Disability Action Plan for Northern Ireland

Five-year review and proposed update

Consultation

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For more information on this publication, please visit ofcom.org.uk

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1. Overview

1.1 As a UK-wide public body operating in Northern Ireland, Ofcom has had a Disability Action Plan (DAP) in place since 2007.

1.2 The DAP illustrates Ofcom's ongoing commitment as a regulator and an employer to the promotion of equality of opportunity for disabled people, and the DAP complements our Equality Scheme under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

1.3 Our current DAP was published in July 2022 and covered the period to March 2027. We have conducted a five-year review of our DAP and are consulting on the changes we propose to make for the period from April 2027 to March 2032.

1.4 The updated DAP continues to follow the template provided by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) and is presented in an accompanying document.

What we are proposing – in brief

We propose to update the DAP to reflect the following changes:

- The additional statutory duties Ofcom has been given since 2022 and subsequent changes to regulations
- Ofcom's new employer-focused Diversity & Inclusion Strategy
- New technologies and ways of using communications services which are relevant to disabled people
- We have also audited our current DAP's Action Measures to help us draw up a relevant set of measures for the next five-year period.

2. Review of our current DAP

Introduction

2.1 As the UK's communications regulator, our mission is to make communications work for everyone. To deliver on this, we must look at accessibility, diversity and inclusion in the sectors we regulate. We also focus on these principles in our own organisation.

2.2 Ofcom has a series of statutory duties to make sure that communications providers support disabled consumers. And as an employer of 1600 people across the UK, including in Northern Ireland, we are working to make Ofcom a more diverse and inclusive organisation.

2.3 Our work as a regulator and an employer to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage their participation in public life is reflected in our DAP.

2.4 Through the completion of actionable measures, the DAP outlines Ofcom's proposals for fulfilling our statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006).

2.5 Public authorities in Northern Ireland must carry out a review of their DAP within five years of its publication and forward a report of this review to the ECNI.

2.6 This document reviews the implementation of Ofcom's current DAP which was published in July 2022 and covers the period to March 2027.

2.7 The recommended assessment criteria for the review are as follows:

- What outcomes have been achieved to date?
- What remains to be done?
- What are the future challenges?
- Conclusions

2.8 We have used our Annual Section 75 Progress Reports to the ECNI as the primary evidence for how our DAP has operated over the last five years.

2.9 We also benchmarked our DAP and its five-year review against the work of relevant public bodies such as the NI Utility Regulator, the NI Assembly and the NI Audit Office.

2.10 Looking ahead to the next five years, we have assessed the impact of changes to Ofcom's duties, as well as the significant changes in technology that are affecting the communications services available, how those services are consumed, and the impacts for disabled people.

2.11 In June 2026, Ofcom published a new Diversity & Inclusion Strategy for the next two years. It is focused on our role as an employer, providing a clear framework for improving the experience and outcomes of our people, while our regulatory work continues to be progressed through the relevant policy and regulatory functions.

2.12 An updated DAP has been prepared for the period from April 2027 to March 2032, on which we are seeking consultees' views, and it takes account of all the issues identified in this review.

Outcomes achieved

2.13 Our current DAP (2022-2027) contains 18 Action Measures. They are a mix of commitments we made both as a regulator and an employer to help promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

2.14 The table in Annex 1 shows each Action Measure and whether it has been achieved, not achieved, or remains an ongoing matter.

2.15 Of the 15 achieved measures, the following are of particular note:

- **Non-executive appointments:** we advertised widely for roles on our Advisory Committee for Northern Ireland and guaranteed an interview to disabled candidates who met the essential criteria for the role. We also promoted the recruitment of a Northern Ireland member to our Communications Consumer Panel through disability groups.
- **Mandatory staff training:** All Ofcom colleagues are expected to complete a mandatory annual e-learning module on equality issues. We partnered with Disability Rights UK to provide Disability Confident workshops for our managers, including a new module on neurodiversity.
- **Diversity in Broadcasting reports:** Our annual reports on TV and radio broadcasters' employment diversity data has shone a light on inequality of opportunity in the industry, especially for disabled people, and pushed broadcasters to see equality as business critical.
- **New emergency services access:** We implemented new rules requiring telephone and broadband companies to offer a free, 24/7 video relay service for British Sign Language (BSL) users to contact the emergency services via a dedicated mobile app and website. Our evaluation has found the service highly successful. In 2024 it handled roughly 20,000 calls and we estimate it saves two lives each year.

