

Section 6: Polish the Article and Video Package

You now have two complete versions of the same reported story: a written article and a rough-cut video package. Section 6 is the quality-control stage. The team will check the reporting again, improve the writing, repair weak edits, balance the sound, correct graphics and captions, and prepare both versions for approval.

Polishing does not mean adding effects until the work looks impressive. It means removing anything that is inaccurate, confusing, unnecessary, distracting, difficult to hear, or difficult to read. The article and package may use different wording and details, but they must agree on the central facts and leave the audience with the same accurate understanding.

The editing program remains your choice. You may use Microsoft Clipchamp on a Chromebook, CapCut, Adobe Premiere Pro, or another approved editor. Use the BellvilleAV.com tutorials assigned by Mr G when you need exact instructions for a particular program. This guide explains what must be checked and corrected no matter which software you use.

By the end of this section, the team should have a polished article and a polished approval copy of the package. Both should be accurate, complete, understandable, technically clean, properly identified, and ready for final review. They are not published or released until approval is given.

Understand the Difference Between Complete and Ready

A complete article has a beginning, middle, ending, facts, and quotations. A complete rough cut plays from beginning to end. Ready work has survived careful review by people who look for different kinds of problems.

Complete work	Polished work
Contains the whole story	Communicates the story clearly without unnecessary or missing information
Uses the selected facts and quotations	Checks every fact and quotation against the original source
Has pictures and sound on the timeline	Uses purposeful pictures, clean cuts, balanced sound, and readable graphics
Has a headline and opening	Uses a specific headline and a strong opening that accurately match the story
Has basic lower thirds and captions	Corrects every name, title, caption, spelling, and timing problem
Meets the approximate length	Meets the assignment at a natural pace without filler or rushed material

Do not confuse more complicated with more polished. A simple, accurate article and clean package are stronger than work filled with decorative effects, dramatic music, and extra words.

Use a Fixed Review Order

Review the largest risks before the smallest details. There is no value in perfecting a font while the story contains a wrong number or a misleading sound bite.

1. Protect the current versions and make working copies.
2. Check the article and package against each other.
3. Verify facts, names, titles, dates, numbers, quotations, and sound bites.
4. Polish the article for focus, order, clarity, attribution, and mechanics.
5. Polish the package for story, pacing, pictures, sound, graphics, and captions.
6. Check permissions, credits, privacy, and required identifications.
7. Conduct audience, technical, and final accuracy reviews.
8. Create and inspect the approval versions.

Step 1 Protect the Current Versions

Before making major changes, save a copy of the article and video project. If a revision creates a new problem, the team must be able to return to the last working version.

- ☐ The article has a clear filename with the story name and version.
- ☐ The video project has a clear version name and known storage location.
- ☐ Original interviews, B-roll, narration, photographs, documents, and graphics remain untouched.
- ☐ The rough-cut export is saved for comparison.
- ☐ One current master article and one current master video project are identified.

Useful names: CTE_Certifications_Article_Edit_v2 and CTE_Certifications_Package_Polish_v2

Do not create several files all named Final. A file can be final only after it has been checked and approved.

Step 2 Compare the Article and Package

Place the article, final script, and rough cut together. The article and video are not expected to contain every identical sentence, but important facts must not conflict.

Compare	Questions to answer
Story focus	Do both versions explain the same central development and why it matters?
Names and titles	Are people identified the same way and spelled correctly in both versions?
Numbers and dates	Do enrollment, scores, costs, dates, counts, and other figures agree?
Cause and effect	Does either version claim a reason, result, or motive that the reporting does not prove?
Uncertainty	Do both versions preserve words such as may, could, proposed, expected, or estimated when needed?
What happens next	Do both versions give the same next step, deadline, decision, or scheduled event?
Overall impression	Would a reader and viewer leave with the same accurate understanding?

If the versions conflict, return to the original reporting and determine which information is correct. Do not choose the version that sounds better.

Step 3 Build a Final Fact Check Sheet

Make a list of every detail that could be wrong. Check each item against an interview recording, written notes, official document, direct observation, or another identified source. Memory is not a source.

