.
- Context, clarity and transparency must be ensured in your writing
- The fact check usually answers the following questions:
  - where and when was it said?
  - To whom?
  - Why is this particular statement being fact-checked?
  - What resources, documents, spreadsheets and interviews were used in compiling the fact check?

# 4

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## **Editing fact-checks**

- **the systems and processes by which fact-checkers establish the veracity of a claim.**

# **Edit with scepticism**

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- **You must, after writing the fact-check take time to edit over and over again to ascertain a high level of correctness.**
- **Afterwards, the fact check will be sent to the editor for final review using standardized questions for each fact check, as well as general knowledge of fact checking principles.**

# Tools for fact checking online fakes

Image	Video	Social Media	Data
<a href="#"><u>Tiny Eye</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Video Vault</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>BS Detector</u></a> (Chrome, Firefox, Safari)	NBS
<a href="#"><u>Image Edited</u></a>	<a href="https://citizenevidence.amnestyusa.org/">https://citizenevidence.amnestyusa.org/</a>	<a href="#"><u>Fake News Alert</u></a> (Chrome)	<a href="#"><u>Wolfram Alpha</u></a> <a href="#"><u>CIA World Factbook</u></a> UNDP's <a href="#"><u>Human Development Indicators</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Google Reverse Image Search</u></a>			MDAs
			FOI
			Wayback Machine

# 1

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## Real photos from unrelated events

*Unrelated photos may be used by the governments and state-owned media outlets to spread their political message and misinform the public.*

### Tip

Run a reverse image search to see whether there is an earlier version of the same image online.

Check with Tiny Eye



# 2

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## **Art, ads, movies and staged scenes**

### **Tip**

- **Seek out reliable sources to confirm OR contacting local authorities to ask**

# 3

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## Photoshopped Images

### Tip

- Seek out reliable sources to confirm OR contacting local authorities to ask
- Be very wary of gory pictures shared during violent conflict!

# 4

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## Fake account

### Tip

- **Twitter and Facebook verify accounts of famous/prominent people and organizations. You can spot these because they have a blue tick mark on the profile page. Otherwise, ask them to share the evidence to authenticate the individual.**
- **Check previous tweets to see if they are consistent with the person.**

# 5

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## Manual retweets

### Tip

- Check if you can find the original tweet..

# 6

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**Fake tweet, facebook wall posts and iPhone conversations**

**Tip**

- Check if you can find the original tweet..

# 7

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**Fake websites**

**Thank you!!!**

# **DATA INTERPRETATION** for fact-checking research

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# Data Interpretation

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- **It is important to regard data with scepticism.**
- **The identification of data sources is not sufficient.**
- **Journalists need to be guided by the ethics of fact-checking to ask valid questions about the quality of the data.**
- **Journalists must take the time to investigate data collection methodology before moving forward with a story.**

# 1

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- **Consider the data from various perspectives.**

# 2

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- **Think beyond the data but do not stray too far from the data.**

# 3

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- **When was the data gathered?**

# 4

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- **What is the size of the sample?**

# 5

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- How was the data collected?

# Factchecking Tools

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Verification Handbook online resource <http://verificationhandbook.com/>

**Thank you!!!**