

ELECTIONS COVERAGE

Fairness and balance: reporting responsibly and comprehensively on elections and polls

What is it about?

The significance of the media in democratic elections is indisputable and we have a responsibility to people to provide fair and balanced coverage. However, it is not easy to report on elections and polls; they can move fast and almost always deliver unexpected developments in some shape or form.

This workshop aims to hone the skills of journalists when it comes to best practice reporting on elections. It also looks at the role of the media in democratic elections, how to inform voters about the process, balanced coverage of candidates, planning a comprehensive media coverage strategy and safety in the field. Training also covers writing skills, sourcing, ethics and legal dangers.

Who should attend?

This course targets journalists who have had limited experience covering elections in a free and balanced manner. The course also focuses on improving writing and reporting skills so may challenge more experienced journalists who could benefit from a fresh look at their journalistic skills.

Learning outcomes

- Understanding the media's role in a democratic election
- Elements that constitute free and fair in an election
- Knowledge of relevant election processes
- Awareness of legal and ethical pitfalls of election reporting
- Best practice for election coverage and fairness to candidates
- Outline an election coverage plan for election day
- Deliver a proposal for incorporating social media into election coverage
- Improved writing and reporting skills

Benefits

Journalists and news organisations will be better equipped to plan effective and efficient reporting strategies for elections. This will improve the overall quality, fairness and balance of coverage, ensuring the media plays a responsible role in the democratic process.

Course structure

- The role of the media in a democratic election
- The election process
- Balanced Coverage for Candidates
- Issues that are key for Voters
- Preparing for an election
- Social Media and Elections
- Pre-election stories
- Election Day and Polling closes
- The Morning After
- Safety while covering elections
- Interviewing techniques
- Sourcing for Credibility and Accuracy in reporting
- Ethical and Legal Dangers