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The BBC's Editorial Guidelines 2010

12 October 2010

People expect the highest standards from the BBC and the BBC Trust is here to get the best out of the BBC for the public. One of the ways we do this is by approving the BBC Editorial Guidelines every five years.

The Editorial Guidelines set out the standards required of people making programmes and other content for the BBC. They exist to guide content producers in making considered editorial decisions that balance freedom of expression with their responsibilities to the audience, contributors and others.

The Guidelines cover these responsibilities in great detail including:

the need to be duly accurate and impartial and to avoid causing audiences unnecessary offence

the importance of treating people fairly and respecting their privacy when making and broadcasting programmes

how programme makers should deal with children and young people who contribute to programmes

how the BBC should cover politics and public policy

ensuring that votes and competitions are run fairly

and the need for programme makers to be mindful of potential conflicts of interest.

The Guidelines also take into account, as appropriate, requirements set out by Ofcom under the Ofcom Broadcasting Code that (under the BBC Agreement) apply to the BBC.

The Editorial Guidelines are also used by the BBC Executive and the BBC Trust when considering complaints about BBC content.

Whilst primarily an aid for programme makers and others making content for the BBC, it is important that the standards set out in the Guidelines reflect the expectations of the public. In 2009 the BBC Trust ran a consultation on the BBC's Editorial Guidelines, the first time such a consultation had been carried out. The consultation ran from October to 24 December 2009. There were 1630 online responses and 15 written submissions. Additionally there were 11 substantive submissions from industry bodies and interest groups. The BBC Audience Councils also submitted responses to the consultation.

The BBC Trust also commissioned Kantar Media to conduct qualitative research on the guidelines relating to harm and offence, and to impartiality and accuracy.

The Trust considered all the evidence outlined above, as well as a range of other data. The Trust approved changes to the draft Editorial Guidelines having taken into account the interests of content producers and audiences. The Trust's statement can be found here:

[Press release of 12 October 2010](#)

The Editorial Guidelines 2010 were published on 12 October 2010. The Editorial Guidelines and associated guidance are available on the BBC website:

[BBC Editorial Guidelines 2010](#)

All people working for the BBC will be required to work within the new Guidelines.

Trust commentary

Below you will find the Trust's commentary together with a summary of the changes to the Guidelines that have come about as a result of the public consultation.

[Trust commentary on the Editorial Guidelines 2010, PDF \(158KB\)](#)

[Trust commentary on the Editorial Guidelines 2010 \(34.3KB\)](#)

Supporting evidence

[Audience research - Kantar Media, PDF \(158KB\)](#)

[Audience research - Kantar Media, text only \(34.3KB\)](#)

[Industry responses, PDF \(6.8MB\)](#)

[Audience Council responses, PDF \(158KB\)](#)

[Audience Council responses, text only \(34.3KB\)](#)

Related links:

[Press release of 12 October 2010](#)

[BBC Editorial Guidelines 2010](#)

[Commentary on the Guidelines by](#)

[Alison Hastings, Trustee](#)



Equality impact assessment

[Equality impact assessment, PDF\(134KB\)](#)

[Equality impact assessment, text only \(9KB\)](#)

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