



The BBC's Editorial Guidelines
Consultation Document

Published: 4 October 2018

Purpose

The BBC has opened a consultation on a revised draft of the Editorial Guidelines which set the content standards for the BBC's programme makers and other content producers for BBC services. The Guidelines cover impartiality, accuracy, fairness, privacy and harm and offence, and further sections deal with range of topics such as religious programming, war, terror, conflicts of interest, competitions, votes, relationships with other organisations and commercial references.

This document explains why we are consulting, what we are consulting on and how to respond. It should be read alongside the [draft Editorial Guidelines](#).

Since Ofcom became the BBC's regulator in April 2017, new sections of the [Ofcom Broadcasting Code](#) now apply to BBC content. It contains the rules which the BBC is required to follow so that BBC viewers and listeners are appropriately protected. The Editorial Guidelines ensure that BBC content complies with the Broadcasting Code.

This consultation is open from **4 October** to **12 November 2018**

The existing (2010) Guidelines will remain in force until the consultation has concluded and the revised Guidelines have been finalised and published

Introduction

The public rightly expect the highest standards from the BBC – truth, accuracy, impartiality and diversity of opinion – and that the information they receive is independent, authoritative and trustworthy. It expects the BBC to serve the public interest and in its output to be fair, protect the vulnerable from harm, avoid unjustifiable offence, respect privacy, and safeguard the welfare of children and young people. At the same time it expects the BBC to balance this with exercising freedom of expression, in broadcasting or publishing content that tests assumptions and pushes boundaries.

The BBC's Editorial Guidelines are a key way of ensuring these expectations. They embody the BBC's values and responsibilities and are one of the most important documents the BBC publishes. First published in 1989 and most recently revised in 2010 they are recognised worldwide as the 'gold standard' in editorial standards, act as an essential guide for anyone making content for BBC services and are fundamental to maintaining the trust audiences place in the BBC.

The Guidelines set out the values and the standards required of anyone involved in the production or presentation of BBC content in the UK or abroad – from news and current affairs, factual programming and sport to drama, comedy, entertainment. They exist to guide producers to make considered editorial decisions that balance freedom of expression with their responsibilities to audiences, contributors and others.

Whilst these values and standards remain a constant, the guidelines themselves evolve over time to take account of changes in BBC regulation as set out in the BBC's Royal Charter and Agreement; changes in legislation, developments in editorial thinking and lessons learnt from editorial rulings as well as reflecting changes in public attitudes and technology. The BBC

therefore periodically reviews the Guidelines to ensure they keep pace with both our legal requirements and with changing audience expectations.

The Regulatory Context

The BBC's Editorial Values as reflected in the Editorial Guidelines are based on the BBC's obligations under its Royal Charter and the Framework Agreement. The Charter guarantees the editorial independence of the BBC and sets out its Mission and Public Purposes.

The BBC's Mission is to act in the public interest, serving all audiences through the provision of impartial, high-quality and distinctive output and services which inform, educate and entertain.

Its Public Purposes are:

- To provide impartial news and information to help people understand and engage with the world around them.
- To support learning for people of all ages.
- To show the most creative, highest quality and distinctive output and services.
- To reflect, represent and serve the diverse communities of all the United Kingdom's nations and regions and, in doing so, support the creative economy across the United Kingdom.
- To reflect the United Kingdom, its culture and values to the world.

The current Charter, which came into effect on 3 April 2017, reformed the BBC's governance and regulation. It passed regulation of the BBC from the BBC Trust to Ofcom, giving Ofcom responsibility for securing observance of content standards in the BBC's UK Public Services and On Demand Programme Services (ODPS) (including BBC iPlayer) and for ensuring that these comply with the Ofcom Broadcasting Code. Previously only certain sections of the Code had applied¹. In line with its revised duties, Ofcom consulted on and published a revised Broadcasting Code. This can be found on Ofcom's website².

The BBC Board is responsible for running the BBC. The Charter gives the BBC Board responsibility to "set, publish, review periodically, and observe guidelines designed to secure appropriate standards in the content of the UK Public Services"³. The Board is also responsible for securing standards across BBC content not regulated by Ofcom – the BBC World Service, BBC material on third party online sites, including social media, and online written material.

