

Archived BBC public responses to complaints

2021

BBC Breakfast, 4th January 2021

Summary of complaint

Some viewers contacted us about BBC News Medical Editor Fergus Walsh's comments when reporting on the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine

Our response

Our Medical Editor Fergus Walsh was exploring how quickly the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine would be rolled out across the UK using an army of volunteers including cabin crew.

Nurse Sam Foster explained that they 'would be .. guiding people through the process'.

However Fergus subsequently made a comment for which he has since apologised.

This included posting on Twitter a short while later: 'Sincere apologies to cabin crew. I know they do a lot more than 'serve food' and play a vital role in all aspects of a flight. I really didn't mean to minimise or be dismissive of them on Breakfast. I'd be very happy to be immunised by anyone who's had the training.'

BBC News, December 2020

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from audience members who feel it's inaccurate to include positive test results in Covid-19 case numbers, and false positives are being counted.

Our response

We report on figures that are supplied by the government, and other trusted sources. We provide context around all the figures we report where possible.

The daily case data which is published by NHSE/ PHE and the devolved administrations includes the number of people who have had at least one positive PCR test and now it also includes tests carried out using lateral flow devices. These daily numbers are one of the most immediate and up to date measures available. The graphs help us to show not just the individual numbers but the trend over time so that we can see whether cases are rising, falling or levelling off and how quickly. While no test for Covid-19 is 100% accurate, false positives and false negatives are likely to remain a fairly consistent error which wouldn't affect the trend over time.

As explained on the House of Common's website, there would not be enough false positives to affect the numbers overall:

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/covid-19-how-reliable-are-test-results/>

Chiles on Friday, January 2021

Summary of complaint

We received some complaints about Adrian Chiles' interview with an NHS matron on New Year's Day.

Our response

The interview was given by an NHS matron, recounting her own experience of what she had seen whilst working. There was no reason to think a matron with 18 years' experience would not convey what she saw and what she had heard. She did not say the children were seriously ill, nor did we.

A Tweet with a clip from this interview was posted to @bbc5live and was based on a direct quote from the contributor. It was not positioned as fact and was followed with a response from the President of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

Happy New Year Live! 2020

Summary of complaint

We received some complaints about the content of the Happy New Year Live! display.

Our response

The New Year midnight celebration, created and organised by The Greater London Authority and broadcast on BBC One, featured references to significant moments from 2020.

We note you feel this was inappropriate and thank you for getting in touch.

BBC News Website, 7 January 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received complaints from readers who believe that our article Covid: Nurse 'angry' over positive test despite vaccination was misleading.

Our response

We reviewed the report and recognise it did not include sufficient context when initially published and as such, did not meet our high editorial standards, for which we apologise. It was duly revised and updated to include additional information and context, giving the reader a fuller understanding of the situation.

BBC News, January 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received complaints from people who felt our coverage of the US Capitol riots was biased

against President Trump and his supporters.

Our response

The storming of the US Capitol was an extraordinary story to which we dedicated comprehensive coverage. We made clear the nature of the violence, vandalism and rioting which took place, its consequences, and reflected the condemnation these scenes provoked from across the political spectrum, from former US presidents, President-elect Biden and political leaders across the world.

We spoke to several Trump supporters present and heard their explanations for their actions and their response to the widespread criticism levelled at them. We were also clear that their belief the US presidential election had been stolen was baseless, and that one consequence of their actions was the suspension of the joint session of Congress certifying Joe Biden's electoral win.

Donald Trump has faced accusations that his rhetoric had incited this violence. Our reporting scrutinised his statements leading up to this incident and subsequently. We gave full, accurate and duly impartial context to what he has said.

BBC News Website, 17 January 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints that our breaking news article initially carried a headline which described Phil Spector as a "talented but flawed producer".

Our response

The breaking news story on Phil Spector's death was published with a headline that did not meet our editorial standards. This was changed within minutes and we also deleted a tweet that had gone out automatically with the original headline. We apologise for this error.

Our coverage of the story across BBC News has been clear that Phil Spector was convicted of the murder of Lana Clarkson and had a long history of violence and abuse.

FA CUP Match of the Day Live: Arsenal v Newcastle United, BBC One, 0912021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints about the coverage for FA Cup Match of the Day Live: Arsenal v Newcastle United, which overran on 9th Jan 2021.

Our response

As a live event, the match went into extra time and as a result there was inevitable disruption to the evening schedule. As viewers may appreciate, we were obliged to broadcast the match until it had ended. We do however recognise the disappointment caused that Casualty and The Wheel were moved later in the schedule and that Mrs Brown's Boys was dropped.

News at Six & News at Ten, BBC One & BBC News Channel, 18 January 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from viewers who felt a report from Royal London Hospital on the impact of Covid-19 on staff and patients was insensitive or scaremongering.

Our response

Our role as an impartial news broadcaster is to reflect the reality of any current situation. Sometimes this means reporting on upsetting stories and including upsetting images. In this case our newsreader gave a warning that there were some distressing images at the beginning of the report.

We consider it is very important to give those working within the NHS a voice and to accurately reflect the current state of the health service, and we felt that was achieved here.

Martin Freeborn wanted to speak to us after his wife had died to tell us what had happened and to convey the seriousness of the situation. Our team gave him the utmost care and respect, and we greatly appreciate his contribution to the report.

We don't consider the report was insensitive or scaremongering, but we do appreciate that some people may have found it difficult to watch.

If you feel affected by the subject matter of the report, or you wish to speak with someone, please visit our Action Lines website which provides our audience members with organisations to get in touch with: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/actionline/>

Countryfile, BBC One, 14 January 2021

Summary of complaint

We received some complaints from viewers who were unhappy about an item on a black women's walking group.

Our response

The feature on the walking group was part of a programme where the overall theme was to encourage people to make more of their connection with the British countryside during the coming year, including trying to get outdoors more to exercise where possible.

For a variety of reasons, as the presenter explained, it has been the case that historically some groups have felt less able than others to take part in outdoor activities such as hiking or mountain walking, so any initiative which seeks to redress that balance is to be welcomed.

The walking group in this programme is one such initiative and is a reminder that not only is the beauty of the British countryside there for everyone to appreciate, but that all are welcome to enjoy it and to safeguard its wildlife, landscape, and traditions for the future.

Alicia Keys Rocks New Year's Eve, BBC One, 31 December 2020

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from viewers who were unhappy with aspects of the programme.

Our response

Traditionally on New Year's Eve we produce two music shows, for BBC One and BBC Two, to provide a broad range of music entertainment across the two channels. Each show leads into and expresses the midnight moment and they are commissioned to work in tandem with each other.

Alicia Keys Rocks New Year's Eve was intended as an intimate and inclusive musical celebration to see in 2021. Alicia Keys is a successful artist who has sold over 42 million albums worldwide and we felt that such a popular and respected artist would be a great way for viewers to see in the New Year. Alicia performed exclusive covers by British Artists and a short instrumental version of Auld Lang Syne and wished everyone a happy new year under the Auld Lang Syne Score.

Meanwhile on BBC Two, The Hootenanny, presented by Jools Holland, is a multi-artist show and featured a range of British artists. This year's line-up included Sir Tom Jones, Rick Wakeman and Roisin Murphy.

Both programmes have a different feel and bring something different to the schedule and our audience members are free to select the show they find most preferable.

We recognise though some of our audience were disappointed.

BBC Teach website, January 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about the Big Talk film

Our response

The Big Talk film was only available on the BBC Teach website - our service for teachers to use for curriculum support. It was never aimed directly at pupils and was never intended to be used independently by them at any age, nor did it form part of our current Lockdown Learning offer.

The content was clearly labelled as requiring advance viewing by teachers and came with extensive notes to support and guide teachers in their use of it when discussing health and relationships - topics that are part of the Primary curriculum in England.

We are aware that this particular film is being wilfully misinterpreted by parts of the media and others on social media. As such, its original purpose and intention has been overshadowed. On this basis we have made the decision to retire the film. We will continue to support teachers on this important topic in other ways.