What remains to be done

2.16 Three action measures were deemed as either 'not achieved' or 'ongoing' as they did not fully meet the performance indicator/target, or the agreed timescale for completion.

- **JAM training:** We had proposed to provide training for our Northern Ireland staff to be JAM (Just A Minute) card friendly for those with neurodiverse conditions and those with dementia. During the course of the DAP, we continued to recruit additional colleagues to our Belfast office, so we decided to wait for numbers to stabilise before delivering the training. The Belfast office continues to expand, and we hope this will continue over the coming five years, so there may not be an ideal time to run the training. We have also reflected on two more significant issues. First, JAM is perhaps most beneficial for customer-facing roles, and we haven't expanded such roles in Belfast. Second, we have recently added neurodiversity modules into our UK-wide training resources for colleagues. With all this in mind, we have concluded that this action measure is no longer relevant and we do not intend to roll it over into our next DAP.

- **Fairness for Customers programme:** We had initially published annual updates on how communication companies were delivering on their commitments to ensure people, particularly those who might be vulnerable, are treated fairly. While we have not published an update on the programme since 2021, it continues to be at the heart of our consumer protection work and has led to our introduction of new rules like end-of-contract notification, transparent price increases and automatic compensation for telecoms consumers. As a result of 'mainstreaming' our fairness approach, and our constant monitoring of markets for emerging consumer issues, we do not intend to roll over this specific action measure into our next DAP.
- **PSTN switch-off consumer protection:** Ofcom has continued to support this industry-driven initiative to migrate customers from the old copper 'Public Switched Telephone Networks' (PSTN) to fibre-based 'Voice over Internet Protocol' (VoIP) networks. During the period of our DAP, the industry deadline for the switchover was delayed from December 2025 until January 2027, primarily to allow more time for vulnerable users and businesses to transition smoothly to VoIP. Assuming the switchover completes successfully in January 2027, we do not intend to include this specific action measure in our next DAP. However, we will continue to monitor progress in the months ahead.

Future challenges

2.17 Over the next five years, the ways communications services are provided and consumed are certain to evolve. If Ofcom is to continue to make communications work for everyone, then we must continue to be alert to how the changing environment could impact disabled people, and how Ofcom as a regulator and an employer will fulfil our disability duties. Below we highlight some examples of the challenges we can expect over the next five years.

2.18 **Switching away from established technologies:** 2G mobile networks will continue to be switched off to create more capacity to deliver better 4G and 5G coverage. The number of public call boxes is likely to reduce further, Royal Mail's delivery schedule will likely reduce, many post boxes will be adapted to handle parcels, and the UK Government will decide on the future provision of free-to-air television. Many of these services have elements on which vulnerable consumers are more likely to be reliant, including disabled people.

2.19 **Social tariffs:** The availability of discounted, low-cost broadband and phone packages designed for people on low incomes or receiving benefits has grown, but awareness and take-up have remained low, and vulnerable consumers are missing out as a result. At the start of 2026, all the major telecoms providers signed up to a government charter which included a commitment to ensure available social tariffs are easy to find, understand and subscribe.

2.20 **Online safety protections:** Although the Online Safety Act (2023) does not contain a specific section devoted solely to disabled people, several parts of the law cover and protect disabled users indirectly, particularly by addressing vulnerable adults, abuse, and access barriers. Ofcom's supervision work will seek to enforce these protections. Relatedly, our media literacy work to date to help support people's online skills has included a project with Mencap NI for people with learning disabilities.

2.21 **Extending accessibility rules to streaming services and connected TV:** The Media Act (2024) updated existing accessibility legislation for TV broadcasting and made it relevant for a world of on-demand and online viewing. As a result, Ofcom is introducing new rules for how connected TV platforms (such as Apple TV and Samsung Smart Hub) make navigating their interfaces accessible; and how the largest streaming services (like Netflix, Disney+ and ITVX) make their content accessible through subtitling, audio description and signing, similar to the rules for traditional TV. The aim is to improve the experience of disabled people (particularly those with sight or hearing conditions) when navigating TV menus and finding accessible content.