In practice this means that the BBC's Editorial Guidelines, for which the Board is responsible, must at least match the standards set by Ofcom's Broadcasting Code. The BBC's guidelines set a higher standard in some cases, and range more widely than required by the Ofcom Code.

Adherence to the Guidelines is a contractual requirement for all programme makers, content producers and performers working for the BBC and for all independent production companies producing BBC content. The BBC Board has decided to apply the Guidelines to all BBC

1 Protection of under-18s; Harm and Offence; Avoidance of inciting crime or disorder; Responsible approach to religious content; Prohibition of use of images of very brief duration; Fairness; Privacy.

2 [ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/)

3 BBC Framework Agreement 2016; Schedule 3.2

content, regardless of the broadcast or publication platform and wherever in the world it is distributed.

When considering complaints about editorial standards in BBC content the BBC will consider whether the BBC has observed the Editorial Guidelines.

This review

The current Editorial Guidelines were published in 2010. Ordinarily reviewed once every five years, there has been a longer gap on this occasion to allow for the governance and regulatory changes established by the current Charter to come into effect.

One of the principal functions of the BBC Board is to set the standards for the BBC's editorial and creative output and services⁴ and it is obliged to have regard to the benefits of undertaking consultation with interested persons about the standards it sets. In the interests of openness and transparency, the Board has decided it is appropriate to publicly consult on a revision of the Guidelines. Whilst the Guidelines are primarily an aid for those involved in the making and presentation of content for the BBC, it is important that the standards set out in them also reflect the expectations of audiences.

The BBC Board has approved for consultation the version published here and will take into account views expressed in the consultation before finalising and publishing the Guidelines. **The existing (2010) Guidelines will remain in force until the consultation has concluded and the revised Guidelines have been finalised and published.** Depending on the outcome of the consultation this is likely to be early in 2019.

This will be the 7th edition of the Guidelines since they were first published in 1989.

The Guidelines are a detailed document and this edition runs to 17 sections. They include:

- *The need to ensure due accuracy in all our content and apply due impartiality to our output. There are particular requirements around content dealing with 'controversial subjects'⁵*
- *The importance of providing adequate protection for members of the public from the inclusion of offensive or harmful material whilst balancing this with the right to creative freedom of expression and the right of audiences to receive creative, innovative and challenging content.*
- *The importance of treating people fairly and balancing the legitimate expectation of privacy by individuals with the public interest in freedom of expression.*
- *How those involved in making content should handle contributors under the age of 18.*
- *How we report on politics and public policy and ensure impartiality in elections.*
- *The re-use, re-versioning and treatment of permanently available content.*
- *Editorial independence in the context of potential for partnerships between the BBC and third parties and issues covered by the Broadcasting Code as regards potential commercial references.*

⁴ Charter Article 20(3)(f)

⁵ See Section 4 of draft Guidelines, A 'controversial subject' may be a matter of public policy or political or industrial controversy. It may also be a controversy within religion, science, finance, culture, ethics and other matters entirely.

- *The need for those involved in making content to be mindful of potential conflicts of interest.*

There are a number of key changes to the 2010 edition which are set out in detail in section two of this document. In summary, these are:

Changes to structure and language

One aim of this edition of the Editorial Guidelines is to make them as user friendly and succinct as possible. Each Guideline now begins with an introduction that sets in context the underlying principles and continues with specific guidelines derived from the real world situations content producers frequently face.

There have been changes to the terminology, adopting the language of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code and the law, where appropriate, to make clear that the BBC does not act in isolation. While the BBC will continue to produce a print edition of the Editorial Guidelines, the web version that will be published once the Guidelines are finalised (there will be apps for mobile too) will be extensively cross-referenced and hyper-linked to ensure users can consider issues in context.

Changes to the BBC's regulation

The BBC's Public Purposes:

The Guidelines have been updated to reflect the BBC's current Public Purposes as set out in the Royal Charter (see page 2 of this document).

Ofcom regulation:

Under the terms of the Charter the revised Guidelines must now follow most of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code, which was updated in 2017⁶ to take into account Ofcom's expanded remit with regard to the BBC. References to the relevant standards from the Ofcom Code have been incorporated in each section of the Guidelines. Sections of the Code that did not previously apply to the BBC's UK licence fee funded services include: Section 5 (Due Impartiality and Due Accuracy and Undue Prominence of Views and Opinions); Section 6 (Elections and Referendums); Section 9 (Sponsorship); Section 10 (Commercial References and Other Matters)

The Guidelines go further than the Code in some areas (reflecting the particular audience expectations of the BBC) as well as covering areas not in the Code, such as conflicts of interest.