The Andrew Marr Show, 3 January 2021

Summary of complaint

We receive complaints from viewers who felt Andrew Marr interrupted Boris Johnson too much and showed bias against the government and/or were unhappy Andrew Marr summarised his interview with the Prime Minister as "an Englishman talking to a Scot".

Our response

The Andrew Marr Show is known for its rigorous and in depth interviews in which politicians and others in positions of power are held to account. Throughout the interview, Mr Marr gave the Prime Minister ample time to respond whilst also interjecting to ask follow up questions to keep the interview on track. We believe the tone of the interview was measured and respectful, and Boris Johnson was able to answer in full whilst also being sufficiently challenged.

In the closing moments of the interview, the Prime Minister said that Mr Marr should "break out of your characteristic gloom" and referred to "lots of reasons to be positive" about the new year. Mr Marr has clarified that he wasn't making a constitutional point by responding that it had been "an Englishman talking to a Scot", but rather referring to what he has called his own "natural, wintry-Caledonian, comfortless, slate-grey, east-coast temperament".

We believe Mr Marr's approach throughout the interview showed the scrutiny, detail and due impartiality the audience expects.

BBC News at Six/Ten, BBC One, 26 January 2021

Summary of complaint

Some viewers felt our main news bulletins contained too much coverage of the UK officially reaching 100,000 covid-related deaths, and that the reporting tone was not appropriate.

Our response

Almost one year on, this was a significant and sombre milestone in the country's fight against the pandemic. When reporting on such a toll, the true scale, and the human story is at risk of being lost. That's why we presented the personal stories in the way we did. As one contributor made clear:

"These are human beings, these are people, with families. They have lives, they're not just numbers, this is a life that's gone. And the impact is huge." We felt it was respectful and a suitable tone for such an occasion, but it's clear you don't agree.

We believe the level of coverage was proportionate to the importance of the issue, and the many aspects to it. In our bulletins we also reflected how the UK compared globally, on the hope the vaccines will offer, and pointed out that over 7m people have benefitted from this 'way out' of the virus.

We included statements from the Prime Minister, in which he took full responsibility for the government's handling, and reflected the various obstacles which they faced in tackling the death toll. As we said, no government has ever grappled with a problem quite like this and they have

expanded and propped up the economy during the crisis. It's important to scrutinise the decisions made along the way, as well as reflect the government's own position on the death toll (as reflected by its own official figures).

We feel the approach was fair, duly impartial, and appropriate to the landmark on that day – our ongoing coverage reflects the different milestones and breakthroughs as they occur.

Pooch Perfect, BBC One, January 2021

Summary of complaint

We received some complaints from viewers who felt the premise of the programme sets a bad example to pet owners.

Our response

Grooming is a healthy and necessary part of responsible dog ownership particularly with certain breeds. Some breeds require more regular grooming than others to ensure that they can see properly, move easily, keep cool and breathe freely. For example, Brachycephalic dogs (like the Shih Tzus seen in episode one) need more regular grooming to prevent them from over-heating due to their shorter snouts.

During the production process, the producers consulted with both the RSPCA and British Veterinary Association (BVA) to ensure best practise as regards animal welfare. Both organisations were given details of the proposed grooming challenges and both were happy to recommend individuals who then became part of the production team. The Animal Welfare Consultant is himself an ex-RSPCA Officer, and was recommended by Dr Samantha Gaines of the RSPCA and our on-screen vet was suggested by Daniella Dos Santos, Senior Vice President, of the BVA.

All the challenges were designed to highlight the skills and knowledge of the professional groomers taking part in the show. At no point did the animal welfare team feel there was any risk to the dogs' welfare and all the dogs were monitored throughout to ensure they were happy, did not show signs of stress, that they had sufficient food and water and had adequate rest away from the studio environment.

Of the twenty challenges across the series, four made use of some form of limited temporary colour. Any use of colour was strictly controlled and only used to highlight the groom and any use of colour was explained and contextualised for each groom. All colour was temporary, animal safe and washed out almost immediately depending on the dog's coat.

In one groom, the dogs were dressed in an outfit. These outfits were all 'dog friendly' and checked by the animal welfare team to ensure that they did not restrict the dog's movements, that the dogs did not get too hot or caused them any discomfort. In challenges in which contestants used some small accessories to accentuate their grooms, every item was checked by the animal welfare team and only permitted if it passed their strict criteria and did not pose any risk to the dog.

Whilst every owner had a very positive reaction to their dog's groom, the production team gave them the option to have their dogs regroomed the following day. In challenges that used colour, the

dogs are shown having been re-washed to highlight the temporary nature of the colour. After the series had completed filming every owner was contacted and reported that their dogs were happy and healthy, had enjoyed the process and had not suffered any ill effects.

Throughout Pooch Perfect, it is made clear that the contestants are professional groomers and that dog owners should not try these creative grooms at home. Every precaution was taken throughout filming to ensure each individual dog's welfare and the production team firmly believes every dog was well treated and that no dog was harmed physically or mentally by the process.

BBC News, February 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints from people who feel that we haven't provided enough coverage of the farmers' protests in India.

Our response

The BBC has been providing ongoing coverage of the farmers' protests in India across our BBC News website, regional radio across the UK, and news programming on Radio 4. We have also run reports on the BBC News Channel and our national news on BBC One.

In addition, this story has been covered on BBC World News and World Service output in several languages, and we have run packages and live updates from at least four of our correspondents from the area.

This is an ongoing story and the BBC is committed to continued coverage of it from the ground. You can find a dedicated topic feed with detailed, up to date coverage on our website here:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/c23dw2xjpxrt/indian-farmers-protest-2020>

Social Media, 28 January 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received complaints from people who feel a tweet by Katya Adler about the UK/EU vaccine dispute was misleading in regards to the UK Government's position.

Our response

As the BBC's Europe Editor, part of Katya Adler's role is to provide our audiences with impartial analysis of key political developments.

The vaccine dispute between the EU and the UK was a fast developing story and it is not uncommon for our journalists to use social media to keep our audience updated with any new developments.

Katya later clarified her earlier tweet by detailing the UK Government's actual position. She also linked to a news online article that further explained the situation which you can read here:

<https://twitter.com/BBCkatyaadler/status/1354959918885974021?s=20>

Panorama: Vaccines: The Disinformation War, BBC One, 15 February 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from viewers who felt the programme was biased against those with concerns over the Covid-19 vaccines.

Our response

The programme investigated how false and misleading information about both the coronavirus and the Covid-19 vaccines is being disseminated online and the impact it can have on people with a range of concerns about having the jab. Early in the programme we heard from Dr David Turner, who said that he had heard many understandable concerns from people as they were preparing to take the vaccine. We also heard from Dr Mary Ramsay, who is Head of Immunisation at Public Health England, who explained it is not unexpected for people to have questions about the vaccine, but that doctors and nurses should be able to give them the answers to their questions.

Panorama also examined a video titled 'Ask the Experts', which has been widely criticised by the general scientific community and has been removed from social media sites for spreading disinformation about Covid-19 and the vaccines. We carried out an experiment in which we asked a panel of volunteers, who were unsure about whether to receive the vaccine, to watch the video and then share their thoughts. They explained their concerns in the programme.

Professor Liam Smeeth, a GP and Head of Epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, who had studied the findings of the vaccine trials was on hand to answer any medical questions arising out of the experiment. He agreed that a little bit of caution is understandable, however he said the benefits outweigh the risks.

We also heard from people who have participated in anti-lockdown/anti-vaccine protests, including Kate Shemirani who also featured in the 'Ask the Experts' video. All of the participants of the video had been invited to respond to the programme, 11 did and our reporter reflected their positions. We also reached out to the production company behind the video, which declined to comment on the contents of the video.

We consider the worries and fears that some may have about the Covid-19 vaccines were properly presented in the programme, and every individual that featured was given sufficient time to put their points across. However there is an overwhelming scientific consensus regarding the benefits of the vaccinations, and we're satisfied this was reflected throughout the programme.

