# Common roles in newsroomsFirstly, let’s clarify some of the roles commonly found in newsrooms. What do the titles mean and what do those people do? Here’s a very broad breakdown:

| Title | Responsibilities |
| --- | --- |
| Managing Editor | A managing editor is a senior member of a publication's management team. This person oversees all aspects of the publication. For most LINA members, this will be the owner of the business or publisher. |
| Editor | Editors are the gatekeepers of content quality and integrity, working closely with Journalists to ensure all materials published meet professional editorial standards. Often this will require some fact-checking, review and revision of content. Editors may also contribute editorial pieces and will shape the tone of the publication. They provide mentoring to emerging journalists, provide feedback to contributors and work to refine stories by analysing each sentence for grammar, accuracy, and clarity. They are often tasked with assigning story topics for writers and journalists. |
| Journalist | Journalists work in the field to identify, investigate and relay events and happenings. They gather information, analyse and interpret stories, verify sources and present their findings to the public in summarised format. Modern journalists are adept in online publishing and use social media skills to stay connected with sources and audiences. They are usually considered ‘on the ground’ and work to deadlines. They are responsible for creating accurate and engaging stories and can work across print, broadcast, and/or digital media platforms. |
| Reporter | Although all reporters can be considered journalists, not all journalists are reporters. Reporters are media personnel that directly cover the news. They provide information to the public concerning current events and trending stories, and can produce written, visual, or audio content. Reporters are on the front lines gathering information, conducting interviews, and covering events. |
| Contributor | Contributors produce occasional rather than regular content for news outlets. They are not usually employees but are generally paid on a project by project basis. They contribute stories or content, but aren’t there full-time, hence the title “contributor.” |
| Columnist | Columnists write regular articles or commentary for a specific section of a publication, often providing personal opinions or expertise on various topics. They become known for their distinctive voice or perspective. |
| Staff writer | Similar to a reporter, a staff writer covers the news, but they often do not travel to do so. While it’s not the case for every publication, Staff writers generally work in-office, whereas reporters are expected to travel to gather stories. Staff writers are also full or part-time employees, unlike contributors. |
| Photojournalist / Photographer | Photojournalists tell stories through images, capturing moments that convey the essence of an event or issue. They must have a keen eye for composition and an ability to react quickly to unfolding events. |
| Content Manager | A [content manager](https://www.indeed.com/q-content-manager-jobs.html) is responsible for planning content development strategies for various print and online media properties. They create an editorial calendar to produce regular, relevant, engaging and impactful content for brand promotion, in collaboration with any marketing staff and/or plans. They stay up-to-date with industry trends and use project management tools. They create test plans, review web analytics and improve production processes to build masthead recognition. |
| Social media specialist | Social media specialists are responsible for day-to-day posts on social media channels and work to improve engagement on social media accounts, contributing to and implementing marketing strategies. They can be freelance, within marketing agencies or on staff. |
| Digital Strategist | A [digital strategist](https://www.indeed.com/q-digital-strategist-jobs.html) collaborates with content development, marketing and social media management teams to create digital promotional strategies. They keep up-to-date with emerging digital trends and identify the target audience for news products. They increase user engagement with SEO techniques and maintain open communication channels with advertising clients. |

For many LINA members, the same person will undertake a combination of some of the roles above, for example strategy, content planning and social media roles. This table is merely to provide guidance on the various types of positions you may recruit for, and a guide to the titles and general responsibilities for each as a base from which to build your position description using the template below.

# How to use this document

# This document is intended to provide guidance to news publishers on the key principles and concepts of a job ad. This document can be used as a template for adaptation and then adoption.

The text below is designed to be adapted for organisational style and context. You will need to consider your publication’s particular employee needs, as well as calibrating this document to the size, nature, style, and character of your publication. The requirements of a new employee may vary between publishers, depending on these factors. For example, consider required skill level, number of hours to be offered and salary.

LINA service reminder:As a LINA member, you have access to [on-demand HR Support](https://lina.org.au/members-area/members-area-operations/). You can use this service to help interpret Fair Work requirements for your businesses.

*© 2024 Local and Independent News Association. You may download, display, print and reproduce this material for your personal use, or non-commercial use by your publication. You may modify this resource. Apart from any use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), all other rights are reserved.*

Job title: (insert job title here) Example: Online Journalist

Reporting to: (insert supervisor’s title here)

Salary: (insert salary per hour/annum or total package including base salary, superannuation, commissions or benefits here)

Hours: (insert average number of hours per week or type of employment such as casual, full-time here)

Location:(insert location of the position and any travel required)

*(Write a short paragraph which describes the overall purpose of this position and how it contributes to the goals or function of the business):*

Example: As one of the news team at **[PUBLICATION]** your role will be to keep the community of **[LOCAL AREA]** informed about breaking and ongoing news. Your role will include daily reporting of news in the local area, attending local council meetings and updating the social media feeds of **[PUBLICATION].**

### Key responsibilities & duties

*(Insert the main responsibilities and duties of the position in this table. Then list the skills or competencies which the candidate will need in order to complete those duties. It’s also worth thinking about how important each duty/competency is e.g. how much time will be spent on each duty and whether prior knowledge is a must-have or something you can train)*

Example:

| Duties of the role | Time spent | Competencies sought | Must have or optional (can be trained) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reporting on issues relevant to the local area | 55% | * Experience in a newsroom * Strong news sense | Must have |
| Conducting interviews with various sources | 25% | * Good research abilities * Skills in interviewing | Must have |
| Updating the social media feeds of [Publication] | 10% | * Understanding of social media algorithms * Basic online community management | Optional |
| Publishing your own stories on [Publication]’s website | 10% | * Understanding of [Your CMS] | Optional |

## You have the following:

*[Outline the level of experience, training and knowledge you require for this position]*  
  
Example:

* A Bachelor's degree,or equivalent, in Journalism
* Experience in a print/online newsroom
* Exceptional writing skills for print and online news
* Strong news sense and research skills
* A knack for asking the right questions, to get to the heart of a story
* An understanding of the [Media Codes of Conduct](https://www.accc.gov.au/about-us/media/media-code-of-conduct#:~:text=The%20Media%20Code%20of%20Conduct,about%20the%20ACCC's%20enforcement%20work.)
* The ability to work well in a team, or by yourself
* Experience with CMS and SEO [you can be specific to your own CMS]
* Experience with [any software you’re currently using that your employee would need - Word, Excel, Canva, etc]

Example: **[PUBLICATION]** is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace. Candidates from all backgrounds will receive equal consideration for the opportunity they apply for.

Please email your CV to (publication email address).