The Guidelines also apply to areas of the BBC not regulated by Ofcom, such as the BBC World Service, BBC material on third party online sites, including social media and online written material.

⁶ Ofcom's amendments to the Broadcasting Code so that it applies to the BBC can be found at www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/category-1/amendments-to-ofcoms-broadcasting-code. Code Rule 5.13 does not apply to the BBC.

Partnerships:

One of the BBC's General Duties in the current Charter relates to how the BBC forms relationship with other organisations⁷. This has required significant revisions to the sections in the Editorial Guidelines relating to section 14 (Independence from External Interests); and section 16 (External Relationships and Financing).

Developments in the technology and media industry since 2010

The revised Guidelines incorporate developments in the media industry, for example advice on use of social media, considerations around usage of material from social media (e.g. the possibility of 'fake news') the wearing of body-worn cameras by third parties, and the expansion of online distribution with the move of BBC Three to a digital-only platform.

Changes in legislation and commitments given to Parliament and/or formal Inquiries since 2010

There have been changes in legislation and developments in the law by the courts relevant to the Guidelines since the 2010 edition was published. These include the Bribery Act 2010; the General Data Protection Regulations; the 'Right to be Forgotten', the legal expansion of who is entitled to automatic anonymity, privacy considerations and the recommendations arising out of the Leveson Inquiry. These are currently captured by Guidance notes but in the revised edition are formally incorporated into the Guidelines.

Changes in editorial thinking (including changes made as a result of editorial breaches since 2010)

They also reflect updated advice based on lessons learnt from editorial breaches since 2010, such as how we cover potentially offensive content in pre-watershed news output and how we deal with hate speech. Impartiality reviews undertaken since 2010 have resulted in changes to the Guidelines on reporting statistics and re-distributions of user-generated content.

'Future proofing'

The draft Guidelines have also been written to try to anticipate potential issues raised by new technology such as augmented reality, virtual reality, voice control, and personalisation of BBC services.

⁷ Article 13 of the Charter

About this consultation

The BBC Board is seeking views on the draft Guidelines so that we can take those views into account when considering whether amendments or further changes should be made to ensure the Guidelines are fit for purpose.

This consultation will allow the Board to take into consideration the views of a range of parties including, but not limited to, other regulatory bodies, the production community and members of the public.

In particular we are seeking feedback on the following questions:

- 1) Are the draft Guidelines clear and straightforward?
- 2) Do they set out appropriate editorial standards for those making BBC programmes and content?
- 3) Do they properly address the BBC Charter duty to form partnerships with external organisations to produce content?
- 4) Do they sufficiently reflect the changes in the media landscape since the last review in 2010?
- 5) How well do they reflect audience expectations of the BBC?

We welcome your contributions to the consultation on any of the areas covered by the above questions.

The consultation period begins on 4 October 2018 and will close on 12 November 2018.

The Guidelines are very much a living document and will continue to be supplemented by new and revised Guidance notes www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidance reflecting changes in legislation, regulation and technology, and, where necessary findings on complaints. Both the Guidelines and the Guidance notes are public documents, available on the BBC website.

Out of the scope of this consultation:

The BBC is not consulting on any of the changes made as a result of the following:

- Changes to the guidelines implementing aspects of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code. Ofcom has already consulted on changes to the Code as it relates to its regulation of the BBC.
- Changes in the guidelines as they relate to legal obligations or commitments given in Parliamentary inquiries.
- The BBC will not consider responses, or elements of responses, that seek to re-open an issue or complaint on which the BBC or Ofcom has previously reached a final decision. Nor will it consider matters that are outside the scope of the Guidelines, such as any submission on salaries, expenses or the licence fee itself.

How to respond

If you would like to respond to this consultation, please email your response to Editorial.GuidelinesReview@bbc.co.uk or send it to BBC Editorial Policy, A1, 2nd Floor, BBC Broadcast Centre, 201 Wood Lane, London W12 7TP.

When submitting your response please read and fill in as appropriate the [confidentiality and data protection statement](#).