BBC News Website, 3 February 2021

Summary of complaint

We received some complaints from readers in response to the article Black bosses 'shut out' by 'vanilla boys' club'.

Our response

It is never our intention to sensationalise or offend. On this occasion we sought to shine a light on a subject in the public interest - a report which shows that diversity in senior roles at the UK's top

firms has got worse instead of better.

Using quote marks in the headline, we make clear that we are reporting Trevor Phillips' comments, from an interview on the Today Programme, to convey the predominance of white males in the boardrooms of FTSE 100 companies. We included his remarks to provide our readers with additional context and reaction to the report, and also included other responses from other organisations, such as the CBI.

We believe that it would have been remiss of us not to report the strongest criticism which accompanied the research, and allow readers to form their own judgements on his choice of words.

Bamous, BBC Three, 19 January 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from viewers who objected to the premise of this comedy programme.

Our response

Bamous is a satirical comedy show which looks at how a mythical stock index for famous black celebrities might work.

We appreciate that comedy is one of the most subjective areas of programming. We never set out to offend viewers with anything we show.

BBC News, February 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from viewers unhappy that the court ruling that Matt Hancock acted unlawfully over pandemic contracts was not the lead story, or felt it did not get enough coverage.

Our response

The court ruling that Matt Hancock acted unlawfully in relation to some pandemic contracts was covered thoroughly on our news website and in our radio news bulletins. It was one of our most read stories online, with around 2.5 million page views, and was reported on both the Six and Ten O' Clock News programmes on BBC One.

The Health Secretary himself was then questioned extensively about the story on The Andrew Marr Show on Sunday morning on BBC One.

It's worth pointing out that the nature of the court's decision was that Matt Hancock acted unlawfully in not publishing the details of contracts within the specified 30-day time period, not whether any contract had been properly awarded.

Throughout the pandemic, BBC News has consistently reported on the Government's handling of PPE contracts, as well as breaking new and exclusive stories such as the following:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-55275597>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54897737>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53672841>

We have also investigated the issue of how taxpayers' money has been spent in relation to PPE contracts:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000s19p>

We appreciate that not everyone will agree with how much coverage a particular story will receive, however the issue of PPE contracts is something that we have been covering since the beginning of the pandemic.

Saturday Kitchen Live, BBC One, 23 February 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from some viewers who were unhappy with the guests in this edition.

Our response

Saturday Kitchen Live's format allows for an informal chatty style and the guests are encouraged to feel relaxed in the studio. Some viewers found the behaviour and comments of the guests this week to be inappropriate and that they were rude to presenter Matt. We appreciate the feedback and we shared it with the Saturday Kitchen team.

BBC News, 19 February 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who felt Nicholas Witchell's reporting that the Duke and Duchess of Sussex won't be returning as working members of The Royal Family was biased against them.

Our response

In his role as our Royal Correspondent, Nicholas Witchell reported in detail on the announcement that the Duke and Duchess of Sussex won't be returning as working members of The Royal Family. He made clear the positions of those involved and the circumstances which had led to this. He also examined the implications of this in both a practical and personal sense for Harry and Meghan, and what this meant for their relationship with the rest of The Royal Family.

The statement issued by Buckingham Palace and the response from the Sussexes demonstrated the differing perspectives of the two parties. In his scrutiny of these statements, Nicholas fairly reflected the conflicting viewpoints which the statements seemed to expose.

As our audience would expect, Nicholas offered analysis of what this story meant for The Royal Family; he did not express a viewpoint on the stance taken by Harry and Meghan, and reflected that there would be many people who supported their decision and wished them well.

Ski Sunday, BBC Two, 21 February 2021

Summary of complaint

We received some complaints about a segment that looked at how snow sports could become more inclusive to people from all backgrounds, from those who felt it was inappropriate.

Our response

We do not agree that it was inappropriate to explore this topic. We do not agree that anything within this report was inaccurate, or biased against anyone who wants to take to the slopes. We included viewpoints and personal stories from multiple contributors as well as experts and commentators in the industry.

BBC News, March 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received some complaints from people who feel that our coverage of the Indian farmers' protests is biased against protestors.

Our response

The BBC has been providing ongoing coverage of the farmers' protests in India across our television, radio and digital content. We have reflected the global attention the protests have garnered, the clashes at the protests, and the market law reforms that sparked the movement.

The BBC has not taken a position on these protests. We have fairly and accurately reported what has been happening in the area, the reasons behind the protests and the position of the government. We have featured a wide range of viewpoints across our programming, hearing from experts who provided insight into the protests as well as speaking directly to farmers who are taking part.

We feel that our coverage of the Indian farmers' protests has been balanced and accurate. This is an ongoing story and the BBC is committed to continued coverage of it from the ground.

Six Nations Rugby, BBC One, 27 February

Summary of complaint

We received some complaints about the post-match interviews after the Wales v England match.

Our response

In our post-match interviews, Sonja McLaughlin spoke to a number of individuals who were involved in the Wales v England game. These interviews were conducted in a fair and professional manner, all were treated respectfully and given ample time to answer the questions. Sonja has been a key member of our Six Nations team for a long time and we have no concerns about the way these interviews were carried out.

BBC News at Six, BBC One and BBC News Channel, 26 February 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints in response to a report by Sarah Smith in which she stated that Alex Salmond had said he thought Nicola Sturgeon should resign in his evidence to a Scottish Parliament Inquiry.

Our response

During our coverage on the News at Six of Alex Salmond's evidence session at the Scottish Parliamentary inquiry into the Scottish government's handling of allegations made against him, Sarah Smith said Mr Salmond had called for Nicola Sturgeon to resign. In fact Alex Salmond had told the inquiry 'it's not for me to suggest what the consequences might be' for Ms Sturgeon. Both Sarah Smith and the BBC News Press team clarified the position on Twitter soon after the programme. This edition of the programme was removed from iPlayer.

This mistake has also been acknowledged on the BBC Corrections and Clarification website: https://www.bbc.co.uk/helpandfeedback/corrections_clarifications/

On the News at Ten later that evening, we made clear that while Mr Salmond had said he believed Ms Sturgeon had broken the ministerial code, he had stopped short of calling for her to resign; this was reflected both in the introduction to our report and in Sarah's piece live to the studio. We also featured the clip of Mr Salmond's statement on this.

Coronavirus Update, BBC Scotland, 24 February 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who were unhappy Nicola Sturgeon used the briefing to respond to journalists' questions about the Alex Salmond inquiry.

Our response

The Scottish government present a regular session on matters they consider relevant to the pandemic. We continue to take the view that these matters are in the public interest and as such afford it coverage commensurate with what is widely accepted to be an ongoing public health emergency. We do of course keep these matters under constant review.

The content of the briefing itself and the response to the Q&A session that follows it is determined by the Scottish government.

On this specific occasion the First Minister responded to questions by journalists on a matter unrelated to the pandemic.

Politics Live: Budget 2021, BBC Two, 3 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from some viewers about a profile of Rishi Sunak in the programme.

Our response

We have reviewed the piece and are confident the item was a fair and duly impartial analysis of Mr Sunak's rise from back bencher to Chancellor.

It features a range of expert voices from across the political spectrum and although it acknowledges Mr Sunak has been widely praised for his actions during the pandemic, it's also clear there have been criticisms too. It references his failure to offer financial support to some sectors of society, and says his 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme may have helped boost transmission rates. The piece also scrutinises his seemingly artless but in fact carefully crafted 'man of the people' image on social media.

The Mash Report, BBC Two, March 2021**Summary of complaint**

We received complaints from some viewers who are unhappy that the series has been decommissioned.

Our response

We are very proud of The Mash Report but in order to make room for new comedy shows we sometimes have to make difficult decisions and it won't be returning. We would like to thank all those involved in four brilliant series and hope to work with Nish Kumar, Rachel Parris and the team in the future.

BBC News, March 2021**Summary of complaint**

We have received some complaints from people who feel our coverage of Harry and Meghan's interview with Oprah Winfrey is biased against the Royal Family.

