
Ofcom Bulletin for complaints about BBC online material

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Introduction

This Bulletin reports on complaints made to Ofcom about the BBC's online material. It gives the outcome of Ofcom's consideration on each complaint received and where relevant, provides Ofcom's opinion on whether the BBC met the required standards for its online material.

Under the BBC's Charter and Agreement, set by Government and Parliament, the BBC is responsible for the editorial standards of its online material. Ofcom has a responsibility to consider and give an opinion on, whether the BBC has observed relevant editorial guidelines in its online material¹. This came into effect with the Digital Economy Act on 27 April 2017.

Online material means content on the BBC's website and apps. This includes written text, images, video and sound content. It does not extend to social media, Bitesize, BBC material on third party websites and World Service content, among other things.

[Ofcom's published arrangements and procedures for handling complaints about BBC online material](#) can be found on the Ofcom website. These documents contain more information about the types of complaints we will consider and the process we will normally follow when handling complaints.

Complaints about BBC online material must follow the 'BBC First' approach, where they are made to the BBC in the first instance. If a complainant is not satisfied with the BBC's final response to a complaint about its online standards, they may seek an independent opinion on it from Ofcom.

Unlike our role regulating the standards of BBC broadcasting and on demand programme services (such as the BBC iPlayer), Ofcom has no enforcement powers for BBC online material.

¹ This does not include content on BBC on demand programme services (such as the BBC iPlayer), which must comply with relevant rules in Ofcom's [Broadcasting Code](#).

1. Complaints assessed, not accepted

Closed between 20 August 2022 and 14 October 2022

Below is an alphabetical list of complaints which, after careful assessment, Ofcom considered did not raise substantive issues under the relevant BBC editorial guidelines that warranted further consideration by Ofcom.

[More information about how Ofcom assesses complaints about BBC online material.](#)

Complaints about BBC online material

BBC online material	Date ²	Category	Number of complaints
BBC News website: Bee-eaters in Norfolk 'worrying sign of climate change'	22/07/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: BP profits soar as calls for windfall tax grow	03/05/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Joe Biden presidency: Five huge challenges looming	21/09/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: The Post Office interrogated me for hours	16/04/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC Ouch! website: Feeling the burn at Glastonbury	11/07/2021	Privacy	1

² This is the date the complainant first became aware of the online material. In the event that the complainant does not specify a date, we use the date that the article was published.

2. BBC First

Complaints closed between 20 August 2022 and 14 October 2022

Complaints about BBC online material, made to Ofcom in the first instance

The table below is an alphabetical list of complaints about the BBC's online material which Ofcom has not assessed. This is because Ofcom only considers complaints about the BBC's online material if the complainant has already complained to the BBC and the BBC has reached its final view on the complaint. The complaints in this table were made to Ofcom before completing the BBC's process.

BBC online material	Date ³	Category	Number of Complaints
BBC News	20/12/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News app	06/07/2022	Impartiality	1
BBC News app: US Election 2020, Live Updates	11/05/2020	Harm and Offence, other	1
BBC News website	28/09/2020	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	18/12/2020	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	05/01/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	17/03/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	26/04/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	15/07/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	28/09/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	06/11/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	10/02/2022	Complaints handling	1
BBC News website	19/02/2022	Harm and Offence, other	1
BBC News website	12/03/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website	07/06/2022	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	01/08/2022	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	01/10/2022	Impartiality	1

³ This is the date the complainant first became aware of the online material. In the event that the complainant does not specify a date, we use the date that the article was published.