We will not consider offensively phrased or abusive responses.

What happens next?

The BBC Board will, taking into account the consultation responses we receive, consider whether further changes to Editorial Guidelines are needed to ensure it meets the requirements set out in the Charter. We expect to publish the finalised Guidelines in 2019.

Section Two – which details the main changes to the Guidelines by section – follows on the next page.

Section Two – Changes to the 2010 version

Please note that the attached document is a draft of the Guidelines only. The textual apparatus – footnotes and cross references – will be revised and updated once the Guidelines are finalised. Each section will include a table of contents, and there will be an index.

Structural changes:

Some of the changes are structural intended to make the Guidelines more user friendly and concise. These changes are based on feedback on the 2010 edition. These include:

- Reducing the number of sections.
- Setting out broader and permissive points – i.e. those that give contextual consideration to issues, such as the public interest, or the broadcaster’s freedom of expression - that in the 2010 version of the Guidelines are set out in the introduction are, in this edition, set out within the relevant Sections.
- The law relating especially to journalistic content is now so complex and in some areas, such as privacy, under continual review, so there is no longer a section summarising legal considerations.
- Where the Guidelines mandated references to, for example, the Director Editorial Policy and Standards or a senior editorial figure, they now include a list of factors that will need consideration.

Section 1: The BBC’s Editorial Standards

This section has brought together the current Section 1 (The BBC’s Editorial Values) and Section 19 (Accountability). It has been re-written to include the BBC’s Mission and Public Purposes, as set out in the Royal Charter. It also includes our editorial commitments to our audiences, our editorial values and our accessibility and accountability obligations. Because the BBC’s Mission requires the BBC to act in the public interest, this section now includes the definition of the public interest which has previously been found in the section on Privacy.

Section 2: How to Use the Guidelines

This section continues to stress the importance of referral in the editorial process and the responsibilities of content makers.

Section 3: Accuracy

This section includes new material on reporting statistics, deriving from the recommendations in the Trust’s Impartiality Review of Statistics⁸.

⁸ BBC Trust Impartiality Review: *Making sense of statistics*. August 2016.
http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/our_work/stats_impartiality/report.pdf

New guidelines have been added on considerations around material garnered from social media, highlighting the possibility of “fake news” (3.3.11).

New material on Correcting Mistakes has been added recognising that online, the BBC iPlayer and social media give rise to new ways to both make mistakes and correct them (3.3.27).

There are new guidelines relating to the Ofcom Licence obligation to provide “adequate links to third party online material, particularly within its news stories”.

Section 4: Impartiality

The introduction explains the meaning of “due impartiality”. It includes this paragraph (4.1 Introduction):

Due impartiality usually involves more than a simple matter of ‘balance’ between opposing viewpoints. We must be inclusive, considering the broad perspective and ensuring the existence of a range of views is appropriately reflected. It does not require absolute neutrality on every issue or detachment from fundamental democratic principles.

The final sentence appeared in the 2006 Agreement’s section setting out the BBC’s impartiality obligations (it originally derived from the 1990 Broadcasting Act, and also appeared in the 1996 Agreement). The 2016 Agreement does not detail our impartiality obligations, simply saying we must observe the Ofcom Code. This is not in the Code.

The introduction also contains this principle (4.1): ***We must not campaign, or allow ourselves to be used to campaign.*** This formerly appeared in Section 10, Politics, Public Policy and Polls. It is an impartiality standard, and is therefore better placed in this Section. However, and as before, the draft Guidelines set out how the BBC can be involved in social action campaigns (4.4.22).

The term “community” has been added as being a context where subjects may be controversial. (4.3.4). This further expands the meaning beyond that included in the Ofcom Code. Doing so requires the BBC to consider the nature of an identifiable community and what levels of impartiality a debate among factions within a community requires.

The draft contains this guideline, relating to personal view content (4.3.30):

BBC staff and regular BBC presenters or reporters associated with news or public policy-related output may offer professional judgements rooted in evidence. However, it is not normally appropriate for them to present or write personal view programmes and content on public policy, on matters of political or industrial controversy, or on ‘controversial subjects’ in any area.

However, the Ofcom Code, rule 5.10, has an exception to due impartiality for “personality phone in hosts” on speech radio. The BBC Board has decided that the maintenance of due impartiality across all the BBC’s services mean this exception should not be applied to the BBC.