2.22 **New Diversity & Inclusion strategy:** Ofcom's disability representation has reached our 15% target from our previous Diversity & Inclusion strategy to 2026, reflecting sustained progression and inclusivity. Our priority now is to sustain this progress and strengthen support for disabled colleagues, ensuring that inclusion is not only maintained but actively enhanced. We will do this through a programme of work focusing on workplace adjustments, assessable people policies and practices, working environment reviews, and all guided by our social model of disability.

Conclusions

2.23 We believe Ofcom has made good progress during the period of this review and remains committed to working with our colleagues and stakeholders in the fulfilment of the two disability duties:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

2.24 This review has helped inform the development of a new, updated DAP for April 2027 to March 2032. In the next section we outline what we are proposing for this next DAP.

3. Proposals for our next DAP

3.1 We want to ensure our DAP for 2027-2032 is up-to-date and reflects our current remit, role, and the changing consumer landscape, as noted above.

3.2 Our updated DAP will continue to use the template provided by the ECNI. However, we propose to make the following changes to the existing content:

- Remove the 'Foreword' as this is not part of the ECNI template. The DAP will still be signed by our Chair and Chief Executive.
- Update the section on Ofcom's functions and duties to reflect changes since 2022, including references to Ofcom's new 2026 Diversity & Inclusion strategy and new duties as the UK's online safety regulator.
- Remove the 'Previous Measures' section as this is only required in a public body's first DAP, according to ECNI guidance.
- Set new Action Measures which are relevant to the next five years (see below).
- Split our updated Action Measures into 'Employer' and 'Regulator' categories, for clarity.

A new set of Action Measures

3.3 In order to set ourselves relevant Action Measures for the next DAP, we began by auditing our current set of measures, assessing whether each remains relevant for this next five-year period. The table in Annex 1 shows the status of each of the 18 current Action Measures and our proposed next steps for each of them.

3.4 We propose to remove any measures which were time-bound and/or have been completed. For example: we have introduced the video-relay service for emergency calls (action 17); and the switchover from PSTN to VoIP networks is due to largely complete in January 2027 (action 18).

3.5 We propose to retain those measures relating to annual performance reporting, whether they relate to our regulatory duties or our responsibilities as an employer. Examples include publishing our Disability Pay Gap report (action 2) and our Diversity in Broadcasting report (action 11). We believe these annual reports create important incentives and provide greater transparency in the pursuit of equality of opportunity for disabled people.

3.6 For the three current measures that we assessed as either 'not achieved' or 'ongoing', we have explained earlier in Section 2 why we do not propose to roll them over into the updated DAP.

3.7 We have amended or added measures where appropriate to reflect changes to our work as a regulator and an employer, while also responding to the future challenges outlined earlier in Section 2. For example, under the Media Act we will be extending the accessibility requirements to the largest streaming services as well as to the interfaces for connected-TV platforms, so disabled people can find and enjoy on-demand TV programmes. And our new Diversity & Inclusion Strategy will focus on sustaining the progress we have made over the last five years to embed inclusion across our organisation.

3.8 The new set of 15 Action Measures are included in the updated DAP which is published as an accompanying document.

3.9 The updated Action Measures will ensure that our Disability Action Plan remains relevant, targeted and effective, enabling Ofcom to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities for disabled people in Northern Ireland over the period 2027 to 2032.

Next steps

3.10 Following this consultation, we will consider the responses received from stakeholders and review our proposals accordingly. We intend to publish a statement alongside an updated DAP before the end of March 2027. Our updated DAP will run from April 2027 until March 2032 and will be subject to a five-year review suitably well ahead of the latter date.

About this document

3.11 The rest of this document comprises the following annexes:

- Annex 1 – Assessment of the Action Measures of our current DAP
- Annex 2 – Impact of our proposals
- Annex 3 – Responding to this consultation
- Annex 4 – Ofcom's consultation principles
- Annex 5 – Consultation coversheet
- Annex 6 – Consultation questions

3.12 The text of the updated version of our DAP is presented as a separate document and can be found here.

A1. Assessment of the Action Measures of our current DAP

The table below shows the status of each of the 18 current Action Measures (2022-2027) and our proposed next steps for each of them relative to our next DAP (2027-2032).

