

When the Spectator was founded in 1828, its declared purpose was “to convey intelligence”. Exactly 190 years later, the magazine still prides itself on its originality of thought, independence of opinion and elegance of expression. We try to avoid editorial balance: our motto is “firm, but unfair”. We have only two staff writers: James Forsyth and Katy Balls. Almost all of the magazine is written by our peerless network of freelance journalists: people like Charles Moore, Isabel Hardman, Matthew Parris and Rod Liddle.

In this era of hyper-scrutiny, we know that writers who offer controversial arguments need to be sure of their supporting facts. That's something we at The Spectator pride ourselves on. In 2017, we did not have any adverse IPSO judgments.

Our complaints policy is very simple: we follow the Editor's Code, which is circulated to all editors and staff writers, and we correct any factual errors. We haven't sought pre-publication advice from IPSO, and don't envisage having to do so. As Editor, I'm personally responsible not just for dealing with IPSO but for every sentence in the magazine – even the bits that I disagree with. I also am personally involved in mentoring and training The Spectator's small team of editors. Of course, as with every member of Britain's free press, our real standards are set not by any regulator but by our readers, who expect us to maintain the highest possible standards of argument and accuracy.

Fraser Nelson, Editor