Our response

The BBC has been providing ongoing coverage of the interview across our television, radio and digital content.

The interview has gained worldwide attention and across our programming we have heard from a range of people from different backgrounds who have voiced their opinion.

The BBC, as a national broadcaster, has not taken a position and we are satisfied our coverage has been duly impartial and accurate.

BBC Breakfast, BBC One, 8 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about an interview on BBC Breakfast on Monday 8th March 2021.

Our response

BBC Breakfast reflected a range of views discussing the issues raised by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex's recent interview. Our guests each made a passionate case and we are satisfied the audience was clear they were each giving their own opinions on what is a very topical subject. Our presenters interjected at several points to ensure the interview remained on track.

Why is Covid Killing People of Colour? BBC One, 2nd March, 2021.

Summary of complaint

Some viewers felt the premise of the programme was racist or biased in favour of the theory that structural racism might explain disparities in Covid-19 outcomes.

Our response

It has been confirmed by the Health Secretary, the Office for National Statistics and Public Health England that Covid-19 has disproportionately affected people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in England. This programme considers some of the possible reasons for this.

It looks at why people from BAME backgrounds are more likely to be employed in public facing key worker roles in which they are exposed to coronavirus, and why there is a higher prevalence of some pre-existing conditions, which affect the chances of surviving Covid-19, in these communities. The programme explores the link between these issues and deprivation, and asks whether structural racism might also play a role.

Viewers hear a range of experts discussing possible explanations for this disparity. There is no suggestion in the programme that people from other ethnic groups have not also been seriously affected by Covid-19.

BBC News at Six and News at Ten, BBC One and BBC News Channel, 15 March 2021

Summary of complaint

Some viewers felt a special report looking at 'Lockdown, A Year On' was either biased against the Government, or too negative in tone.

Our response

Laura Kuenssberg's piece looked back at the government's handling of the coronavirus pandemic one year on. It was a careful and sober account, employing her specialist expertise and contacts, in which a range of views were reflected. Health Secretary Matt Hancock and Labour Leader Sir Keir Starmer were interviewed. The reporting was accurate and duly impartial.

The piece included comment from unnamed sources. They were the senior politicians, officials and former officials who witnessed first-hand or were directly involved in the decisions. This use of unnamed sources is not at odds with the BBC's editorial standards, although it's something that

requires careful judgement. When reporting important stories in the public interest, such as the workings and decision making of the government, the use of unnamed sources is acceptable as long as the sources are verified and are credible, as they were here. Quite often information in the public interest is available only through sources or contributors on an unattributable or anonymous basis.

BBC News, March 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who felt Ros Atkins' report was biased against the Royal Family.

Our response

Each week Ros Atkins has an in-depth look at a significant story that has been in the news; during this report he gave detailed analysis of the fallout of the interview the Duke and Duchess of Sussex gave to Oprah Winfrey. BBC News has reported comprehensively across our coverage on the interview itself and claims made by the Sussexes. The purpose of this piece was not to scrutinise each assertion made but instead to specifically explore the wider ramifications of this story. Ros made clear that the Royal Family deny allegations of racism made against them.

Ros examined what this story means for the reputation of the Royal Family and their future role in the world, and why there had been tensions in the relationship between the couple and the rest of the family. We are confident that Ros' piece was duly impartial and gave a fair analysis of the issues that had been raised by the interview.

BBC Breakfast, BBC One and BBC News Channel, 18 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people unhappy with a comment Charlie Stayt made about the flag in the background of an interview and Naga Munchetty's subsequent activity on social media.

Our response

At the end of a long, serious interview with the Housing, Communities and Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick, Charlie Stayt made an off the cuff remark about the size of the flag behind Mr Jenrick. It was meant as a light-hearted, off the cuff comment and no offence or disrespect was intended. Naga and Charlie have been spoken to and reminded of their responsibilities, including the BBC's impartiality and social media guidelines.

BBC News, March 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who felt we gave too much coverage to Oprah Winfrey's interview with the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

Our response

The interview given by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex to Oprah Winfrey was in itself a news story because members of the Royal Family rarely speak publicly and in depth. Its content sparked wider conversations about racism, mental health, the role of the Royal Family and the media. Our coverage reflected duly impartially and accurately what the couple said and the reaction to it. The institution of the monarchy and how it develops is a matter of high public interest and we are confident our coverage was proportionate given the significance of the interview.

Eddie Nestor, Radio London, 12 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We received some complaints about Eddie Nestor's line of questioning during an interview about sexual harassment.

Our response

In the light of Sarah Everard's tragic death we have covered the issue of women's public safety across BBC Radio London all week. We have been contacted by many women who have bravely spoken out on air about the abuse and intimidation they have faced.

We have reviewed the conversation between Eddie Nestor and Jess Leigh, and agree that some of the questions were not appropriate. Eddie has since apologised on air. We have discussed the interview with Eddie to ensure that there is no reoccurrence and he is sorry for the offence caused.

Line of Duty, BBC One, 21 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We were contacted by some viewers who were unhappy with how a character with Down's syndrome was referred to by another character.

Our response

Superintendent Ted Hastings' comments were not in reference to the character Terry Boyle's disability - Ted Hastings had never met Terry Boyle. Hastings was looking only at the evidence against Boyle, namely the press cuttings of Gail Vella found in his flat. The word 'oddball' means an eccentric person and has no meaning or connotation of disability and Hastings was referring to the stalker/obsessed fan theory of Gail Vella's murder.

BBC News, 17 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who were unhappy with a report about Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs).

Our response

This report looked at how divisive LTNs have been in some communities and focussed on the nature of the debate their introduction has prompted. This is an important story. Opposition to LTNs is widespread and very vocal, and has made local authorities across the country anxious about extending existing LTNs and introducing new ones.

In this context the report included examples of the passions LTNs have provoked in order to help the audience understand how the debate has developed. The report also reflected the views of those who support LTNs and who say LTNs reduce local traffic, improve air quality and give people more choices about how they travel. Our digital coverage cited Department for Transport polling from last year that showed 78% of people said they wanted traffic reduction measures in their areas and the fact that when such measures are introduced active travel increases.

We appreciate some members of the audience would have liked more analysis of the impact of LTNs on the environment and public health. However, a certain amount of compression is necessary in the short time available in a news report. The BBC has reported on the introduction of LTNs on previous occasions and the intention here was to cover the resulting debate within local communities.

BBC News, 13 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from audience members who feel reporting on police action during the vigil for Sarah Everard was biased against the Metropolitan Police or was biased in favour of the attendees.

Our response

We don't consider that our coverage of the vigil for Sarah Everard has been biased against the Metropolitan Police. Our reporting made clear that they had advised people against attending the vigil due to Covid restrictions. However, given there was widespread and high-profile criticism of policing tactics from politicians, this aspect of the story was included in our coverage.

BBC News, March 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from audience members who feel there has been insufficient coverage of new claims made by Jennifer Arcuri about her personal relationship with Boris Johnson.

Our response

The story of Jennifer Arcuri's personal relationship with Boris Johnson has been an ongoing issue, with updates being provided over a long period of time. Stories are chosen due to their editorial merit, for instance, if it's breaking news. Please be assured that we have discussed the new claims on programmes such as The Andrew Marr Show, and we will continue to provide updates to this story when necessary.

EastEnders, BBC One, 22 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We were contacted by some viewers who felt the programme was critical of those who do not want or cannot have the Covid-19 vaccine.

Our response

EastEnders, whilst a fictional drama, has a long tradition of reflecting real life and this exchange aimed to reflect the conversations that some people in Britain are having.

BBC News Website, 16 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received complaints that our article Religious group warns against LGBT+ conversion therapy ban inappropriately gave a platform to the LGB Alliance and lacked input from LGBT+ organisations.

Our response

As we point out in the article, some LGBT+ groups have accused the government of moving too slowly to introduce a conversion therapy ban, an element of the story to which we have devoted considerable coverage:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-56284422>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-56362329>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-56353313>

Therefore it was also relevant to mention that the government has received support for its approach, in the form of a letter from the LGB Alliance.

