
Ofcom Bulletin for complaints about BBC online material

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Introduction

This Bulletin reports on complaints made to Ofcom about the BBC's online material. It gives the outcome of Ofcom's consideration on each complaint received and where relevant, provides Ofcom's opinion on whether the BBC met the required standards for its online material.

Under the BBC's Charter and Agreement, set by Government and Parliament, the BBC is responsible for the editorial standards of its online material. Ofcom has a responsibility to consider and give an opinion on, whether the BBC has observed relevant editorial guidelines in its online material¹. This came into effect with the Digital Economy Act on 27 April 2017.

Online material means content on the BBC's website and apps. This includes written text, images, video and sound content. It does not extend to social media, Bitesize, BBC material on third party websites and World Service content, among other things.

[Ofcom's published arrangements and procedures for handling complaints about BBC online material](#) can be found on the Ofcom website. These documents contain more information about the types of complaints we will consider and the process we will normally follow when handling complaints.

Complaints about BBC online material must follow the 'BBC First' approach, where they are made to the BBC in the first instance. If a complainant is not satisfied with the BBC's final response to a complaint about its online standards, they may seek an independent opinion on it from Ofcom.

Unlike our role regulating the standards of BBC broadcasting and on demand programme services (such as the BBC iPlayer), Ofcom has no enforcement powers for BBC online material.

¹ This does not include content on BBC on demand programme services (such as the BBC iPlayer), which must comply with relevant rules in Ofcom's [Broadcasting Code](#).

Complaints assessed, not accepted

Closed between 16 October and 10 December 2021

Below is an alphabetical list of complaints which, after careful assessment, Ofcom considered did not raise substantive issues under the relevant BBC editorial guidelines that warranted further consideration by Ofcom.

[More information about how Ofcom assesses complaints about BBC online material.](#)

Complaints about BBC online material

BBC online material	Date ¹	Category	Number of complaints
BBC News website: Belarus threatens to cut off gas to EU in border row	07/07/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Dawn Butler thrown out of Commons for PM lie accusation	29/07/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Labour conference: Not right to say only women have a cervix, says Starmer	28/09/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: Media watchdog Ofcom quits Stonewall diversity scheme	25/08/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Quinn: Canada's transgender footballer on being 'visible' and playing at the Olympics	04/08/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Texas abortion: US appeals court reinstates near total ban	09/10/2021	Accuracy	1

¹ This is the date the complainant first became aware of the online material. In the event that the complainant does not specify a date, we use the date that the article was published.

BBC First

Complaints closed between 16 October and 10 December 2021

Complaints about BBC online material, made to Ofcom in the first instance

The table below is an alphabetical list of complaints about the BBC's online material which Ofcom has not assessed. This is because Ofcom only considers complaints about the BBC's online material if the complainant has already complained to the BBC and the BBC has reached its final view on the complaint. The complaints in this table were made to Ofcom before completing the BBC's process.

BBC online material	Date ¹	Category	Number of Complaints
BBC Facebook	06/12/2021	Other	1
BBC News website	26/07/2020	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	07/11/2020	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	14/08/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website	16/10/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	29/10/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website	02/11/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website	07/12/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: Boris Johnson forced to act in sleaze row BBC News website: Can No 10 move on from the sleaze row? BBC News website: No easy exit from sleaze row mess for Boris Johnson	11/11/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Covid: Dominic Cummings defends polling contract	15/02/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Hong Kong's British history explained: Tea, drugs and war	01/08/2020	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: 'I'm Bengali, my boyfriend was black – and my mum freaked out'	20/10/2020	Harm and Offence	1

¹ This is the date the complainant first became aware of the online material. In the event that the complainant does not specify a date, we use the date that the article was published.

BBC online material	Date¹	Category	Number of Complaints
BBC News website: Is Africa overtaking the Middle East as the new Jihadist battleground?	03/12/2020	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Migrant tragedy is biggest loss of life in Channel	24/11/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: NHS boss jailed over £3m fraud	06/01/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Puberty blockers: Parents' warning as ruling challenged	01/01/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Shell pulls out of Cambo oil field development	03/12/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: Sulli Deals: The Indian Muslim women 'up for sale' on an app	18/07/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: The story of the killer disease humanity eradicated	22/11/2020	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: The winners: The 2020 Russell Prize for best writing	08/11/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: Viewpoint: Why Ethiopia's Tigray region is starving, but no famine declared	19/10/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	05/10/2021	Accuracy	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	25/10/2021	Harm and Offence	2
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	26/10/2021	Accuracy	3
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	26/10/2021	Harm and Offence	61
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	27/10/2021	Harm and Offence	17
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	28/10/2021	Harm and Offence	2
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	29/10/2021	Harm and Offence	1

BBC online material	Date¹	Category	Number of Complaints
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	01/11/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	02/11/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	12/11/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	13/11/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	14/11/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC News website: 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women'	16/11/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC News website: Why are there fewer teenager mothers in Northern Ireland?	24/10/2021	Harm and Offence	1
BBC Sport website: Ole Gunnar Solskjaer: Man Utd sack manager with club seventh in Premier League	21/11/2021	Impartiality	1
BBC Urdu website: Asma Shirazi's column: The story of a big house	19/10/2021	Harm and Offence	1
Twitter	14/10/2021	Other	1

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