

Stop and consider

**CHECK
THE
SOURCE**
this upcoming
referendum

During the referendum you may come across information that isn't supported by evidence, is missing context or is even deliberately misleading. To be well informed, be a critical thinker when consuming information and think about whether the information is accurate and truthful.

Disinformation tactics

Disinformation is knowingly false information designed to deliberately mislead and influence public opinion, and disinformation doesn't spread on its own. People trying to circulate disinformation can use some of the following tactics to intentionally try and mislead you:

Just asking questions

People may intentionally ask questions to cast doubt on something without providing any evidence. Although most questions asked are legitimate, be on the lookout for questions asked in bad faith or about very unlikely situations. Stop and consider why the question is being asked.

Emotional language

Strong language that evokes negative emotions like anger or fear can make it easier for content to go viral. If you see something that makes you feel a strong emotional response, stop and consider why.

Cherry-picking

Cherry-picking occurs when information is provided without context, such as screenshots or statistics without reference to their original source.

Your role as a voter

Referendum laws do not regulate truth in communication or advertising. Take the time to consider if the information is:

Reliable

Is it from a reliable or recognisable source?

Do you know the source of the information? Has it come from an accredited media outlet or official social media account? If you're not sure, check if the account is newly created, or if it has other posts.

Current

When was it published?

Just because a post/article was shared today does not mean it is current. Always check the original source and publication date. Old posts/articles that may no longer be accurate can be shared to make them appear like new information.

The AEC's role

The AEC is the independent agency tasked with running the referendum. The AEC's role is to:

Provide reliable information on the referendum process

The AEC will provide easy access to information regarding how to enrol or vote through our advertising campaign, website, contact centre and social media accounts. If there is any incorrect information about these processes, the AEC will act to correct the record. Outside these processes – the AEC does not have any role in checking the truth of referendum communication.

Investigate the authorisation of referendum communications

Certain referendum communications are required to be authorised to help you to know the source of that information.

Yes and No campaign material

Although the AEC is responsible for issuing the referendum pamphlet, which will contain information from the official Yes and No campaigns, the AEC does not have a role in regulating the truth in these communications.