BBC online material	Date³	Category	Number of Complaints
BBC News website: Branson's journey to the edge of space (and back)	07/11/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: CCTV: Lorry reverses into Stoke-on-Trent level crossing	08/10/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Chris Kaba: Man shot dead by police in Streatham named	05/09/2022	Accuracy	2
BBC News website: Climate change food calculator: What's your diet's carbon footprint?	19/08/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Climate change: Boris Johnson 'risks humiliation' over coal mine	05/02/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Coronavirus: More work needed to rule out China lab leak theory says WHO	31/03/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Covid cases and hospital admissions down - is it over?	08/04/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Covid: Child jabs halted in trial as adult clot link probed	07/04/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Covid: One dose of vaccine halves transmission - study	28/04/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Covid: The UK is Europe's virus hotspot - does it matter?	11/10/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Covid: The UK is Europe's virus hotspot - does it matter?	20/10/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: EU data law row threatens child abuse investigations	06/01/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: EU data law row threatens child abuse investigations	25/04/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Euro 2020: The ways Scotland has changed since France '98	14/06/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Gender Recognition Act: LGBT political group anger at trans law 'changes'	20/06/2020	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Gwynedd man killed himself after paying romance scammers	23/07/2021	Accuracy	1

BBC online material	Date³	Category	Number of Complaints
BBC News website: Ivermectin: Oklahoma doctor warns against using drug for Covid treatment	09/05/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Joe Rogan: Four claims from his Spotify podcast fact-checked	01/02/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Khurram Parvez: Kashmiri rights activist arrested under anti-terror law	30/11/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Labour councillor suspended over alleged anti-Semitic remarks	11/06/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Mississippi bans trans girls from girls' school sports	03/02/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Numbers look tricky for government in aid vote	06/07/2021	Harm and Offence, other	1
BBC News website: Obituary: Stephen Hawking	15/02/2021	Other	1
BBC News website: Palestinian deaths toll in West Bank hits 100 this year	01/10/2022	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Pensioner arrested after dismembered body found	15/03/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Pope's Slovakia visit sends signal after brief Hungary stop	14/09/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Prince Philip: Sir David Attenborough praises his conservation work	17/04/2021	Harm and Offence, other	1
BBC News website: Queen Elizabeth II funeral: Nation pays final farewell	19/09/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Queen's Platinum Jubilee music released by British-Israeli composer	04/02/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Queue for lying-in-state	17/09/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Stonewall's influence on BBC and Ofcom revealed	14/10/2021	Harm and Offence, other	1

BBC online material	Date³	Category	Number of Complaints
BBC News website: The coronavirus pandemic 'Great Reset' theory and a false vaccine claim debunked	08/01/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: The foreigners in China's disinformation drive	07/12/2021	Harm and Offence, other	1
BBC News website: The tale of Algeria's stolen cannon and France's cockerel	13/10/2020	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Thorpe Bay and Leigh residents back plans for 20mph speed limits	13/01/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Thousands protest in London over Israel-Gaza violence	26/05/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Unlicensed STI drugs sold online	04/05/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: US group to fight Scotland's abortion buffer zones	28/09/2022	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Virgin Media O2 'completes' gigabit upgrade after two years	07/12/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	11/04/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	25/10/2021	Harm and Offence, other	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	26/10/2021	Harm and Offence, other	2
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	26/10/2021	Impartiality	2
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	27/10/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	27/10/2021	Harm and Offence, other	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	29/10/2021	Harm and Offence, other	2
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	01/11/2021	Harm and Offence, other	2

BBC online material	Date³	Category	Number of Complaints
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	02/11/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	14/11/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: What is white privilege?	19/07/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Yemen: This doctor saw Covid hospital empty after fake death text	18/01/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC Sport website: Formula 1: FIA aware of new Michael Masi title-decider radio messages	09/02/2022	Accuracy	1
BBC website: Is the great digital-nomad workforce actually coming?	16/06/2021	Impartiality	1

[More information about how Ofcom assesses complaints about BBC online material.](#)

Out of remit complaints

The table below includes complaints which have not been assessed by Ofcom because they fall outside of Ofcom's remit under its arrangement with the BBC.

BBC online material	Date⁴	Number of complaints
BBC website: Eurovision Song Contest update on 2023 Host City	27/09/2022	1
Twitter	24/09/2022	1

⁴ This is the date the complainant first became aware of the online material. In the event that the complainant does not specify a date, we use the date that the article was published.