	Measure	Timescale	Performance indicator/target	Status & *Proposal*
1	Promote the advertisement of Non-Executive Director posts through disabled stakeholder groups, such as Disability Action, and note in advertisements that we guarantee an interview to disabled candidates who meet all the essential criteria of the job description.	Recruitment exercises for Non-Executive Director posts expected in 2022 and future years of the plan.	To help us better reflect UK society in relation to disabled people and achieve our target of having 15% of non-executive directors across Ofcom with disabilities.	Achieved and remains relevant ***Continue in next DAP***
2	Publish our annual disability pay gap report for Ofcom.	The first of these was published in May 2021, and annually throughout the plan thereafter.	Demonstrates Ofcom's commitment to ensuring there is a fair and equitable pay structure, while hiring and retaining the best talent. Supports Ofcom's aim to be a diverse, fair and inclusive employer.	Achieved and remains relevant ***Continue in next DAP***
3	Continue work to attain Level 3 of the Government's Disability Confident Scheme, to be a Disability Confident Leader.	Ongoing throughout the period of the plan.	Demonstrates Ofcom's commitment to being a diverse, fair and inclusive employer.	Achieved but reapplication required every three years. ***Continue in next DAP with application due in 2027/28***
4	Continue to raise disability awareness among staff through the mandatory e-learning courses of Equality in the Workplace and Unconscious Bias.	Completed on an annual basis.	Improved staff awareness of issues faced by disabled people, and of their relevance in the workplace.	Achieved and remains relevant ***Continue in next DAP***

	Measure	Timescale	Performance indicator/target	Status & *Proposal*
5	Source and rollout training for staff on neurodiversity.	Expected to commence in 2022.	Improved staff awareness of issues faced by those with neurodiverse conditions, and of their relevance in the workplace.	Achieved and remains relevant ***Continue in next DAP***
6	Aim for staff in Northern Ireland team to be JAM (Just A Minute) card friendly for those with neurodiverse conditions and those with dementia.	To be completed by March 2023.	Demonstrates Ofcom's commitment to fair treatment of consumers with additional needs.	Not achieved and no longer relevant, including due to alternative training being introduced. ***Close and remove from next DAP***
7	Continue to publish progress updates on our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy priorities and workforce targets, including an annual statistical report on the diversity of Ofcom colleagues; the diversity profile (disability, gender and ethnicity) of our non-executive board members and senior management team in our Annual Report and Accounts and gender, ethnicity and disability pay and equal pay audits.	Annually throughout the period of the plan.	Demonstrates transparency in relation to Ofcom's commitment to being a diverse, fair and inclusive employer.	Achieved and remains relevant ***Continue in next DAP***
8	Ensure ongoing quantitative and qualitative research includes a representative sample of disabled citizens and consumers.	Ongoing throughout the period of the plan.	Ofcom gains in-depth knowledge about issues of concern to disabled people, enabling regulatory resources to be directed where they can have the most impact, leading to	Achieved and remains relevant ***Continue and merge with 9 & 10 in next DAP***

	Measure	Timescale	Performance indicator/target	Status & *Proposal*
9	Conduct stakeholder engagement with organisations representing the interests of disabled people.	Ongoing throughout the period of the plan.	improved communications services for disabled people.	Achieved and remains relevant ***Continue and merge with 8 & 10 in next DAP***
10	Monitor Ofcom complaints data to identify disability issues relevant to complaints.	Ongoing throughout the period of the plan.		Achieved and remains relevant ***Continue and merge with 8 & 9 in next DAP***
11	Continue the publication of the annual monitoring report on 'Diversity and equal opportunities in TV and Radio', based on equal opportunities data and information on diversity initiatives from broadcasters.	Report due for annual publication in Q3.	Ensure that TV and radio broadcasting represents and accurately reflects UK society.	Achieved and remains relevant ***Continue in next DAP***
12	Continue to work with Government on accessibility of on-demand services, following our publication of further recommendations to Government on making the accessibility of on-demand services a legal requirement.	Ongoing throughout the period of this plan.	Promote accessibility of On Demand Programme Services (ODPS) for those with sight and/or hearing impairments.	Achieved and completed ***Close and remove – the Media Act extended accessibility requirements to on-demand services and connected TV interfaces***