We explain how they describe themselves as “promoting the rights of lesbians, bisexuals and gay men” and quote briefly from the letter so that readers can form their own judgements on their involvement in the story.

The Andrew Marr Show, BBC One, 28 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from viewers who claim that the Sunday Mirror's front page story on Jennifer Arcuri was not shown or discussed in the programme.

Our response

The Jennifer Arcuri story was covered during the news review and the front page of the Sunday Mirror was shown during the discussion.

The programme has covered this story previously and will continue to do so, as with all stories, on

editorial merit.

Election Scotland 2021: Leaders' Debate, BBC One Scotland, 30 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who claimed the audience and Sarah Smith were politically biased.

Our response

We select audiences for our debates which reflect widespread political views in accordance with BBC Election Guidelines. They are invited to ask questions which are relevant to the current affairs agenda. It is, of course, entirely possible members of the audience were swayed during the debate by the arguments put forward. The format - including how the audience would be selected - was clearly set out in advance and was agreed by all the participants.

Sarah Smith ensured that each of the party leaders was given a fair and appropriate amount of time to make their arguments and all parties were content with this following the programme. We completely reject any suggestion that Sarah was biased during the debate. To be clear, at no point did she display or verbalise any bias towards any individual or political party.

BBC News, 23 March 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about a statement from Centrica regarding British Gas strikes.

Our response

We clearly explained that Centrica were invited onto the programme but were told nobody was available to comment. We then read out the statement they had provided in response. This was not written by the BBC, it came directly from Centrica. We also spoke with Paul Vowles, a worker in dispute with the company, and gave him the opportunity to put the perspective of many of his colleagues across in a lengthy interview. We will continue to cover this dispute and will keep inviting Centrica onto the BBC News Channel so that we can put some of these points directly to them.

BBC News Special: Coronavirus Daily Update, BBC One & BBC News Channel, 5 April 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received some complaints about comments made by the Prime Minister about the London Mayor during a Coronavirus Government Briefing.

Our response

During an election period the BBC has specific guidelines in place to ensure we achieve due impartiality across our coverage. We are committed to ensuring our coverage is in line with our guidelines and Ofcom's guidance.

Sportsound, BBC Radio Scotland, 19 March

Summary of complaint

We received complaints regarding Michael Stewart's comments about allegations of racial abuse during the Rangers v Slavia Prague Europa League match.

Our response

Across our Sportsound programmes on Friday and Saturday (19 & 20 March) we involved a number of guests who've taken the position that, given the actions of the Slavia Prague player and the reaction of the Rangers players, the allegation of racial abuse is well-founded.

On Saturday, through Chris Iwelumo and Derek Ferguson (both Show Racism the Red Card ambassadors) and Pat Bonner (who attended the match as a UEFA observer), we offered our audience a first-hand account of what could be seen inside the stadium, the views of those who have been subject to racist abuse in football and someone trying to eradicate it. On Friday we also spoke to Livingston captain Marvin Bartley, who again called out racist action within football and on social media platforms.

Regarding Michael Stewart's contribution on the Friday night broadcast, Michael did not make any comments which could be described as racist or said to be condoning racism – it's also worth noting, for context, that the programme was broadcast before Rangers' Glen Kamara issued his own statement.

In making the point that UEFA have to reach their conclusion and that we should allow them to do so, Michael Stewart said:

"It definitely looks suspicious and your instinct is to say he's racially abused Glen Kamara...I'm 99%, I'm 99% with you guys on this but that 1% for me is what draws me back from judging and confirming 100%."

Talking about punishment, Michael added:

"...then the lip service and the token gestures, they don't suffice, they really don't and I think it gets to the stage where if a serious penalty is handed down like, for example, being suspended from European competition next season..."

On Saturday's Sportsound programme, Michael Stewart was again involved in the discussion and said:

"It's the right thing to do to try to put pressure on to UEFA to continue to do that so that it doesn't just drift away. There needs to be a thorough investigation and if it's found out to be exactly as Glen Kamara is saying it is and, to be honest, the statement he's released there with (Bongani) Zungu – I think it was Chris mentioning there – as a corroborator, witness, then I think like everyone else in the country it's very difficult to think anything other than what Glen Kamara is saying there is what's going on and Slavia's attempts to try to almost just deflect away from it, it's not great, but you've got to allow this process to take place with UEFA so that justice is done for the victims here, Glen Kamara in particular, and then the punishment needs to be comparable with what's going on with the big overall issue of racism and for me, and I said this last night, the players should be getting suspended – I'm not 100% sure about lifetime bans but at least you're talking about a year ban

where the player has time to genuinely think about his actions and re-assess and rehabilitate himself and the club should be getting banned from European competition.”

In conclusion, we are confident that our overall output on this subject has been fair, accurate and balanced, and our production teams across all of our platforms have taken great care to ensure we have appropriate guests.

BBC News, April 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from viewers who feel it's inappropriate for Prince Andrew to feature in our news coverage.

Our response

All of Prince Philip's children gave a tribute to their father following his passing, which we have covered in our news programming. We have fully reported on the allegations against Prince Andrew, and we have also made it clear that he has not been charged with any crime. We consider we have appropriately covered his comments.

Coverage of the passing of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, April 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about our coverage of the passing of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Our response

The passing of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh was a significant event which generated a lot of interest both nationally and internationally.

We acknowledge some viewers were unhappy with the level of coverage given, and impact this had on the billed TV and Radio schedules.

We do not make such changes without careful consideration and the decisions made reflect the role the BBC plays as the national broadcaster, during moments of national significance.

We are grateful for all feedback, and we always listen to the response from our audiences.

MasterChef:The Final, BBC One, 9 April 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about MasterChef: The Final being dropped from the schedule.

Our response

We acknowledge viewers were disappointed that MasterChef:The Final was dropped from the

schedule to accommodate coverage of the passing of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

We do not make such changes without careful consideration and the decisions made reflect the role the BBC plays as the national broadcaster, during moments of national significance.

The programme was rescheduled to air on 14 April at 8pm on BBC One.

BBC News Special - Death of the Duke of Edinburgh, BBC One, BBC Two and BBC News Channel, 9 April 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about a phrase used by Andrew Marr while giving his analysis of the life of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Our response

When reflecting on the life of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Andrew Marr gave his analysis of Prince Philip's role within the monarchy and relationship with the Queen. While doing this, Andrew made a remark which he accepts was poorly phrased, for which he apologises.

All That Glitters: Britain's Next Jewellery Star, 13 April 2021, BBC Two

Summary of complaint

We were contacted by some viewers who were unhappy that Katherine Ryan made a joke about the confidence displayed by straight white men.

Our response

Many viewers of this programme will be familiar with Katherine Ryan's well-established style of comedy after multiple appearances on BBC comedy programmes over the years. Comedy is one of the most subjective areas of programming and we can assure you we never set out to offend viewers with anything we show.

BBC News, April 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people unhappy with the clothing worn by some of our presenters during the period of mourning for HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Our response

Like other broadcasters, the BBC has agreed protocols in the event of a Royal death. The guidance for the death of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was that, as a mark of respect, black attire should be worn on the day of the death and the day of the funeral. However, in between those dates formal mourning clothing is not mandatory for BBC staff, not least because our news programmes are dealing with a wide range of other stories.

We trust this explains BBC policy regarding dress codes for our presenters during the period of mourning.

The funeral of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, 17 April, BBC One

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about our coverage of the funeral of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Our response

The funeral of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh was a significant event which generated a lot of interest both nationally and internationally.

We acknowledge some viewers were unhappy with the level of coverage given, and impact this had on the billed BBC One schedule.

We do not make such changes without careful consideration and the decisions made reflect the role the BBC plays as the national broadcaster, during moments of national significance.

We are grateful for all feedback, and we always listen to the response from our audiences.