Section 5: Harm and Offence

Material has been added to the introduction making clear the BBC's right to freedom of expression, and the audience's right to receive information. The explanation of "generally accepted standards" has been revised to clarify its relationship to "audience expectations".

A practice currently lists the three strongest sexual terms and requires any use of them to be referred to Channel Controller. The Ofcom Code refers to "the most offensive language", without specifying any terms, though its practice is to regard any use of those three words before the watershed as a code breach – which does not apply to, for example, strong racist language.

We must make careful judgements about the use of the strongest language post-watershed and ensure it is clearly signposted. (5.3.23).

A new guideline has been added warning of the risk from using strong content in headlines in television news bulletins, where it cannot be contextualised. (5.3.11)

More information is given about television trails with an acknowledgement that trails need to be suitable for their audiences while giving an accurate sense of the programme they relate to. (5.3.18)

Advice is provided about virtual reality and immersive reality output recognising that this output creates a more intense experience for audiences, which could increase the risk of harm and offence when the content itself is graphic or violent. (5.3.27)

Material that dealt with potential offence arising from religious references has been moved to this section from the Religion section, to match the Ofcom Broadcasting Code. (5.3.54)

The definition of a child adopted by the Guidelines (under 16 years of age) is a higher standard than required by the Ofcom Broadcasting Code which defines a child as being under the age of 15 (Introduction).

The Guidelines take into account how individuals can personalise BBC online content they receive, so that content accessible on the BBC Home Page to those who are not "signed in" must be suitable for an audience that includes children. (5.3.15).

Section 6: Fairness to Contributors and Consent

For clarity, the title of this section has been changed.

The introduction now includes material setting out the requirement for the exercise of "due care" when assessing the potential for harm and distress to contributors arising from their participation in our output (for example harassment on social media). Additional guidelines have been added to comply with modern day data protection requirements, especially the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). A new guideline has been added assessing from

whom an individual wants to remain anonymous and why as a key to understanding the extent to which we need to protect an individual's identity. (6.3.26)

Three new standards have been added: one to emphasise the importance of the BBC maintaining editorial control in relation to access agreements (6.3.31); one to match the Ofcom Code on withholding certain information in the public interest; and one to provide extra care for vulnerable people (6.3.10).

Additional guidelines have been added describing the detail that the subject of an allegation should normally be given when seeking a right of reply. (6.3.39)

Section 7: Privacy

This section has been revised to reflect changes in the law (both GDPR and developments by the courts on privacy matters), and new technology such as drones (7.3.24) and body-worn cameras (7.3.23) that create opportunities for entirely new ways of infringing an individual's privacy.

A new justification "satire in the public interest" has been added to the reason for using secret recording to recognise the development of satirical current affairs coverage, especially on BBC Three (BBC III) and to recognise that this style of television is helpful in content aimed at younger audiences. (7.3.9)

The requirement that secret recording is used only as "a last resort" has been deleted.

The provisions around door-stepping have been extensively revised, to match the equivalent provisions in the Ofcom Code. (7.3.34). They now recognise that door-stepping can be used where publicly accountable individuals consistently refuse to have their decision making scrutinised in the public interest. We warn against secretly recording doorsteps (7.3.33), and added an additional test for door stepping without prior approach "where there is no reasonable expectation of receiving a response" (to a request for interview or response to an allegation) (7.3.35).

The approach to use of private investigators in this section derives from commitments the BBC made to the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee in 2012 which investigated the use of private investigators following the Leveson Inquiry. (7.3.32)

Section 8: Reporting Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

The language in this section now matches the recently re-written and re-titled Section 3 of the Ofcom Code (Crime, Disorder, Hatred and Abuse) which gives significant weight to the question of whether content is in the public interest.

A new section, "Hate Speech", has been added reflecting additions in the Ofcom Code aimed at addressing hatred and abuse issues. (8.3.3)

The section on Disguising Identities when interviewing perpetrators of crime and anti-social behaviour lists a new consideration when deciding whether it is appropriate to anonymise

them: Where the contribution is of clear public interest and could not be obtained without disguising the contributor's identity. (8.3.36)

Material relating to investigations that are never broadcast but nonetheless uncovered information that may be of interest to the authorities, which includes a mandatory referral, has been moved from Guidance to this section. This derived from *Newsnight's* aborted investigation into Savile. (8.3.46)

Section 9: Children and Young People as Contributors

The Ofcom Code standard on due care for under 18s has been adopted in this section. A meaning of "due care", corresponding to the meaning of "due accuracy" and "due impartiality" in Sections 3 and 4 has been added.