	Measure	Timescale	Performance indicator/target	Status & *Proposal*
13	Publish the annual Television and on-demand programme services: Access Services Report on broadcasters' compliance with the requirement to deliver a certain proportion of their programmes with subtitles, signing, and audio description.	Publish interim report in Q4 and full year report for previous year in Q2 throughout the period of the plan.	The report allows consumers to compare the extent to which traditional broadcast television and catch-up or on-demand services are accessible to people with sight and/or hearing impairments.	Achieved and remains relevant ***Amend for next DAP to reflect new Media Act accessibility regulations for on-demand TV as well as traditional TV.***
14	Continue to publish an annual Electronic Programmes Guide (EPG) Accessibility report outlining the improvements for people with visual impairments.	Expected in Q1 2022.	Ensures that people with visual impairments are able to use EPGs in the same way that people without such disabilities use them.	Achieved and remains relevant ***Amend for next DAP to reflect new Media Act accessibility regulations for connected TV as well as traditional TV platforms.***
15	Our Fairness for Customers programme seeks to ensure people, particularly those who might be vulnerable (including because of a disability), are treated fairly by the companies who provide their home phone, broadband, mobile and pay-TV services. This programme informs many of our key work areas such as switching, pricing, and the use of consumer data.	Update due in 2022/23.	Update on how communication companies are delivering on their commitments to ensure people, particularly those who might be vulnerable, are treated fairly.	Not achieved, but the fairness commitments continue to underpin our consumer protection work. ***Close and remove from next DAP***

	Measure	Timescale	Performance indicator/target	Status & *Proposal*
16	Implement a new package of consumer protection measures contained within the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC), a new EU directive that updates the regulatory framework for communications services.	Due to phase in from December 2021.	Disabled customers will be able to request all communications (except marketing) are provided in accessible formats.	Achieved and completed ***Close and remove from next DAP***
17	Implement new rules that require telephone and broadband companies to offer a free, 24/7 video relay service for British Sign Language (BSL) users to contact the emergency services via a dedicated mobile app and website.	Due to be introduced by Telecoms companies by June 2022.	BSL users will have equivalent access to the emergency services as other people in the UK.	Achieved and completed ***Close and remove from next DAP***
18	Work with telecoms providers to ensure reasonable measures are in place to protect customers throughout the switchover from the 'public switched telephone network' (PSTN) to 'Voice over Internet Protocol' (VoIP).	Ongoing, throughout the period of the plan.	Customers, particularly those more vulnerable, experience minimal disruption and are protected from harm during the switchover.	Ongoing, but the switchover is due to complete in January 2027. ***Close and remove from next DAP***

A2. Impact of our proposals

A2.1 Section 7 of the Communications Act requires us to conduct and publish an assessment of the likely impact of implementing a proposal which would be likely to have a significant impact on businesses or the general public, or when there is a major change in Ofcom's activities.

A2.2 More generally, impact assessments form part of good policymaking and we therefore expect to carry them out in relation to a large majority of our proposals. We use impact assessments to help us understand and assess the potential impact of our policy decisions before we make them. They also help us explain the policy decisions we have decided to take and why we consider those decisions best fulfil our applicable duties and objectives in the least intrusive way. Our impact assessment guidance sets out our general approach to how we assess and present the impact of our proposed decisions.

A2.3 Our provisional view is that our proposals will ensure our Disability Action Plan is up-to-date and reflects our current remit, role, and approach. To that extent, we consider any impact of our proposals on stakeholders is likely to be low and any impact there may be is likely to be positive. In particular, we consider that our proposals will provide further transparency, add clarity, and promote certainty for stakeholders around the content of our scheme and how it operates. These potential impacts should ultimately benefit citizens and consumers including equality groups (see below).

Equality impact assessment

3.13 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 imposes a duty on Ofcom when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct related to the following protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. The Equality Act also requires Ofcom to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share specified protected characteristics and persons who do not.

3.14 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 ('the NI Act') also imposes a duty on Ofcom, when carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the NI Act. Ofcom's Revised Northern Ireland Equality Scheme explains how we comply with our statutory duties under the 1998 Act.

3.15 To help us comply with our duties under the Equality Act and the NI Act, we assess the impact of our proposals on persons sharing protected characteristics and, in particular, whether they may discriminate against such persons or impact on equality of opportunity or good relations.

3.16 Our assessment is that revising our DAP is likely to have a major positive impact in respect of one or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories. It will also put Ofcom in a better position to fulfil its Section 75 duties.

3.17 Our new set of proposed Action Measures span the full breadth of Ofcom's work as both a regulator and an employer and are targeted at the areas where we believe we can have the greatest impact.

3.18 They will help ensure that Ofcom continues to meet its disability duties in a changing environment, supporting greater equality of opportunity for disabled people in Northern Ireland and helping to address the issues most relevant to them over the next five years.