Item to verify	Source used	Article checked	Package checked
Name and title: _____	_____	Yes / Fix	Yes / Fix
Number or statistic: _____	_____	Yes / Fix	Yes / Fix
Date or deadline: _____	_____	Yes / Fix	Yes / Fix
Claim or explanation: _____	_____	Yes / Fix	Yes / Fix
Quote or sound bite: _____	_____	Yes / Fix	Yes / Fix
Next step or result: _____	_____	Yes / Fix	Yes / Fix

Details that require special attention

- The spelling and capitalization of every person's name
- The current and relevant title for every source
- Numbers, scores, costs, measurements, rankings, and percentages
- Dates, days of the week, deadlines, and whether an event has already happened
- Statements about causes, motives, reactions, plans, and future results
- Words that show uncertainty or that a decision is not final
- Claims supplied by a club, team, business, organization, or promotional source

Step 4 Verify Every Written Quotation

Play the original recording or compare the written interview notes while reading each quotation in the article. The quotation must preserve the source's words and meaning. Correct transcription mistakes, names, and necessary punctuation.

- ☐ The source actually said the quoted words.
- ☐ The quotation is not created by joining separate answers.
- ☐ Removed words do not change the meaning.
- ☐ The sentence before and after the quotation do not create a false impression.
- ☐ The quotation is assigned to the correct person.
- ☐ The article does not use quotation marks around the reporter's summary.

A quotation may be shortened for clarity only when the remaining words still represent what the source meant. If the quote is confusing, use a shorter accurate portion or paraphrase the verified information with clear attribution.

Step 5 Verify Every Sound Bite

Watch each sound bite from the original interview, including the words immediately before and after the selected section. The edit must not change the source's meaning or hide necessary context.

- ☐ The source makes a complete and understandable point.
- ☐ The selected start and end do not cut off important words.
- ☐ The interview question is not required to understand the answer.
- ☐ The bite does not misrepresent the source through missing context.
- ☐ Any edit covered by B-roll sounds natural and remains truthful.
- ☐ The correct name and title appear with the correct source.
- ☐ Captions match the spoken words.

Do not remove a pause or phrase simply to make a source sound more certain, emotional, supportive, or critical than the full answer shows.

Step 6 Polish the Article Focus and Order

Read only the headline, lead, and first several paragraphs. The main news should be clear quickly. Then read the first sentence of every paragraph to test the order of the story.

Check the article structure

- The lead states the most important new information without trying to include every detail.
- The next paragraphs explain why the story matters and add necessary context.
- Facts and quotations appear where the reader needs them.
- Different perspectives are represented fairly when the story requires them.
- Less important background appears later or is removed.
- The ending gives a useful next step, consequence, or final verified idea.

Move a paragraph when the information is useful but appears in the wrong place. Delete a paragraph when it repeats something the reader already understands or pulls the story away from its focus.

Step 7 Polish Each Article Paragraph

Review the article one paragraph at a time. Each paragraph should perform a job: deliver news, explain context, provide evidence, add a source voice, show impact, or tell what happens next.

Problem	What to do
The paragraph contains several ideas	Separate the ideas or keep only the one that supports the story at that point.
The sentence is difficult to follow	Use a clear subject, active verb, familiar words, and a more direct order.
The paragraph repeats an earlier fact	Add new information or remove the repetition.
The wording sounds promotional	Replace praise, slogans, and unsupported claims with verified facts and attributed statements.
The wording assumes motive or emotion	Use what the source said or what the reporter directly observed. Do not guess.
The attribution is vague	Name the actual person, document, organization, or record.

Step 8 Check Article Style and Mechanics

Spelling and grammar tools can find possible problems, but they do not understand the reporting. Review every suggestion before accepting it. A tool may incorrectly change a name, title, quotation, school term, or intended meaning.

- ☐ Names and proper nouns use consistent spelling and capitalization.
- ☐ Verb tense is consistent with when events happened.
- ☐ Pronouns clearly refer to the correct person or group.
- ☐ Quotation marks, commas, periods, and apostrophes are correct.
- ☐ Paragraphs are short enough for comfortable online reading.
- ☐ Links lead to the intended page and use meaningful linked words.
- ☐ The article does not contain drafting notes, AI instructions, blank placeholders, or unresolved questions.
- ☐ The byline identifies the correct student reporter or team.