The guidelines on informed consent have been expanded, emphasising that we have an overriding responsibility to assess whether it is appropriate for an under-18 to contribute, even if parental consent has been given. (9.3.17)

The guideline on the impact of a contribution has also been expanded, in the light of both experience and Ofcom guidance in this area. A guideline has been included relating to the need to create a redacted script in drama and other programming for an under-18 contribution to post-watershed material, and requiring consideration to be given as to whether it is appropriate for them not to be present on set or at read-throughs for some programmes. (9.3.19)

This section also states that the potential negative impact of social media on under-18s contributors should be considered and they and their parents/guardians should be advised accordingly. (9.3.20)

The practice suggesting criminal record checking of staff that moderate content online has been removed: the BBC's Child Protection Policy sets out safeguarding and disclosure considerations. The practice on private online spaces has been deleted, as the BBC does not offer services on private online spaces to anyone. The practice for the moderation of spaces which publish pictures or videos from members of the public has been moved to the Interacting with our Audiences section, as it applies to all age groups.

Section 10: Politics, Public Policy and Polls

The guidelines on Opinion Polls have been revised to add even more caution when reporting their findings, following recent election and referendum experience. (10.3.28)

There is no longer a distinction made between the use of different methods of polling – face-to-face, telephone and online. (10.3.27)

The section on Parliamentary Broadcasting has been re-drafted in the light of changes to copyright law. (10.3.6)

Section 11: War, Terror and Emergencies

The language in this section has been amended to reflect the variety of global terror issues. The obligations on journalists and others working for the BBC under the Terrorism Acts has been emphasised.

Material has been added to deal with the potential impact of social media activity and comment online, including when it originates from individuals directly involved. Greater restrictions on use of social media are proposed here than elsewhere in the Guidelines. (11.3.4)

Section 12: Religious Content

This section has been retitled from “Religion” in line with the equivalent section of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code, which covers only religious programming. Harm and Offence considerations arising from references to religion in all output have been moved to Section 5, Harm and Offence.

The prohibition on recruitment to religions extends across all platforms, going further than the Ofcom Code which only applies restrictions to television programmes. (12.3.3)

Section 13: Re-Use, Reversioning and Permanent Availability

The title of this section has been changed from “Re-Use and Reversioning” to better reflect the fact that much BBC content is no longer explicitly re-broadcast or re-distributed but made permanently available.

Guidelines have been added to reflect Ofcom findings that the balance between privacy and the public interest changes over time. (13.3.10)

Additional guidelines emphasising the public value in the availability of the BBC’s archive, and underlining our reluctance to change it, thereby “rewriting history”, have been added. This section also includes material previously in Guidance on the BBC’s takedown policy in relation to online and broadcast material. (13.3.20)

Guidelines have been added setting out the circumstances where we would make both transmitted and untransmitted material available, especially to the relevant contributors. (13.3.24) (13.3.28)

Section 14: Independence from External Interests

In this section of the draft Guidelines, guidelines that apply only to Public Services are highlighted in turquoise, guidelines that apply only to Commercial Services are highlighted in yellow. Guidelines that apply to all services have no highlight.

The title of this section has been changed, deleting the reference to “Editorial Integrity”, as that applies to all aspects of the Guidelines.

This section has been heavily revised to clarify and simplify the many ways the BBC can and should form relationships with other bodies, one of the major changes from the 2016 Charter. This section is an amalgamation of the public service and commercial service Guidelines into one section covering all BBC services. This section conforms with Sections 9 and 10 of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code which now apply to the BBC.