3.19 Our provisional conclusion is that no further mitigations are required, however, as part of the consultation on our revised scheme, we welcome consultees' views on our Equality Impact Assessment.

Welsh language

3.20 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 established a legal framework to impose duties on certain organisations to comply with standards in relation to the Welsh language. Ofcom has a set of standards agreed with the Welsh Language Commissioner which govern how we treat the Welsh language as we carry out our work.

3.21 Our initial assessment is that the proposals set out in this consultation will not have any impact on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, or on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. Therefore, we would not expect to publish a Welsh language translation of the updated DAP or this consultation document.

3.22 We have reached this conclusion for three reasons. First, the audience for this consultation is exclusively Northern Ireland stakeholders. Second, the majority of the action measures in our new DAP are rolling over from our existing DAP, and they relate to ongoing or established Ofcom work to support disabled people which is published UK-wide. Therefore, this work is likely to have been already assessed for its impact on the Welsh language. Third, when Ofcom consulted on a similar five-year update of our NI-specific Equality Scheme in 2025, we concluded there was no identifiable Welsh language impact and translation obligation.

A3. Responding to this consultation

How to respond

A3.1 Ofcom would like to receive views and comments on the issues raised in this document, by 5pm on Friday 5 February 2027.

A3.2 You can download a response form from here. You can return this by email or post to the address provided in the response form.

A3.3 If your response is a large file, or has supporting charts, tables or other data, please email it to: ofcomnorthernirelandoffice@ofcom.org.uk, as an attachment in Microsoft Word format, together with the cover sheet.

A3.4 Responses may alternatively be posted to the address below, marked with the title of the consultation:

Review of NI Disability Action Plan
Ofcom
Landmark House
5 Cromac Quay, The Gasworks
Belfast, BT7 2JD

A3.5 We welcome responses in formats other than print, for example an audio recording or a British Sign Language video. To respond in BSL:

- Send us a recording of you signing your response. This should be no longer than 5 minutes. Suitable file formats are DVDs, wmv or QuickTime files; or
- Upload a video of you signing your response directly to YouTube (or another hosting site) and send us the link.

A3.6 We will publish a transcript of any audio or video responses we receive (unless your response is confidential).

A3.7 We do not need a paper copy of your response as well as an electronic version. We will acknowledge receipt of a response submitted to us by email.

A3.8 You do not have to answer all the questions in the consultation if you do not have a view; a short response on just one point is fine. We also welcome joint responses.

A3.9 It would be helpful if your response could include direct answers to the questions asked in the consultation document. The questions are listed at Annex 6. It would also help if you could explain why you hold your views, and what you think the effect of Ofcom's proposals would be.

A3.10 If you want to discuss the issues and questions raised in this consultation, please contact Ofcom's Northern Ireland Director jonathan.rose@ofcom.org.uk

Confidentiality

A3.11 Consultations are more effective if we publish the responses before the consultation period closes. This can help people and organisations with limited resources or familiarity with the issues to respond in a more informed way. So, in the interests of transparency and good regulatory practice, and because we believe it is important that everyone who is interested in an issue can see other respondents' views, we usually publish responses on the Ofcom website at regular intervals during and after the consultation period.

A3.12 If you think your response should be kept confidential, please specify which part(s) this applies to and explain why. Please send any confidential sections as a separate annex. If you want your name, address, other contact details or job title to remain confidential, please provide them only in the cover sheet, so that we don't have to edit your response.

A3.13 If someone asks us to keep all or part of a response confidential, we will treat this request seriously and try to respect it. It is however for Ofcom to decide whether or not information is confidential. Sometimes we may consider it necessary to publish all or part of a response, including those that are marked as confidential (for example, so we can explain our decisions and people can understand our reasoning or in order to meet legal obligations).

A3.14 Where this is the case (and the relevant information is not already in the public domain), we will normally first explain our intention to publish information from your response and give you the opportunity to raise concerns about the proposed publication. We will generally try to resolve any objections you may have through constructive dialogue. If we remain of the view that we need to publish all or part of your response and you continue to object, we will give you advance warning prior to publication.

A3.15 To fulfil our pre-disclosure duty, we may share a copy of your response with the relevant government department before we publish it on our website.

