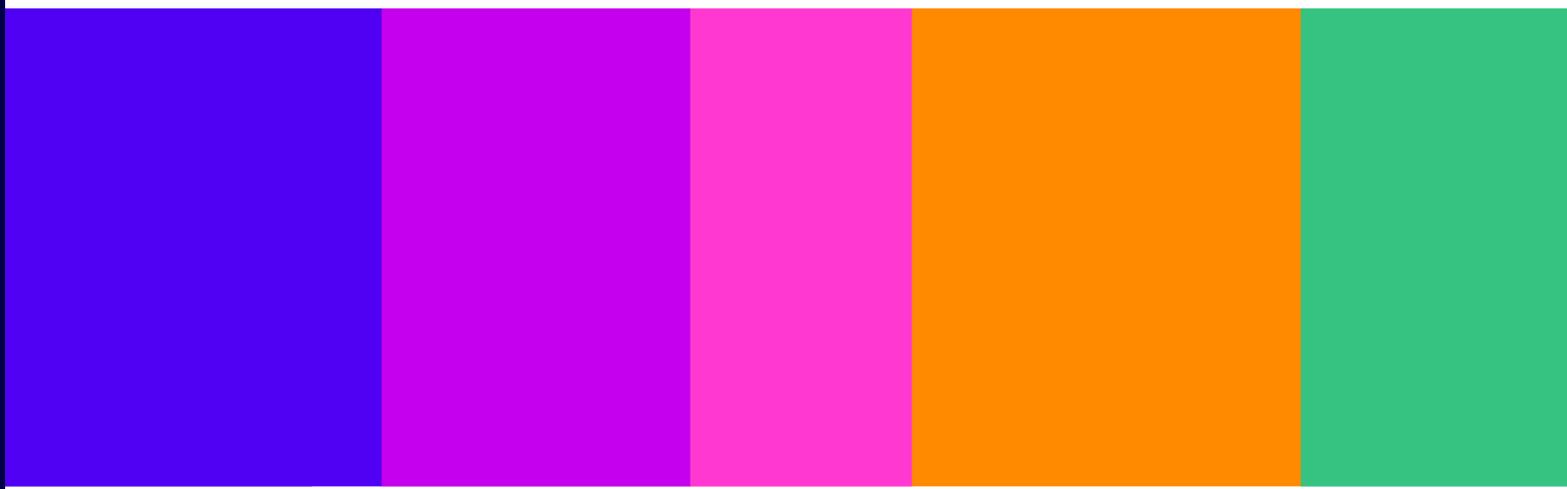


# **Ofcom Bulletin for complaints about BBC online material**

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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 met the required 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 standards, 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 9 December 2023 and 26 January 2024

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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 |
|--|-------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| <b>BBC News website: "The truth about heat pumps and the power needed to run them"</b> | 01/08/2023        | Accuracy     | 1                    |
| <b>BBC News website: Ex-Secret Service agent reveals new JFK assassination detail</b>  | 13/09/2023        | Accuracy     | 1                    |
| <b>BBC News website: Minute's silence for more than 100 UN workers killed in Gaza</b>  | 13/11/2023        | Impartiality | 1                    |
| <b>BBC News website: When can protesting over the Gaza war be illegal in the UK?</b>   | 04/11/2023        | 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 9 December 2023 and 26 January 2024

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### 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 website  | 25/10/2022        | Impartiality | 1                    |
| BBC News website  | 07/10/2023        | Impartiality | 1                    |
| BBC News website  | 25/10/2023        | Impartiality | 1                    |
| BBC News website  | 02/11/2023        | Impartiality | 1                    |
| BBC News website  | 20/11/2023        | Impartiality | 1                    |
| BBC News website  | 21/12/2023        | Impartiality | 1                    |
| BBC News website: Ayodhya Ram Mandir: India PM Modi inaugurates Hindu temple on razed Babri mosque site | 23/01/2024        | Impartiality | 1 <sup>4</sup>       |
| BBC News website: Could X go bankrupt under Elon Musk?  | 03/12/2023        | Accuracy     | 1                    |
| BBC News website: Gaza journalists' families reject Israeli military's 'terrorist' claims               | 12/01/2024        | Impartiality | 1                    |
| BBC News website: Israel says Gaza war to continue 'with or without' international support              | 13/12/2023        | Impartiality | 1                    |

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<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.

<sup>4</sup> Ofcom was also copied into 851 emails complaining to the BBC about the BBC News online article: Indian PM opens grand temple on razed mosque site.

| BBC online material  | Date <sup>3</sup> | Category         | Number of Complaints |
|--|-------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| <b>BBC News website: Israel says it mistakenly killed three hostages in Gaza campaign</b>  | 15/12/2023        | Accuracy         | 4                    |
| <b>BBC News website: Khan Younis: Israel says forces have encircled Gaza's second city</b> | 24/01/2024        | Impartiality     | 1                    |
| <b>BBC News website: Royal couples pose for 'show of unity' picture</b>                    | 06/12/2023        | Harm and Offence | 1                    |

[More information about how Ofcom assesses complaints about BBC 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  | Date <sup>5</sup> | Number of complaints |
|--|-------------------|----------------------|
| BBC Bitesize: An A-Z of LGBTQ+ language for speaking to your child | 28/09/2023        | 2                    |

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<sup>5</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.