BBC News, 17 April 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people unhappy that Nicholas Witchell offered analysis about the relationship between the Duke of Sussex and the Duke of Cambridge, when reporting on the funeral of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Our response

Our Royal Correspondent, Nicholas Witchell, reported in detail on the funeral of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, reflecting its historic and national significance, remembering the life and achievements of the Duke, while also examining what this moment meant for The Royal Family. The relationship between Prince Harry and Prince William has been a focus of interest in recent weeks. In this context, Nicholas offered analysis of the implications of this solemn event on The Royal Family, and what could be construed about current family relations from what was seen at the funeral. This was a legitimate, impartial and proportionate part of the coverage of this story.

BBC News, April 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received complaints about our coverage of the European Super League.

Our response

Plans for the creation of a European Super League (ESL) in football and its subsequent collapse has been a story of significance not just in the world of sport but more broadly too.

Football is the most popular spectator sport in the UK, followed closely by millions of people. For many of those fans, it is far more than just a game. They view their local football club as an important part of their civic and personal identity. The fortunes of those clubs have an impact not just on their fans' sense of wellbeing but also on their wider communities.

Football is also the biggest global spectator sport and because of that is a huge business and cultural force too. Many of the top clubs are owned by wealthy and powerful individuals and businesses. The proposed European Super League was able to secure billions of pounds in potential funding before it had even launched.

The proposed League would have had a fundamental impact on all levels of football, affecting the global game but also those smaller clubs up and down England. It would also have changed some traditional understandings in the UK about the nature of sporting competition that have stood for centuries.

That was why there was such a strong reaction to the plans not just from football authorities, players and fans but also from politicians. The issue was addressed by both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, as well as the Duke of Cambridge in his role as President of the Football Association. Following the launch of the ESL, the Government has announced a wide-ranging fan-led review into football, which could lead to significant change to the way the sport is run.

This rapidly-changing and unprecedented story played out over mere days, and we have seen from the figures and audience reaction that there was high interest in following its development.

Because of that we believe our coverage was editorially justified and we are confident it was proportionate and fair.

Scottish Government COVID Briefings, BBC Scotland, April 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received complaints from people who are unhappy that the briefings have not been broadcast in full since 30 March 2021.

Our response

Our coverage of Scottish government health briefings has been appropriate for the election period which we are currently in. Steve Carson, Director BBC Scotland, and Rhodri Talfan Davies, Director BBC Wales, wrote to political party leaders in Scotland and Wales on 11 March 2021 setting out how coronavirus briefings will be broadcast in the run-up to the forthcoming national elections. You can read the letter setting out our approach here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/statements/live-government-tv-briefings-during-national-elections-scotland-wales>

Covid briefings in the election period have been covered in this way, ensuring we meet our obligations on fairness and impartiality.

As we've done throughout the pandemic, we will continue to cover significant news stories and developments, including those arising from the briefings, for our audiences across all of our output.

BBC News, 23 April 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from viewers who feel there has been insufficient coverage of St George's Day.

Our response

Normally there would have been traditional parades and celebrations, however, with public gatherings prohibited, due to the coronavirus pandemic, this year's celebrations will have been much more subdued and limited to people's homes, therefore resulting in fewer events to cover.

However it was referenced on BBC Radio 5 Live Breakfast, and on our Cbeebies programming: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000vdr7/my-first-festivals-series-2-5-st-georges-day>

BBC Four also put together a special St George's Day music programme which is available to watch in full on BBC iPlayer: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000vbst/st-georges-day-at-the-bbc>

Inevitably there may be disagreements about the level of prominence we give to stories. We're sorry you were disappointed on this occasion.

BBC News Channel, 24 April 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about the manner in which Martine Croxall conducted her interview with Alastair Campbell.

Our response

BBC News has reported in detail on the recent allegations made about the conduct of Boris Johnson. Alastair Campbell was on the programme to discuss this story and the wider issue of integrity in politics. When questioning Mr Campbell on the implications of this story, Martine Croxall asked if this was an issue that voters cared about. She wasn't implying that this isn't an important story, but simply questioning whether it was one which resonated with the public.

As a prominent figure in British politics for many years, Mr Campbell's politics are well-known. Mr Campbell was robust in his criticism of Mr Johnson and made several allegations against the Prime Minister. Martine gave Mr Campbell ample time to make his points, but, as our audience would expect, she also scrutinised the claims he was making.

BBC News impartially, rigorously and routinely examines stories of significance related to politicians

from all parties; we apply exactly the same principles in our coverage of political stories affecting any party. We will continue to report on developments in this story.

BBC News Channel, 28 April 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who thought it was inappropriate for Laura Kuenssberg to ask a non-Covid related question at the Downing Street coronavirus briefing.

Our response

The line of questioning used by our correspondents at the Downing Street coronavirus briefings does usually focus on the most pertinent aspects of the pandemic. However, on certain occasions we have also used these briefings as an opportunity to ask government ministers questions on issues of importance unrelated to Covid. In the past, ministers have been happy to address other topics, and have given in depth responses which we believe would have been of interest to our audience.

Earlier in the day, the Electoral Commission had announced that they had launched an investigation into the funding of Boris Johnson's Downing Street flat renovations. This is a developing and significant story, with potentially serious implications. In this context, we believe it was legitimate for Laura Kuenssberg to use her question to the Health Secretary, Matt Hancock, to reference this.

A principle of journalism in the UK is that journalists can ask politicians questions on any subject; politicians are of course under no obligation to respond and can decline to answer, as was the case in this instance.

Have I Got News for You, BBC One, 30 April 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from audience members who feel the programme contained material about Snowdon/Yr Wyddfa that was offensive.

Our response

Comedy is of course a very subjective area and it is perhaps inevitable that jokes which are acceptable to some will strike others as distasteful. We do not set out to cause offence, but we realise comments made about Snowdon/Yr Wyddfa on last Friday's programme made some of our audience members unhappy. HIGNFY takes a satirical look at the latest news stories, and none of the jokes are intended to be taken seriously.

BBC News, April 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who felt we gave too much coverage to the funding of the refurbishment of Boris Johnson's flat.

Our response

Our editors use their expertise to decide what news stories we cover and how much prominence we give them. This is a serious and important story because it highlights the issue of standards in public life, and the honesty and integrity we can expect from our politicians and the Prime Minister. Holding power to account and challenging political figures in interviews is how we ensure we are reporting impartially, and this would be the same whatever political party was in government.

The Electoral Commission has now launched its own investigation, which demonstrates that there are wider concerns about the issues raised in the reporting by BBC News and other media organisations.

BBC News, May 2021**Summary of complaint**

We have received some complaints about the amount of coverage of the 2021 Elections.

Our response

The 2021 Elections earlier this month covered national polls in Scotland and Wales for the Holyrood Parliament and the Senedd, council elections across England, 39 ballots for police and crime commissioners, 13 directly elected mayors, and the London Assembly. Elections that were scheduled to take place last year were postponed because of the pandemic, so this was a bumper year. The Covid-19 restrictions also meant it took longer to count votes and our coverage was spread out over a number of days.

We don't believe our coverage has been excessive, but has instead reflected the nation's interest in this wide-ranging set of elections.

The Andrew Marr Show, BBC One, 18 April 2021**Summary of complaint**

We received complaints from people unhappy with a comment Andrew Marr made during the paper review.

Our response

Andrew Marr's off the cuff remarks were highlighting the extensive newspaper coverage of the funeral of the Duke of Edinburgh and the fact this was an important national occasion watched by millions of people. His comments were certainly not intended to cause offence but to acknowledge too that some people are not interested in Royal coverage.

Line of Duty, BBC One, 2 May 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from some viewers who were unhappy with the finale episode.

Our response

We always aim to produce the most captivating drama possible for viewers to enjoy and we're extremely proud of this series - for the recognition it received and for the support from viewers.

The series 6 finale deliberately aimed to wrongfoot viewers' expectations. Out of an audience of 16 million, we recognise that the programme makers' dramatic choices won't have met with everyone's approval.

BBC News, 21 April 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about our reporting of text messages between the Prime Minister and Sir James Dyson.

Our response

This story raised important public interest issues about the ministerial code, direct contact with the Prime Minister, and the tax implications for visiting workers.