A3.16 Please also note that copyright and all other intellectual property in responses will be assumed to be licensed to Ofcom to use. Ofcom's intellectual property rights are explained further in our Terms of Use.

Next steps

A3.17 Following this consultation period, Ofcom plans to publish a statement by the end of March 2027. This statement will set out Ofcom's decisions on the proposed version of the DAP on which we are consulting and the responses we receive to our consultation.

A3.18 If you wish, you can register to receive updates alerting you to new Ofcom publications.

Ofcom's consultation processes

A3.19 Ofcom aims to make responding to a consultation as easy as possible. For more information, please see our consultation principles in Annex 4.

A3.20 If you have any comments or suggestions on how we manage our consultations, please email us at consult@ofcom.org.uk. We particularly welcome ideas on how Ofcom could more effectively seek the views of groups or individuals, such as small businesses and residential consumers, who are less likely to give their opinions through a formal consultation.

A3.21 If you would like to discuss these issues, or Ofcom's consultation processes more generally, please contact the corporation secretary:

Corporation Secretary
Ofcom
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA
Email: corporationsecretary@ofcom.org.uk

A4. Ofcom's consultation principles

Ofcom has seven principles that it follows for every public written consultation:

Before the consultation

1. Wherever possible, we will hold informal talks with people and organisations before announcing a big consultation, to find out whether we are thinking along the right lines. If we do not have enough time to do this, we will hold an open meeting to explain our proposals, shortly after announcing the consultation.

During the consultation

2. We will be clear about whom we are consulting, why, on what questions and for how long.
3. We will make the consultation document as short and simple as possible, with an overview of no more than two pages. We will try to make it as easy as possible for people to give us a written response.
4. When setting the length of the consultation period, we will consider the nature of our proposals and their potential impact. We will always make clear the closing date for responses.
5. A person within Ofcom will be in charge of making sure we follow our own guidelines and aim to reach the largest possible number of people and organisations who may be interested in the outcome of our decisions. Ofcom's Consultation Champion is the main person to contact if you have views on the way we run our consultations.
6. If we are not able to follow any of these principles, we will explain why.

After the consultation

7. We think it is important that everyone who is interested in an issue can see other people's views, so we usually publish the responses on our website at regular intervals during and after the consultation period. After the consultation we will make our decisions and publish a statement explaining what we are going to do, and why, showing how respondents' views helped to shape these decisions.

A5. Consultation coversheet

Basic details

Consultation title:

To (Ofcom contact):

Name of respondent:

Representing (self or organisation/s):

Address (if not received by email):

Confidentiality

Please tick below what part of your response you consider is confidential, giving your reasons why

- Nothing ☐
- Name/contact details/job title ☐
- Whole response ☐
- Organisation ☐
- Part of the response ☐

If you selected 'Part of the response', please specify which parts:

If you want part of your response, your name or your organisation not to be published, can Ofcom still publish a reference to the contents of your response (including, for any confidential parts, a general summary that does not disclose the specific information or enable you to be identified)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Declaration

I confirm that the correspondence supplied with this cover sheet is a formal consultation response that Ofcom can publish. However, in supplying this response, I understand that Ofcom may need to publish all responses, including those which are marked as confidential, in order to meet legal obligations. If I have sent my response by email, Ofcom can disregard any standard e-mail text about not disclosing email contents and attachments.

Ofcom aims to publish responses at regular intervals during and after the consultation period. If your response is non-confidential (in whole or in part), and you would prefer us to publish your response only once the consultation has ended, please tick here.

Name Signed (if hard copy)

A6. Consultation questions

Please tell us how you came across this consultation (tick as many boxes as apply):

- ☐ Email from Ofcom
- ☐ Saw it on social media
- ☐ Found it on Ofcom's website
- ☐ Found it on another website
- ☐ Heard about it on TV or radio
- ☐ Read about it in a newspaper or magazine
- ☐ Heard about it at an event
- ☐ Somebody told me or shared it with me
- ☐ Other (please specify)

We are seeking views on our proposals and reasoning. Please provide reasons for your response, along with any supporting evidence.

Question 1:

Do you have any comments on the outcome of the five-year review of our current DAP (2022-2027)?

Question 2:

Do you have any comments on the proposals for our next DAP (2027-2032), including the new set of Action Measures?

Question 3:

Do you agree with our assessment of the impacts of our proposals?

Question 4:

Do you have any comments on any other aspect of our revised DAP?