Step 9 Polish the Headline and Supporting Text

The headline should tell the reader the real news in specific, accurate language. It should not promise more than the article proves. Avoid vague labels, clickbait, excessive punctuation, and promotional wording.

Weak headline	Stronger headline
Exciting Changes Coming to Bellville	Bellville Adds Two Industry Certification Courses
Brahmas Have Huge Night	Brahmas Rally in Fourth Quarter to Defeat Tigers
Everything You Need to Know About Pickup	New Parent Pickup Route Begins Monday

If the article includes a summary, excerpt, photograph caption, or search description, each item must also be accurate. A caption should identify who or what appears, explain the relevant action, and include credit information when required. Do not use the caption to make an unsupported claim.

Step 10 Review the Package as a Story

Watch the package once without pausing and without reading the article or script. A person who did not edit the package should answer the questions below immediately afterward.

- What happened or what changed?
- Why does it matter to the Bellville audience?
- Who provided the important information or experience?
- What evidence or example made the story understandable?
- What happens next?

If the viewer cannot answer an essential question, find the exact point where the package becomes unclear. Repair the story with verified narration, a better sound bite, a useful graphic, or a clearer order. Do not add random material simply to make the package longer.

Step 11 Polish the Package Pacing

Pacing is the speed at which the audience receives pictures, words, and ideas. The package should move, but it should not race. Viewers need enough time to understand a sentence, recognize a source, read a graphic, and experience important natural sound.

Pacing problem	Possible correction
Narration sounds rushed	Shorten lower-priority wording and record the line again at a natural pace.
A shot stays after its meaning is clear	Cut to another relevant part of the sequence or shorten the section.
Pictures change too quickly	Hold useful shots longer and remove unnecessary cuts.
A sound bite drags	Select a shorter complete portion that preserves the source's meaning.
The package never breathes	Allow a useful natural-sound moment or brief pause between ideas.
The ending feels sudden	Give the final picture or sound a moment after the last words.

Step 12 Polish the Visual Edit

Watch the package once with the sound muted. The pictures should still show a logical path through the people, place, action, evidence, impact, and ending.

- ☐ Every spoken section has an intentional picture.
- ☐ There are no accidental black frames, empty spaces, frozen frames, or missing-media screens.
- ☐ B-roll matches the meaning of the narration or sound bite.
- ☐ Interview sources appear long enough to be recognized and identified.
- ☐ Visual sequences use a useful mix of wide, medium, close, detail, and reaction shots.
- ☐ No clip is repeated without a clear reason.
- ☐ Shaky, badly framed, dark, or distracting clips are replaced when better material exists.
- ☐ Cuts occur at natural points in movement and do not feel accidental.
- ☐ Transitions communicate a real change and are not used as decoration.
- ☐ The final shot supports the ending and remains long enough to register.

Do not stretch, crop, zoom, filter, or stabilize footage so heavily that it looks unnatural or hides important information. A technically imperfect but truthful picture may be better than a processed picture that misleads the audience.

Step 13 Make Careful Color and Image Corrections

Basic corrections may help shots match and remain visible. Adjust exposure, contrast, color, or cropping only as needed. Keep skin tones, school colors, lighting conditions, documents, and the actual scene believable.

- Brighten a dark face carefully without destroying the background.
- Correct an obvious color cast when the editor provides a simple control.
- Match nearby shots so changes are not distracting.
- Crop out an accidental edge only when the remaining image still tells the truth.

- Do not use beauty filters, dramatic color styles, fake backgrounds, or effects that change the meaning of news footage.

If an editor does not provide these controls or the Chromebook struggles with them, concentrate on choosing the clearest available shot. Story and accuracy matter more than advanced correction.

Step 14 Polish the Audio Mix

Listen to the full package with headphones. Then listen again through ordinary Chromebook or phone speakers. Every important voice must remain understandable in both conditions.

