

Reference: 2037352

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

12 August 2025

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about the Audience Attitudes Report and May 2025 consultation.

We received your request on 15 July 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the FOI Act”).

Your request & our response

We write in respect of GB News’ request for information in accordance with the FOI Act.

Pursuant to section 8 of the FOI Act, we make a request on behalf of GB News to be provided with the information set out below (the “Requests”).

Requests concerning the Audience Attitudes Report

In April 2024, Ofcom published a report, prepared by Ipsos, titled ‘Audience attitudes towards politicians presenting programmes on television and radio’ (the “Audience Attitudes Report”).

To the extent not contained within the Audience Attitudes Report itself, please provide:

- 1. All documents relating to the decision to commission the Audience Attitudes Report including minutes, emails, memos and other documents;*
- 2. Details of the procedures adopted to ensure that the Audience Attitudes Report was unbiased and was independent;*
- 3. Details of Ofcom’s Audience Attitudes Report methodology including details of any related analysis and/or procedures undertaken to produce the methodology;*
- 4. Details of groups of persons or organisations consulted to take part in the research and the process of selecting such persons or individuals;*
- 5. Details of external advisors commissioned or consulted in respect of the Audience Attitudes Report; and*
- 6. All documents relating to the Audience Attitudes Report and the conclusions up to and including the date of this request¹.*

We requested this same information previously by way of a Freedom of Information request on behalf of GB News dated 6 March 2024, prior to the publication of the Audience Attitudes Report

(the “**March 2024 Request**”). Ofcom confirmed in its response on 4 April 2024 that it held information responsive to these Requests² but that it fell within the exemptions of the FOI Act (the “**April 2024 Response**”).

In the April 2024 Response, Ofcom relied on the exemptions contained within sections 22 and/or 22A of the FOI Act in respect of each of the Requests on the basis that the information was intended for future publication and the programme of research was continuing with a view to the publication of a report of the research. Given that the Audience Attitudes Report has since been published, those exemptions no longer apply.

Further, in relation to Request 1, Ofcom relied on the exemptions contained within sections 40 and 43 of the FOI Act. To the extent that it is necessary to redact any third-party personal data responsive to Request 1 in order to provide the relevant information falling within scope of the Freedom of Information request, GB News is content for Ofcom to take that approach.

Ofcom also explained that the information responsive to Request 1 was “the mini competition evaluation report”. We are surprised that that is the only document responsive to the decision to commission the Audience Attitudes Report as we would expect there to be, for example, internal correspondence regarding the decision.

Requests in relation to the May 2025 Consultation

On 12 May 2025, Ofcom published a consultation titled ‘Politicians presenting news: Consultation on proposed amendment to Rule 5.3 of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code’ (the “**May 2025 Consultation**”).³ The consultation proposes to prohibit politicians from presenting news content in programmes of any type. The May 2025 Consultation was published as a direct response to the February 2025 High Court judgment which found two Ofcom breach decisions against GB News concerning Rule 5.3 of the Broadcasting Code / the rules concerning politicians presenting news to be unlawful.⁴ It is clear from Ofcom’s statement published the same day that the High Court judgment was handed down (28 February 2025)⁵, that by 28 February 2025 Ofcom had decided to propose changes to the Broadcasting Code to restrict politicians from presenting news content in programmes of any type.

In relation to the May 2025 Consultation and the process by which it came to be published, please provide:

1. All documents relating to the decision to consult on prohibiting politicians from presenting news content in programmes of any type;
2. The date on which it was decided to consult on prohibiting politicians from presenting news content in programmes of any type; and
3. A list of individuals within Ofcom with whom any embargoed version (or the substance of any embargoed version) of the High Court judgment handed down on 28 February 2025 was shared.

Footnotes:

¹ We appreciate that some of this material may be responsive to Requests 1-5, in which case it does not need to be provided again. However, we anticipate that there will be additional material to be provided, e.g. instructions provided by Ofcom to Ipsos, earlier drafts

of the Audience Attitudes Report provided by Ipsos to Ofcom and Ofcom's analysis of the Audience Attitudes Report.

² Ofcom also confirmed it did not hold any information in respect of a further request made in the March 2024 Request: "Any documents relating to monitoring that forms part of the research".

³ <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/consultations/category-3-4-weeks/consultation-politicians-presenting-news/main-documents/politicians-presenting-news-consultation.pdf?v=396619>.

⁴ *R (on the application of GB News Limited) v Ofcom* [2025] EWHC 460 (Admin) - <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/GB-News-v-Ofcom.pdf>.

⁵ <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/broadcast-standards/ofcom-statement-in-response-to-high-court-judgment-gb-news-v-ofcom>.

We are unable to disclose any information in response to your request. The information is not readily accessible as a considerable amount of time would be needed to locate, retrieve, identify and extract any relevant information. Section 12 of the FOI Act provides that a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the "appropriate limit". The appropriate limit is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, and is, for Ofcom, £450. That sum is intended to cover the estimated costs involved in determining whether Ofcom holds the information requested, identifying, locating, retrieving and extracting the information from any document containing it. The Regulations provide that costs are to be estimated at a rate of £25 per person per hour.

You have made nine separate requests for different types of information. These include requests which are very broad, covering "all documents" relating to a particular decision and report, the latter relating to an over two year period. Ofcom estimates that it would take at least 18 hours to identify, locate and extract the information requested as a whole and as such the cost of complying with your request will exceed the appropriate limit. We will therefore not be able to provide any information in connection to your request.

However, if you wish to submit an alternative request with a narrower, more specific scope in relation to this subject, we would be happy to give it our full consideration.

We hope this information is helpful. If you have any further queries, then please send them to information.requests@ofcom.org.uk – quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).