Reference: 02337163

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

11 November 2026

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about BBC governance around PinkNews reporting.

We received this request on 6 November 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request

I am writing under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding the BBC's reporting of allegations concerning the owners of PinkNews which have subsequently been retracted.

Please provide:

1) The number of complaints received by Ofcom concerning the relevant BBC reporting, including any complaints received following its retraction.

2) Whether Ofcom considered, assessed or investigated the reporting, either following a complaint or on its own initiative, and the outcome of any such consideration.

3) Copies of, or recorded information summarising, any correspondence between Ofcom and the BBC concerning the reporting, its subsequent retraction, the accuracy of the allegations, or corrective/remedial action taken by the BBC.

4) Any recorded findings, assessments or conclusions concerning potential failures or deficiencies in the BBC's compliance with applicable broadcasting standards arising from this matter.

5) Details of any assurances, recommendations, corrective actions or procedural changes communicated by the BBC to Ofcom, or requested or recommended by Ofcom, as a result of the matter.

6) Whether Ofcom was informed of any internal BBC review, investigation or lessons-learned exercise concerning the reporting and, if so, any information held by Ofcom concerning its scope, findings, recommendations or outcome.

For the avoidance of doubt, I am not seeking personal information relating to complainants or confidential journalistic sources.

Our response

We are unable to confirm nor deny whether we hold the information you requested. By virtue of section 44(2) of the FOI Act, the duty to confirm or deny holding information does not arise if the confirmation or denial that would be given in itself reveals information that falls under the exemption in section 44(1) of the FOI Act. Section 44(1) of the FOI Act provides that information is exempt from disclosure if its disclosure is prohibited by or under any enactment.

In this case, disclosure is prohibited under section 393 of the Communications Act 2003 ('the Communications Act') which prohibits the disclosure of information with respect to a particular business (such BBC and PinkNews) which we have obtained in the course of exercising a power conferred by certain legislations including the Broadcasting Act 1996, unless we have the consent of those businesses or one of the statutory gateways under section 393(2) of the Communications Act is met, neither of which applies here. Section 44 is an absolute exemption and therefore is not subject to a public interest test.

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 Commission .