
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 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 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 here on the Ofcom website: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/ofcom-and-the-bbc/bbc-online-material>. 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.

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](#).

Complaints assessed, not accepted

Closed between 1 November and 12 January 2018

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.

For more information about how Ofcom assesses complaints about BBC online material go to:

https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0022/101893/bbc-online-procedures.pdf.

Complaints about BBC online material

BBC online material	Date ²	Category	Number of complaints
BBC News website: BBC pay: What else did we learn?	20/07/2017	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: General election 2017: Brexit dominated voters' thoughts	01/08/2017	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Israel and the Palestinians: What are alternatives to a two-state solution?	17/02/2017	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Man Utd reports record revenues as TV cash soars	21/09/2017	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Who is in charge?	19/06/2017	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: World News (coverage of Palestinian events)	24/08/2017	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: various	various	Accuracy; Impartiality; harm and offence	161
BBC Newsround website: "The Labour party in 60 seconds" and "The Conservative party in 60 seconds"	04/06/2017	Accuracy; Impartiality	1
BBC Three website: 'Hepeating' is the internet's favourite new word	27/09/2017	Harm and offence	1

² This is the date the complainant first became aware of the online material.

BBC First

Complaints closed between 1 November and 12 January 2018

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 One: This Week website	12/10/2017	Harm and offence	1
BBC News website	09/08/2012	Fairness, contributors and consent	1
BBC News website	06/10/2017	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	01/11/2017	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	02/11/2017	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	03/11/2017	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	10/11/2017	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	19/11/2017	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Have there been two decades of failure to reform social care?	24/11/2017	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Jerusalem row: Clashes erupt over Trump move	08/12/2017	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Thomas Monson: President of the Mormon Church dies at 90	03/01/2018	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: What the world thinks of Trump's first year as US president	10/01/2018	Impartiality	1
BBC Three website: WTF moments of election night	09/06/2017	Language	1

³ This is the date the complainant first became aware of the 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 recruitment website	various	3
BBC Introducing website	26/06/2017	1
BBC Nature website	05/09/2017	1
BBC News Twitter	17/11/2017	1
Reggie Yates Podcast	24/11/2017	1
Strictly Come Dancing Blog	12/12/2017	1
Subscription to BBC newsletter	15/11/2017	1

For information about how Ofcom deals with different types of BBC complaints, go to:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/how-to-report-a-complaint/how-ofcom-deals-with-bbc-complaints>

⁴ This is the date the complainant first became aware of the online material.