

# Consultation response form

<b>Consultation title</b>	Consultation on our draft Code of Practice and draft Guidance on the Agreement Objectives
<b>Full name</b>	Dr Ryan Josiah Bramley
<b>Contact phone number</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Representing (delete as appropriate)</b>	Organisation
<b>Organisation name</b>	School of Education, University of Sheffield (on behalf of the 'Rethinking Subtitles for Deaf Audiences' project team: Dr Kirsty Liddiard, Beth Evans, and Jon Rhodes)
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

## Confidentiality

We ask for your contact details along with your response so that we can engage with you on this consultation. For further information about how Ofcom handles your personal information and your corresponding rights, see [Ofcom's General Privacy Statement](#).

<b>Your details: We will keep your contact number and email address confidential. Is there anything else you want to keep confidential? Delete as appropriate.</b>	No
<b>Your response: Please indicate how much of your response you want to keep confidential. Delete as appropriate.</b>	None
<b>For confidential responses, can Ofcom publish a reference to the contents of your response?</b>	Yes



## Your response

Question	Your response
<p><b>Question 1:</b> Do you agree with our approach to considering appropriate prominence and our analytical framework? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b> – the use of in-home ethnographic interviews can generate a wealth of rich, in-depth qualitative data, as demonstrated by the <a href="#">‘Exploring audience journeys on connected TV devices’</a> research report. Indeed, our own research project to explore how <a href="#">Deaf British Sign Language users experience suspense in film (2022)</a> adopted a similar approach. Deaf people have historically been “tested on” in research, rather than <i>worked with</i> as experts by lived experience (see <a href="#">Singleton, Jones and Hanumantha, 2014, p. 62</a>). It is reassuring to see that Ofcom’s important research in this area was done in an inclusive way – effectively meeting people <i>where they are</i>. The use of a ‘digital TV diary’ also enabled the researchers to collect insightful data on participants’ everyday viewing habits, without unnecessarily increasing the amount of time spent engaging with the researchers/interviewers directly.</p>
<p><b>Question 2:</b> Do you agree with our proposals on <b>app menus</b>, and our assessment of their associated impacts? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Question 3:</b> Do you agree with our proposals on <b>primary content areas</b>, and our assessment of their associated impacts? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b> – given the ever-present risk of mis- and disinformation (for young users of connected TV devices and media in particular; see <a href="#">Bramley et al., 2024</a>), trusted Public Service Content should be as prominent to users as non-Public Service Content, if not more so.</p>
<p><b>Question 4:</b> Do you agree with our proposals on <b>search</b>, and our assessment of their associated impacts? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b> – see response to Question 3</p>

Question	Your response
<p><b>Question 5:</b> Do you agree with our proposals on <b>listed channels</b>, and our assessment of their associated impacts? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Question 6:</b> Do you agree with our proposals on <b>attribution</b>, and our assessment of their associated impacts? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Question 7:</b> Do you agree with our proposal on <b>alternatives to visual information</b>, and our assessment of its associated impacts? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Question 8:</b> Do you agree with our proposal on <b>text and image enlargement</b>, and our assessment of its associated impacts? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b> – <a href="#">‘Increase personalisation options for captions’</a> was one of the six recommendations that emerged from our research with Deaf film and TV audiences; the addition of similar personalised accessibility options in the connected TV platform would further cater to the needs of a wide range of audiences.</p>
<p><b>Question 9:</b> Do you agree with our proposal on <b>distinguishable text and images</b>, and our assessment of its associated impacts? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b> – see response to Question 8</p>
<p><b>Question 10:</b> Do you agree with our proposal on <b>information on accessibility features</b>, and our assessment of its associated impacts?</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b> – see response to Question 11 (below)</p>

Question	Your response
<p>Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	
<p><b>Question 11:</b> Do you agree with our proposal on <b>labelling of accessible content</b>, and our assessment of its associated impacts? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b> – as identified in both the <a href="#">‘Exploring audience journeys on connected TV devices’</a> report (see page 58), subtitle users are frequently let down by subtitling provision. Whilst an ideal solution to this would be ensuring that all programmes and films are made available with Subtitles for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SDH) across VoD and terrestrial broadcast services, the next best thing is to make sure that viewers know whether a show has subtitles before they choose to watch it. The quote given in your research report – where a participant with hearing loss had to stop watching a detective show they liked four episodes in because “the subtitles stopped” (page 58) – is a powerful example of why the labelling of accessible content is essential for users’ experiences of connected TV devices. To this end, the use of simple, standardised icons (i.e. page 59 of the ‘Exploring audience journeys...’ report) is a good recommendation.</p> <p>As documented in our written evidence submission to <a href="#">DCMS’s British Film and High-End Television Inquiry (2023, pages 2-3)</a>: “poor, limited, or absent captioning has significant implications for how Deaf people experience the world and view themselves in relation to society as a whole” – as one of our research participants put it, “I don’t feel like I’m equal [...] The Deaf community have the right to watch things at the same time as the hearing community and other people”. There is still a long way to go before this goal can be achieved, but the labelling of accessible content is certainly a good place to start.</p>
<p><b>Question 12:</b> Do you agree with our proposal on <b>enabling use of the available accessibility features</b>, and our assessment of its associated impacts? Please provide your</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b> – millions of audience members across the UK depend on accessibility features (such as subtitles, audio description, or sign language) for their enjoyment of TV and film.</p>

Question	Your response
reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.	
<p><b>Question 13:</b> Do you have any views or evidence on the effectiveness or impact of any other actions in relation to making use of the RTSS and finding/making use of accessible programming? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>N/A</b></p>
<p><b>Question 14:</b> Do you agree with our proposed draft <b>Guidance</b>, and our assessment of its associated impacts? Please provide your reasoning and, where relevant, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Question 15:</b> Do you agree with the assessment of the <b>combined impact of our proposals</b> when considered as a package? Please provide any relevant evidence that supports your position.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b> – we agree that each part of these proposals will deliver distinct benefits, and should be implemented as a priority. It is encouraging to see how, in the aftermath of the transformative 2024 Media Act, Ofcom continues to advocate for further measures which will ensure that disabled people can use connected TV platforms and their services for the same purposes as non-disabled people.</p>
<p><b>Question 16:</b> Do you agree that 12 months is a reasonable period for all providers to bring themselves into compliance? Please provide your reasoning, and if possible, any supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p><b>Yes</b> – 12 months seems like a perfectly reasonable timeframe, given that these proposals will not incur unreasonable costs for providers. If anything, these providers stand to financially benefit from making these recommended changes, given that they will make their content accessible to a much larger range of people.</p>