The BBC public services now come under Ofcom regulation for Commercial References in Television Programming (Section 9 of the Code) and Commercial Communications in Radio Programming (Section 10 of the Code). The following changes were therefore required:

- For public services, the requirement that they do not “endorse” any other organisation, its products, activities, services, views or opinions, has been changed to “endorse or promote” (Introduction)
- The requirement to avoid undue prominence, which formerly applied to “commercial products or services” has been extended to apply to “products, services or trademarks”. (14.4.1)
- The phrasing of the guidelines around Product Prominence has been changed to take account of Ofcom’s Code Guidance, and to add a warning to avoid prominence of commercial music in trails. (14.4.5)
- Specific reference has been made to the BBC’s Anti-Bribery Policy for any proposals to accept expenses paid trips. (14.4.18)
- We have slimmed down the Guidelines on Online Links to Third Party Websites, and Logos and Credits Online, reflecting the fact that placing content online is now “business as usual” and that the current level of detail specific to online is not required. Online content should meet the standards of TV and Radio content. (14.4.8)
- New guidelines have been added for Live Streams from Third Parties and for references to programme-related material which now explicitly makes clear that the material may be promoted only during or around the editorial content from which it is directly derived and only where it is editorially justified. (14.4.25)
- Product Placement for Commercial Services now has to meet the Ofcom requirement: “In services under the BBC’s control, product placement must not influence the content and scheduling of content in a way that affects the responsibility and editorial independence of the broadcaster” (14.4.34). All proposals to include product placement on the BBC’s Commercial Services have to be approved by a senior editorial figure. Restrictions on the types of products that may be placed have been amended to meet Ofcom standards. Product placement requirements for acquisitions on public services have been expanded, moving some from Guidance in these areas into Guidelines. (14.4.31)

The sections on Advertising and the BBC Brand, Makeovers, Joint Editorial Initiatives, Funding of Off-Air Support Material, and Advertising and Sponsorship for Commercial Services, have been moved into Section 16 of the Guidelines (External Relationships and Financing). Game shows have been moved to Section 17, *Competitions, Votes and Interactivity*. The Guidelines for BBC support services, such as Action Lines, have now been brought together in Section 14.

Section 15: Conflicts of Interest

This Guideline covers an area in which the BBC is not regulated by Ofcom.

A new provision has been added to make it clear that a conflict of interest does not arise simply because a presenter who has an independent standing as an expert has, in that capacity, expresses an opinion. (Introduction)

Material has been added on expression of opinion on social media, particularly by those associated with BBC News and Current Affairs output. (15.3.13)

Section 16: External Relationships and Financing

The title of this section has been changed from “External Relationships and Funding”. “Financing” is an umbrella term used for clarity to distinguish it from licence fee funding and external funding for World Service Group, as well as other forms of funding that are all included in this section.

The new Charter sets out a new framework for partnerships and commercial relationships between the BBC and other organisations. This section has been revised to enable work within this framework and remove unnecessary constraints. The Guidelines includes a meaning of “partnership”.

The new section is an amalgamation of existing Section 16 External Relationships and Funding, which currently applies only to licence fee funded services, and the Editorial Policy Guidelines for BBC World Service Group on External Relationships and Funding, which apply to the World Service, Global News Ltd and BBC Media Action. It is proposed that the new section applies to all BBC services, including BBC Studios and BBC Monitoring who are currently not bound by these Guidelines.

New regulatory policies apply in the area of financing for Public Services. The draft Guidelines has been amended to refer to and reflect these policies.

The Charter sets out a new framework for partnerships and commercial relationships between the BBC and other organisations. This Section has been revised to work within this framework and remove unnecessary constraints. . We have replaced the phrase “public value partnership” with “editorial partnership”. The phrase “joint editorial initiative” has been given a new meaning as an initiative that is not part of a partnership (currently it is a form of partnership).

This new section includes what was a principle in the World Service Group Guidelines, that “The nature of any external relationship must be clear to the audience”. The section also includes Guidelines to ensure that the other party in the relationship is appropriate, that the relationship is appropriate given the editorial content to be produced, and that the BBC will maintain independent editorial control over its editorial content.

Guidelines on Practices on Editorial Partnerships, Joint Editorial Initiatives, Co-Productions, Location and Production Incentives, Third Party Advertising and the BBC Brand and Distribution/Syndication now apply to all services.

Section 17: Competitions, Votes and Interactivity

This section has been re-titled to include the most common methods of interactivity, and to make its purpose clear.

This has been revised to align the BBC's requirements for interactivity (mostly relating to competitions and votes) with the rules in Sections 9 and 10 of the Ofcom Code.