Balance the audio in this order

1. Make the narration blocks sound consistent with one another.
2. Match sound bites and stand-ups to a comfortable spoken level.
3. Lower natural sound beneath important words.
4. Let planned natural sound rise only where it helps the story.
5. Remove clicks, sudden level changes, and accidental gaps with careful cuts or short fades.
6. Add approved music only if the format calls for it, then keep it below every important voice.

Audio problem	Best response
A narration take has echo or heavy noise	Re-record it in a better space when possible.
One sound bite is much quieter	Adjust it carefully or use a clearer accurate part of the interview.
Automatic noise removal damages the voice	Reduce or remove the effect and return to the original audio.
Music changes the emotional meaning	Remove it or choose a neutral approved alternative.
A cut clips a word	Restore the complete word and create a cleaner edit.

Step 15 Polish Lower Thirds and Graphics

Every lower third and graphic must be correct, readable, consistent, and visible long enough to understand. Check it on a phone-sized preview, not only on a large editing screen.

- ☐ Each source name is spelled correctly and appears with the correct person.
- ☐ Each title explains the source's relevant role in the story.
- ☐ Font, color, capitalization, size, placement, and animation are consistent.
- ☐ Text remains inside the safe viewing area and does not cover faces or important action.
- ☐ Numbers, dates, scores, maps, and comparisons match the verified reporting.
- ☐ Graphics do not remain after the related information has passed.
- ☐ Documents and screenshots hide private or unrelated information.
- ☐ Logos, photographs, and other visual material are permitted and credited when required.

Do not use a graphic to repeat every word being spoken. Use it when reading the information helps the audience understand or remember it.

Step 16 Correct the Captions

Automatic captions are a starting point, not a finished product. Play the package while reading every caption. Correct the words, punctuation, capitalization, names, numbers, and timing by hand.

- Make captions match what is actually spoken.
- Correct names, school terms, abbreviations, and local place names.
- Break lines at natural phrase boundaries rather than in the middle of a name or idea.
- Keep captions on screen long enough to read.
- Do not allow captions to cover lower thirds or important visual information.
- Identify an off-screen speaker when the audience could be confused.
- Include meaningful sounds when the format requires full accessibility, such as applause or a whistle.

Watch the finished captions once with the sound muted. A viewer who depends on captions should receive the same essential story.

Step 17 Check Credits Permissions and Privacy

Confirm that the team has the right to use every photograph, video clip, document, logo, graphic, sound effect, and music track that did not come from the team's own reporting. Record the owner or source and the required credit.

- ☐ The team recorded the interviews and B-roll or has permission to use outside material.
- ☐ Photographs and submitted clips have the correct owner and credit.
- ☐ Music and sound effects are school-approved and properly licensed or permitted.
- ☐ Screenshots and documents do not reveal student records, private messages, passwords, addresses, phone numbers, or unrelated personal information.
- ☐ Minors and sensitive locations are shown according to school instructions and permissions.
- ☐ The article and package do not contain private notes, raw contact information, or unapproved material.

If permission is uncertain, do not assume that finding something online makes it free to use. Ask Mr G or replace it with material the team can use.

Step 18 Use AI as a Reviewer

AI may help identify unclear sentences, repeated information, possible grammar problems, missing attribution, conflicting details, or places where the article and script appear inconsistent. It may not confirm a fact from memory, invent a source, rewrite a quotation, create a sound bite, or decide that an unsupported claim is true.

AI article review prompt

Review this news article using only the verified fact sheet and source material I provide. Identify unclear wording, repetition, weak attribution, promotional language, unsupported conclusions, possible contradictions, and spelling or grammar problems. Do not add facts or rewrite quotations. List each suggested change with the reason, and mark anything that must be checked against an original source.

AI package review prompt

Compare this final video package script, caption transcript, lower-third list, graphic text, and verified fact sheet. Identify conflicts in names, titles, numbers, dates, quotations, attribution, or what happens next. Also identify narration that repeats a sound bite or may be difficult to understand when heard once. Do not invent information or assume the media matches the description. A human will verify every suggestion against the original files.

Accept changes one at a time. Check each suggestion against the reporting and the actual package. Do not use an automatic rewrite that replaces the entire verified article or script without review.

