

Notice of Sanction – Talksport Ltd

Type of case	Broadcast Standards
Outcome	Financial penalty of £75,000 and a direction to broadcast a statement of Ofcom’s findings in this case, on dates and in a form to be determined by Ofcom.
Programme	George Galloway
Service	Talk Radio
Date & time	16 March, 27 July and 6 August 2018
Category	Due impartiality/bias
Summary	Three episodes of the George Galloway programme failed to maintain due impartiality on matters of major political or industrial controversy and major matters relating to current public policy. In breach of Rules 5.11 and 5.12 of the Broadcasting Code. Financial penalty of £75,000 and a direction to broadcast a statement of Ofcom’s findings in this case, on dates and in a form to be determined by Ofcom.

Talk Radio is a national digital speech radio station. The *George Galloway* programme was typically broadcast on Fridays between 19:00 and 22:00 with Mr Galloway occasionally broadcasting at other times when covering for other presenters.¹

The licence for Talk Radio is held by Talksport Ltd (“Talksport” or “the Licensee”).

¹ On 3 June 2019 Talk Radio dismissed George Galloway, and terminated his weekly programme, after he published an allegedly anti-Semitic tweet. See: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48498010>.

This sanction related to three episodes of the *George Galloway* programme which dealt with the following issues: the poisoning of Yulia and Sergei Skripal in Salisbury on 4 March 2018, and allegations of anti-Semitism in the Labour Party.

In the decisions published on 28 January and 25 March 2019 in [Issue 371](#) and [Issue 375 of the Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin](#) (the “Breach Decisions”), Ofcom found that the programmes had failed to maintain due impartiality and had breached Rules 5.11 and 5.12 of the Code:

Rule 5.11: “...due impartiality must be preserved on matters of major political and industrial controversy and major matters relating to current public policy by the person providing a service...in each programme or in clearly linked and timely programmes”.

Rule 5.12: “In dealing with matters of major political and industrial controversy and major matters relating to current public policy an appropriately wide range of significant views must be included and given due weight in each programme or in clearly linked and timely programmes. View and facts must not be misrepresented”.

In accordance with [Ofcom’s penalty guidelines](#), Ofcom decided that it was appropriate and proportionate in the circumstances to impose a financial penalty of £75,000 on the Licensee in respect of these serious and repeated Code breaches (payable to HM Paymaster General). In addition, Talksport is directed to broadcast a statement of Ofcom’s findings in this case, on dates and in a form to be determined by Ofcom.

The [full sanctions decision](#) was published on 17 February 2020.