However, as we have publicly acknowledged, we accept that Sir James Dyson is not a prominent Conservative supporter as was stated in some of our coverage. We acknowledge that the James Dyson Foundation made a charitable gift to support the Wiltshire Engineering Festival for school children, and we accept that this does not signal affiliation to any political party. We have also clarified that Sir James contacted Number 10 in response to the Prime Minister's direct request to him for assistance in relation to the urgent need for ventilators, and that he incurred costs of £20m that his company voluntarily absorbed in trying to assist in the national emergency. We acknowledge that his text messages to the Prime Minister were later sent to officials. We have apologised that these facts were not always made clear in our coverage of the story

Our full analysis of the story about government lobbying is here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-56824869>

BBC News, April and May 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who feel Laura Kuenssberg's recent reporting has been biased against Boris Johnson and the Conservative Party.

Our response

Laura Kuenssberg is a highly experienced political journalist who observes Westminster and its workings and provides updates and professional analysis of what takes place for our audiences. She does not favour any particular politician or party and is required to report with due impartiality and accuracy by the BBC's Editorial Guidelines. Laura's recent reporting on issues relating to Boris

Johnson and the Conservative Party has been fair and thorough, reflecting the positions taken on all sides.

The BBC has a comprehensive complaints process to deal with complaints about specific pieces of output and in cases where a breach of our guidelines is identified we will take action to correct any mistakes.

BBC News at One, 11 May 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about protestors in the background of a live news report.

Our response

It is common practice for BBC news to report live from Westminster, especially on big Parliamentary occasions such as the Queen's speech.

Whenever possible our News teams speak with protestors and ask them to stand back and not to interfere with our broadcasting. However, this is a public area and it is not always possible to remedy these issues quickly as was the case in this instance.

Findings of Lord Dyson's investigation, 20 May 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people unhappy with the findings of Lord Dyson's investigation into Martin Bashir's 1995 Panorama interview with Diana, Princess of Wales.

Our response

Statement from the BBC Board:

As members of the BBC Board we were, like so many others, concerned by the findings in Lord Dyson's report into the 1995 Panorama interview with Diana, Princess of Wales.

We accepted Lord Dyson's findings in full and reiterate the apology we have offered to all those affected by the failings identified. We recognise the impact that the events it describes has had on so many people, not least those whose lives were personally affected by what happened. We also acknowledge that audiences had a right to expect better from the BBC.

As a Board we believe that the BBC is a different organisation today, with different and stronger governance, as well as improved processes. Nevertheless, Lord Dyson's report speaks to historic failings of oversight and these should be reflected upon. We must not just assume that mistakes of the past cannot be repeated today - we must make sure that this is the case.

We have confidence that the processes and guidelines in today's BBC are much stronger than they were in 1995, but we know we must also do what we can to prevent such an incident happening again. As such, we think it is right that we review the effectiveness of the BBC's editorial policies and

governance in detail.

In doing this, the Board will hold the Executive to account to ensure there are strong day to day editorial processes and a clear route by which to handle any specific issues arising from Lord Dyson's report. The Board will look at the culture of the BBC as part of its remit to assess the effectiveness of policies and practice.

This work will be undertaken by a group of non-executive Board Directors led by Sir Nick Serota, the BBC's Senior Independent Director, and supported by Ian Hargreaves and Sir Robbie Gibb, non-executive members of the BBC's Editorial Guidelines and Standards Committee. It will report to the Board by September.

Their work will focus on oversight of the BBC's editorial practices and will consider in detail the robustness and independence of whistleblowing processes in editorial areas. This will include communicating with internal and external stakeholders and taking expert independent advice on the BBC's approach. Their work will moreover identify the lessons to be learned from Lord Dyson's review which may be relevant today. The BBC will, of course, also participate fully in the next formal review of BBC governance, as set out in our Royal Charter.

This has been a profoundly sobering period for us all. The Board of the BBC has absolute faith that the mission and purposes of the BBC endure. We must strive to reinforce confidence in our world-class journalism and prove that we deserve the trust of all our audiences.

This statement is also available <https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/statements/dyson-board-statement/>

BBC News, 15 May 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about a lack of coverage of the anti-lockdown Worldwide Rally for Freedom protests which took place in various parts of the UK on 15 May.

Our response

Many marches and protests take place in cities around the UK and BBC News is unfortunately unable to cover all of them. Stories are chosen due to their editorial merit. We accept that not everyone will agree with each decision.

We are committed to achieving due impartiality in all of our output. Throughout the pandemic we have featured a broad range of contributors with scientific, medical and political experience and expertise. We have examined and challenged their views on behalf of our audience. We have also covered other anti-lockdown protests in the past.

Eurovision Song Contest, BBC One, 22 May 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from viewers who feel that the Eurovision Song Contest is political and a

waste of the licence fee.

Our response

Ever since the Eurovision Song Contest first burst onto our television screens in 1956, the competition has continued to be staple springtime viewing for BBC audiences.

The accusation that the contest's voting is 'political' is nothing new. The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) is strongly committed to secure the fairness of the Eurovision Song Contest and has implemented a wide range of measures to ensure this.

Eurovision is the most watched, live non-sporting event in the world and the 2021 Contest provided BBC viewers with over eight hours of content in three shows. The Grand Final on BBC One attracted an average of 7.4 million viewers. It is extremely cost effective for a popular prime time entertainment programme.

Adrian Chiles, Radio 5 Live, 26 May 2021

Summary of complaint

We received some complaints from listeners who were unhappy with comments made by Jonathan Goldberg QC regarding the Hillsborough disaster during an interview with Adrian Chiles.

Our response

After the interview, Adrian spoke about these comments, saying:

"During the course of that interview, Jonathan Goldberg said the behaviour of some of the Liverpool fans on the day was 'perfectly appalling' and many of you have been reacting to this. I should have pulled him up as he said it, because that essentially is a myth that has been debunked."

Adrian then read out texts from listeners expressing their dissatisfaction with Jonathan Goldberg's comments. Later 5 Live programmes also made clear that Jonathan Goldberg's comments were wrong, Adrian apologised himself on air on Thursday 27 May, and we removed the interview from our online platforms.

We are sorry that this wasn't challenged at the time, and hope our subsequent actions have helped to allay any concerns about this interview.

BBC News, May and June 2021

Summary of complaint

We received some complaints from viewers who had concerns about our use of the phrase 'Indian variant' when reporting on the coronavirus pandemic.

Our response

We appreciate that there are sensitivities around the use of this description for the variant of concern first detected in India. We believe our audiences understand that viruses mutate, and we have been using this term to make clear where different variants emerged. This can be important

for understanding the story, as it may indicate, for example, where travel restrictions may apply.

Previously we have reported on the Kent or UK variant, South African variant, and Brazilian variant. Most of the British media, broadcasters and newspapers have taken a similar approach, and 'Indian variant' is the term most people search for online. Where there is space we have used longer phrases such as 'the variant first detected in India'. This is not always possible in short headlines or where time is limited.

On 31 May 2021 the World Health Organization announced that it will in future identify variants of concern by letters of the Greek alphabet. As currently most of our audience recognise the variants by the geographical reference we are continuing to use that description but also adding the new Greek letter label. We are keeping this under regular review.

BBC News, 29 May 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about a lack of coverage of the anti-lockdown/no vaccine passports protest which took place in London on 29 May.

Our response

Many marches and protests take place at the weekend in the UK and BBC News is unfortunately unable to cover all of them. We choose stories due to their editorial merit. We accept that not everyone will agree with each decision.

We are committed to achieving due impartiality in all of our output. Throughout the pandemic we have featured a broad range of contributors with scientific, medical and political experience and expertise. We have examined and challenged their views on behalf of our audience. We have also covered other anti-lockdown protests in the past.

BBC News Website, 25 May 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received complaints that the original headline for our article Manchester Arena Inquiry: Paramedic tells of bomb scene was sensationalist and unfair to the paramedic, Patrick Ennis.