Step 19 Conduct Three Final Reviews

Review	Reviewer task
Audience review	Read the article and watch the package once for meaning. Identify anything confusing, slow, repetitive, distracting, or unanswered.
Technical review	Check picture, sound, captions, graphics, links, formatting, timing, filenames, project health, and export playback.
Accuracy review	Compare every checkable claim, quotation, bite, name, title, number, date, caption, and graphic with the original source.

Whenever possible, use different people for these reviews. The primary writer and editor know what they intended, which can make them overlook what the audience actually receives.

Record and Resolve Corrections

Location	Problem	Correction	Checked by	Complete
Article paragraph or video time				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No

Mark a correction complete only after someone checks the revised article or package. A note saying fix name is not finished work.

Step 20 Create the Approval Versions

Save the polished article with a clear approval filename. Export the polished package using the assigned resolution, orientation, format, and filename. Exporting creates a new video file; it does not prove that the file works.

☐ The article opens correctly and contains the latest approved changes.

- ☐ The video export finishes without an error.
- ☐ The exported file has the expected picture dimensions and orientation.
- ☐ The exported video plays from the first frame to the final frame.
- ☐ Narration, interviews, natural sound, and any approved music are present.
- ☐ Graphics and captions appear at the correct times and remain readable.
- ☐ There are no new black frames, frozen sections, missing clips, or audio changes caused by export.
- ☐ The running time meets the assignment.
- ☐ The correct article and video versions are placed in the assigned review location.

Useful approval names: CTE_Certifications_Article_Approval_v1 and CTE_Certifications_Package_Approval_v1.mp4

Keep the editable article, video project, and original media. An exported video cannot replace the working project when a correction is requested.

Common Polishing Mistakes and Fixes

Mistake	Fix
The team only runs spell-check	Conduct separate story, accuracy, quotation, visual, audio, caption, and technical reviews.
The article and package disagree	Return to the original source, correct both versions, and repeat the comparison.
Polishing becomes adding effects	Remove distractions and improve clarity, accuracy, timing, readability, and sound.
AI changes a verified detail	Reject the change and check every remaining suggestion against the source material.
Automatic captions are accepted unchanged	Correct the caption transcript and timing while playing the package.
The editor fixes audio only with effects	Re-record poor narration or select clearer source audio when possible.
Only the primary editor reviews the package	Use another viewer who did not build the timeline.
The team exports and submits without watching	Open the actual exported file and inspect it from beginning to end.
Files are named Final Final 2	Use clear story, deliverable, stage, and version names.

Ready for Approval Checklist

The article and package are ready for approval only when the team can check every applicable item.

- ☐ The article and package tell the same central story and do not conflict.
- ☐ Every fact, name, title, date, number, quotation, and sound bite has been checked against an original source.
- ☐ Uncertainty, proposals, estimates, and future plans are described accurately.
- ☐ The article has a focused lead, logical order, useful quotations, clear attribution, and a meaningful ending.
- ☐ The headline accurately states the news without exaggeration or promotional language.
- ☐ Spelling, grammar, punctuation, byline, links, captions, and supporting text have been checked.
- ☐ The package is understandable after one viewing without the article beside it.
- ☐ Narration and sound bites are clear, accurate, naturally paced, and properly balanced.
- ☐ B-roll, interviews, photographs, documents, and graphics match the words and support the story.
- ☐ Cuts and transitions are clean and purposeful.
- ☐ Lower thirds identify the correct people with verified names and titles.
- ☐ Graphics are accurate, readable, consistent, and visible long enough.
- ☐ Automatic captions have been corrected word by word and checked with the sound muted.
- ☐ Permissions, credits, privacy, and school requirements have been confirmed.
- ☐ Audience, technical, and accuracy reviews have been completed.
- ☐ Every correction in the review log has been made and checked.
- ☐ The approval article and exported package open, play correctly, and use clear filenames.
- ☐ The editable project, article, and original media remain saved and recoverable.

When every required item is complete, submit both approval versions for final review. Do not publish, post, send, or release the article or package until Mr G or the assigned newsroom editor gives approval.