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# Ofcom Bulletin for complaints about BBC online material

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**Issue number: 13**

**Date: 27 August 2019**

## 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 observed the relevant 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 material<sup>1</sup>. 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 material, 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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](#).

## Complaints assessed, not accepted

### Closed between 15 June 2019 and 16 August 2019

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 <sup>2</sup>	Category	Number of complaints
BBC News website	06/06/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: #HotSoundGuy	24/05/2019	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: Anti-Semitism row: Jeremy Corbyn concerned evidence 'ignored'	15/04/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Brexit: Bercow chucks a hulking great spanner in the works	19/03/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Climate change: What is a climate emergency?	04/05/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: 'Dead' psychiatrist Anatta Nergui fit to work	27/10/2018	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Does the Bank of England have a woman problem?	24/04/2019	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: Flights diverted after Gatwick Airport 'drone sighting'	01/06/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Israel Folau: Australia end player's contract over anti-gay message BBC News website: Israel Folau: Sacking by Australia sends clear message, says referee Nigel Owens	18/05/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: JD Sports rewarded for focus on millennials	16/04/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Tommy Robinson: Trouble flares at event in Oldham	18/05/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: What did we learn from the Bank of England?	28/11/2018	Accuracy	1

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<sup>2</sup> 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 First

### Complaints closed between 15 June 2019 and 16 August 2019

#### 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 <sup>3</sup>	Category	Number of complaints
BBC News online	21/06/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	22/09/2016	Fairness and Privacy	1
BBC News website	25/05/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	06/06/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	10/07/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website	15/08/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: A guide to Labour Party anti-Semitism claims	15/07/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Call for inquiry to expand reservoir	23/04/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Donald Trump attacks Sadiq Khan over London violence	16/06/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Gangnam: The scandal rocking the playground of K-pop	26/06/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Guyana – bracing for the oil boom	21/05/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Jeremy Hunt brands Labour leader 'pathetic' over Iran comments	15/06/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Labour general secretary criticises 'irresponsible' Tom Watson	10/07/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Reporting Kashmir	12/08/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Strictly Come Dancing: Oti Mabuse's sister Motsi to be new judge	22/07/2019	Impartiality	2
BBC News website: Texas migrant children moved from 'horrific cells' after outcry	25/06/2019	Accuracy	1

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<b>BBC online material</b>	<b>Date<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Number of complaints</b>
BBC News website: Top Labour figures 'interfered' in anti-Semitism disputes	10/07/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Trump: 'We won't deal with UK ambassador' after leaked emails	08/07/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Uncovering Pakistan's secret human rights abuses	02/06/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: US climate objections sink Arctic Council accord in Finland	08/05/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: US states file lawsuit accusing drugs firms of inflating costs	15/05/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC Sport website	20/05/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC Sport website	21/05/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC Sport website	21/05/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC Sport website	23/06/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC website: How much warmer is your city?	05/08/2019	Accuracy	1

### 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.

<b>BBC online material</b>	<b>Date<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Number of complaints</b>
BBC Facebook page	12/08/2019	1
BBC Instagram account	11/04/2019	1
BBC News on Twitter	25/07/2019	1
BBC News website	30/07/2019	1
BBC Top Gear Facebook page	13/06/2019	1
BBC Top Gear website: How green is an electric car, really?	27/04/2019	1
BBC Top Gear website: How green is an electric car, really?	04/05/2019	1
Nick Robinson on Twitter	10/07/2019	1

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

<sup>4</sup> 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.