
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 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.

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 12 October 2019 and 3 January 2020

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 ¹	Category	Number of complaints
BBC News website: Brexit: 'Election in October' if MPs block no deal	02/09/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Chagabi Etacore: The leader killed by contact with the outside world	26/08/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Climate change: 12 years to save the planet? Make that 18 months	02/09/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Congresswomen hit back after Trump's tweets branded racist	16/07/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: European Election 2019: UK results in maps and charts	27/05/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: 'Gaukeward' squad joins fight against no-deal Brexit	01/10/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Jai Shri Ram: The Hindu chant that became a murder cry	10/07/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Norway mosque shooting probed as terror act	11/08/2019	Harm and Offence	1
BBC Sport website: Leagues & Cups	25/10/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC Sport website: Manchester City & FFP: What could happen next- Q&A	20/05/2019	Impartiality	1

¹ 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 12 October 2019 and 3 January 2020

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 ¹	Category	Number of complaints
BBC Ideas website: Four Things Bats Can Tell Us About Survival	07/08/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website	08/09/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website	04/10/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	01/11/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website	14/11/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	26/11/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	12/12/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website and Twitter	18/09/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: A guide to Labour Party anti-Semitism claims	06/07/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Birmingham mosque attacks: Shia Muslim jailed	28/11/2019	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: Brexit: Boris Johnson and Jeremy Corbyn meet after timetable rejected	23/10/2019	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: Brexit: Boris Johnson won't decide what happens next	02/10/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Buttmitzvah is a Jewish, Queer club night that's held in London	23/10/2019	Harm and Offence	1
BBC news website: Cannabis 'deaths'	30/07/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Chagabi Etacore: The leader killed by contact with the outside world	12/08/2019	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: Congresswomen hit back after Trump's tweets branded racist	07/08/2019	Impartiality	1

¹ 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	Date¹	Category	Number of complaints
BBC News website: General election 2019: Ads are 'indecent, dishonest and untruthful'	10/12/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: General election 2019: Labour launches 'radical' manifesto	21/11/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: General election 2019: No apology from Jeremy Corbyn over Labour anti-Semitism claims	26/11/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: General election 2019: Sturgeon says legal indyref2 is a 'hard truth'	06/12/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: General election 2019: Tories seek to avoid manifesto calamity	24/11/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: General election 2019: Tories seek to avoid manifesto calamity	25/11/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: General election 2019: Who is standing in Scotland?	15/11/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Greenland: Trump criticises 'nasty' Denmark over cancelled visit	21/08/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: How death threats spread in pro- and anti-Brexit Facebook groups	07/10/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Jeremy Corbyn 'not happy' with shoot-to-kill policy	30/11/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Lucy McHugh murder case: Stephen Nicholson jailed for life	22/07/2019	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: Macron warning on stigmatising Muslims amid France veil row	18/10/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Nusrat Jahan Rafi: Death penalty for 16 who set student on fire	24/10/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: PM 'model of restraint' amid Parliament language row	29/09/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: PM 'model of restraint' amid Parliament language row	29/09/2019	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Reaction as MPs discuss Commons culture	26/09/2019	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: The women paid to cry at the funerals of strangers	30/06/2018	Privacy	1

BBC online material	Date¹	Category	Number of complaints
BBC Radio 1Xtra website	13/09/2019	Harm and Offence	1
BBC Sport website: Have Your Say	20/10/2019	Harm and Offence	1
BBC Teach website: RSE KS2: Respecting Myself and Others	10/09/2019	Accuracy	2
BBC website: Have Your Say	01/11/2019	Harm and Offence	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.

BBC online material	Date²	Number of complaints
BBC News website: Have Your Say	07/10/2019	1
BBC Politics on Twitter	27/11/2019	1
BBC Scotland App	27/10/2019	1
BBC Teach website: RSE KS2: Identity – Understanding sexual and gender identities	15/09/2019	1
BBC YouTube	14/09/2019	1
Twitter	28/07/2019	1
Twitter	09/12/2019	1

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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.