

# Making Sense of Media Advisory Panel

## Agreed Terms of Reference

### Background

The ambition of Ofcom's 'Making Sense of Media' programme is to help improve the online skills, knowledge and understanding of UK adults and children, through providing robust research, and collaboration with, and coordination of, relevant stakeholders and their activities. The Making Sense of Media Advisory Panel will support Ofcom in the pursuit of this ambition.

### Aims

To lead on improving the online media literacy of UK adults and children, via:

- Advising on the overall direction of Ofcom's 'Making Sense of Media' programme
- Informing robust and relevant research and its dissemination
- Working with a wider Making Sense of Media network to develop better ways of collating, allowing access to and dissemination of information on media literacy activities
- Facilitating media literacy discussion, collaboration and activity across the UK including particular support for media literacy activities across underrepresented communities and vulnerable groups.

### Activities

- To provide co-ordinated input into reviews of existing relevant research and identification of gaps in research
- To provide co-ordinated input into reviews of existing media literacy activity and initiatives, identification of gaps in activity and best practice on what makes activities successful
- To provide co-ordinated input into potential priority areas for further research and initiatives
- To provide co-ordinated input into reviews of current approaches to evaluation, consider how best to evaluate the levels of media literacy in the UK, the effectiveness of existing initiatives and track that over time
- To advise on effective methods for disseminating Ofcom research (including future events)
- To make recommendations for and support further activity identified as valuable to promote media literacy
- To provide co-ordinated input and guidance into focus and membership of smaller working groups that will consider particular topics/act as a springboard for further work and discussions
- To support the development of a wider Ofcom network of stakeholders with an interest in promoting media literacy
- To coordinate activity with other groups working in this area, for example the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS)

## Membership

Membership is voluntary and by Ofcom invite only.

Advisory Panel members are drawn from a cross section of expert individuals and organisations and with an interest in promoting media literacy and informing Ofcom's Making Sense of Media programme of work.

Membership is for 12 months in the first instance and reviewed regularly by Ofcom in discussion with the panel, to reflect the priorities of the Making Sense of Media programme.

## Ways of working

Panel meetings will be chaired and minuted by Ofcom. Current Ofcom chair is Yih-Choung Teh, Group Director Strategy and Research, or a nominated substitute. Discussions will be confidential to encourage free and frank advice and exchange of view and minutes made available on a confidential basis for members' reference. A non-confidential version of the minutes will be published on Ofcom's website.

The panel will meet as required with ad-hoc meetings involving a subset of panel members as required. During the first phase of establishing the panel it will meet approximately every two months and then the frequency is expected to reduce. We also anticipate that individual members of the panel may be consulted by Ofcom on particular matters on an ad-hoc basis.

Panel members can propose agenda items to Ofcom for inclusion.

Individual panel members may carry out activities directly on behalf of the group by agreement with the group or with Ofcom, or indirectly advise Ofcom to carry out or commission activities such as research.

Panel members may chair smaller working groups (drawn from the broader Ofcom media literacy network) to address specific issues.

The panel may invite guests in consultation with Ofcom to give expert testimony at meetings.

## Outputs and evaluation

Outputs may include recommendations for working groups, reports, guidance documents, initiatives or other outputs as appropriate.

The panel will develop an evaluation framework for its activities and will use this to monitor its work on a regular basis.

Any output or publication of the Advisory Panel or working groups will be signed off by Ofcom in collaboration with Advisory Panel members.

## **Accountability / ownership**

Ofcom is setting up this Advisory Panel to inform its existing and future work to promote media literacy. Ofcom will consider all advice given by the panel when it makes decisions on its work programme.

Where panel members are asked to represent the panel (and therefore Ofcom), this will be done only after prior discussion with Ofcom and the panel.

## **Reviewed**

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the panel at least annually or when deemed appropriate by the Chair.