Reference: 02332886

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

12 November 2026

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about Ofcom's public perception research.

We received this request on 30 October 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request

1. The questionnaire, topline results and any summary report from the 2026 wave of the "Public Perceptions Research" contracted to Yonder Consulting Limited (contract published 22 June 2026, reference ocds-b5fd17-352800c8-0186-4bf7-9764-c6f22535b7c2).

2. The results of any earlier research Ofcom has commissioned since 2020 measuring public awareness, favourability, trust or reputation of Ofcom itself.

I would be grateful if you could provide the information in electronic format, with any data tables in their original format (for example, Excel or CSV) where possible.

Our response

We do hold information in scope of your request. However, the information is being withheld as we consider this information exempt from disclosure under section 36 of the FOI Act. Section 36(2)(c) of the FOI Act provides that information held by a public authority is exempt from disclosure if, in the reasonable opinion of a qualified person, disclosure of the information would otherwise prejudice, or would be likely otherwise to prejudice, the effective conduct of public affairs.

Section 36 is a qualified exemption, which means that Ofcom is required to consider whether or not the public interest in disclosing the information you have requested outweighs the public interest in withholding the information. In this case, we consider that the public interest favours withholding the information for the reasons set out in Annex B to this letter. In Annex A of this letter, the qualified person, the Corporation Secretary for Ofcom, has confirmed that the exemption applies.

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 .

Annex A

Freedom of Information: Right to know request

Section 36 exemption

I am a "qualified person" as referred to at section 36(2) of the Act and duly authorised by a Minister of the Crown for the purposes of that section. In my reasonable opinion, disclosure of the relevant information requested would be likely otherwise to prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.

In applying this exemption, I have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information.

I have set out in Annex B the exemption in full, as well as the factors I considered when deciding where the public interest lay in relation to the information concerned. If you have any queries about this letter, please contact information.requests@ofcom.org.uk.

Corporation Secretary

Date: 12 November 2026

Annex B

Section 36: Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs

Section 36 exempts information whose disclosure would, or would be likely to, have any of the following effects:

- inhibit the free and frank provision of advice, or exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation, or
- otherwise prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.

Key points:

- Section 36 can only be used if, in the reasonable view of a "qualified person", disclosure of the requested information would have one of the specified effects.
- In this case it is considered that disclosure would be likely otherwise to prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.
- The application of section 36 is subject to a public interest balance.

Factors for disclosure	Factors for withholding
• Ofcom recognises that the public perception of Ofcom and our communications strategy might be matters of interest to the wider public. Releasing such information could be said to increase transparency in our work and allow for discussion in a public forum.	• The documentation in relation to which the exemption is claimed reflects research carried out by Yonder Consulting Limited on behalf of Ofcom. • The purpose of the research is to obtain details of awareness of, and perceptions towards, Ofcom from a representative sample of the public in the United Kingdom, including knowledge of our responsibilities and recent work. • The research is commissioned by Ofcom in order to inform our overall communications strategy and approach, including to assess whether this is working effectively to ensure a diverse range of individuals and groups across the country are aware of our work, and its impact on them. • This includes assessing which aspects of our existing communications strategy are working well, and which may need to be adapted to maximise their impact. • The publication of the findings of this research and the questions asked would have a chilling effect on our ability to carry out such work in the future, as we would be limited in being able to ask research questions that are direct, comprehensive and candid. This would likely mean that we are not able

	to carry out such frank and detailed research at all in future. • This would result in our communications strategy being less evidence-based and well-informed, and therefore less effective. The consequence would therefore be that different groups of people across the country are less aware of Ofcom's work and its impact on their daily use of communications services, which would not be in the public interest. • Given the above, disclosing such information would be likely to prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs. • Ofcom communicates details of its work to the public regularly through a variety of methods, including our website, press statements and media interviews. • We also consider that the public interest of this information is limited, as the information requested does not relate to Ofcom carrying out its regulatory functions.
Reasons why public interest favours withholding information	
• At this time, Ofcom is withholding the requested information. The public interest test has been applied on the basis of disclosing information which would reveal details and findings of research carried out in order to inform Ofcom's communications strategy. • We consider that the public interest in withholding outweighs the public interest in disclosure. • This is because the disclosure of this information would be likely to prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs, as it would affect Ofcom's ability to carry out such important research in future, which would prejudice the effectiveness of our communications approach. • Whilst there may be some weight attached to the public interest in disclosing, we consider this is limited, as the requested information does not relate to Ofcom's regulatory functions, and that significant prejudice would likely be caused by such a disclosure.	