Our response

A few hours after the article was first published we took the decision to amend the headline from Paramedic did not treat bomb victims to Paramedic tells of bomb scene, in recognition of the points made by readers regarding standard practice when responding to a major incident.

We also made some further amendments to the article and issued a clarification on Twitter.

Although the earliest version of the story did explain that Patrick Ennis had told the inquiry that this was because it was his job to prepare for a wider major incident response and that some people may see it as a "brutal way to approach the situation" but that was the way he had been trained to

provide an "overall grip" on a major incident, we accept that there were issues with our initial framing of his evidence.

As soon as we became aware of this we immediately took steps to address these issues and although we consider the changes we made to have resolved these complaints, we are sorry for any concerns prompted by the early versions of the story.

Euro 2020: Denmark v Finland, BBC One, 12 June 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received complaints about our coverage of Christian Eriksen's collapse during the Denmark v Finland Euro 2020 match.

Our response

Everyone at the BBC is hoping Christian Eriksen makes a full recovery. We apologise to anyone who was upset by the images broadcast. In stadium coverage is controlled by UEFA as the host broadcaster, and as soon as the match was suspended, we took our coverage off air as quickly as possible.

Holby City, BBC One, June 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people unhappy with the announcement that Holby City has been cancelled.

Our response

We are incredibly proud of Holby City and it's with great sadness that after 23 years the show will end on screen in March of next year.

We sometimes have to make difficult decisions to make room for new opportunities and, as part of the BBC's commitment to make more programmes across the UK, we have taken the difficult decision to bring the show to a close in order to reshape the BBC's drama slate to better reflect, represent and serve all parts of the country.

We would like to thank all the viewers for watching and we will be working with the programme team over the coming months to ensure that Holby goes out on a high.

BBC Training Opportunities, June 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people unhappy with the requirements set out for some training opportunities.

Our response

The BBC is a welcoming, inclusive organisation, committed to representing and reflecting all our audiences.

Like a large number of organisations in the arts, publishing and media, including a number of newspaper groups and broadcasters, we support a scheme organised by an independent organisation called Creative Access. They are a social enterprise that support talented people from groups that are under-represented in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic background and disability; or those who are facing significant barriers to entering the creative industry in the UK.

These development roles are in line with the Equality Act 2010.

BBC One schedule, 12 June 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about changes to our BBC One schedule on 12 June.

Our response

In this instance, due to Christian Eriksen's collapse during the first half, the remainder of the Denmark v Finland match was broadcast later than expected. The BBC has a commitment to cover these matches, and the scheduling of them is often out of our control.

This meant that some of our programmes, like Pointless and Casualty, aired slightly earlier than expected, and others, like The Hit List Celebrity Special and The Wall, were dropped from the schedule.

We appreciate that last minute schedule changes can be frustrating and we try to keep these to a minimum, alerting viewers of the changes using continuity announcers and on-screen graphics when possible.

Euro 2020 team, June 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received some complaints about our choice of commentators, presenters and pundits for Euro 2020.

Our response

Our football coverage is watched by a very diverse audience, each with differing views and opinions, and for that reason we aim to reflect those across our programmes.

We believe we've put together a very strong line-up of presenters, pundits, and commentators including ex-professional players/managers and football experts. Gary Lineker, Gabby Logan, Eilidh Barbour and Mark Chapman lead our coverage across TV and Radio, and are joined by a host of former England, Scotland and Wales stars, including Alan Shearer, Rio Ferdinand, Alex Scott, Micah Richards, Ashley Williams, Mark Hughes, Shelley Kerr, Frank Lampard and James McFadden.

Former European Championships winners Cesc Fabregas and Jurgen Klinsmann will also bring their international experience and insight to audiences.

We appreciate that not everyone will enjoy every one of our presenters, pundits, or commentators, but we are proud of the range of talent and expertise our Euros 2020 team bring to our coverage.

Euro 2020 commentary, June 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about our Euro 2020 coverage, from people who think our commentators or presenters are biased in favour of England.

Our response

This year, our Euro team features a line-up of England, Scotland, and Wales experts, including Alan Shearer, Rio Ferdinand, Micah Richards, Alex Scott, Jermaine Jenas, Mark Hughes, Ashley Williams, Robbie Savage, James McFadden and Shelley Kerr.

Dedicated team coverage will also be provided by home nations experts; Kelly Somers for England, Eilidh Barbour for Scotland, and Carl Roberts for Wales. We also feature international representation through Juergen Klinnsmann, Cesc Fabregas, Petr Cech and Eric Abidal.

We are proud of the expertise and experience that our team are bringing to football fans across the UK, and don't agree that our line-up shows any bias towards any one team.

Euro 2020 coverage, June 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about the amount of coverage of Euro 2020

Our response

The BBC has an obligation to cater to sports fans across the UK by providing coverage of the most notable sporting events on our channels. The UEFA Men's Euro is one of the highest-profile and biggest sporting events in the world with millions of viewers and listeners following every match. We believe there's a huge audience for this event, especially considering the impact of coronavirus on live sport which delayed this tournament, and are proud to be able to bring live matches to our audience across television, radio, and online.

Of course, we don't have control on the day and time these matches are played, and so we sometimes need to react accordingly by building our schedules around such commitments.

We appreciate that not everyone will be interested in football, and we hope our viewers are able to find something else on our schedules to enjoy.

Euro 2020 - Sweden v Ukraine, BBC One, 29 June 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints from people who felt our Euro team spent too much time talking about the England team.

Our response

During our sport commentary, it is not uncommon for commentators to discuss other teams and/or games in the tournament.

Given that earlier in the day England won their game against Germany, we don't consider it inappropriate for members of our team to spend some time talking about their performance. After reviewing the match, we feel that the time spent talking about the England team was fair and did not take away from our analysis of the Sweden v Ukraine game.

BBC News, 26 June 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about a lack of coverage of the protests which took place in London on 26 June.

Our response

BBC News reported on the protests which took place in London on 26 June on the BBC News Channel, BBC Radio and online: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-57623110>

Wimbledon 2021, 5 July, BBC One

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about the discussion of Emma Raducanu and Ajla Tomljanovic's match ending early due to Raducanu's ill health.

Our response

After the match ended early, Clare Balding, John McEnroe and Annabelle Croft discussed this development. John McEnroe offered his personal view on the pressures that tennis players face, based on both his own experience and those of current players. He was sympathetic to Emma's situation.

Wimbledon 2021 commentators, July 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about our Wimbledon 2021 commentary, punditry, and presenting team.

Our response

We are proud of the range of talent and experience that our Wimbledon team are bringing to our audience. Sue Barker, who has been part of our Wimbledon team since 1993, is joined by grand slam winners John McEnroe, Martina Navratilova, Boris Becker, Billie Jean King, Tracy Austin and Tim Henman.

Today at Wimbledon is led by Clare Balding, and our commentary and insight team is made up of experts and former players, including Andrew Castle, Sam Smith, John Lloyd, and Chanda Rubin, among others.

We appreciate our audiences will have a range of views on our commentators and presenters.

BBC News, July 2021**Summary of complaint**

We have received complaints about the amount of news coverage of Euro 2020.

Our response

Football is the UK's most popular spectator sport and is followed closely by millions of people, and this tournament has generated extremely high levels of interest from audiences across the UK.

Euro 2020 has particular significance as it is the biggest global sporting event since the start of the pandemic, having been delayed by a year, and is being used by the UK Government and others to research the practicalities of allowing spectators to attend mass events. It is also the first major men's football tournament to be staged, at least partially, in the UK since 1996.

There is also additional audience interest as this is the first time the England men's team has qualified for the final of a major tournament since 1966.

In our view it is a significant news event of considerable interest to audiences and our coverage has been proportionate.

BBC News, July 2021**Summary of complaint**

We've received complaints from audience members who feel there has been too much coverage of the Euro 2020 final.

Our response

The Euro 2020 final was the first appearance in a major international final for England's men's football team in 55 years since their win in the 1966 World Cup, and it was also England's first appearance at a European Championship final. Regardless of what the final result may have been, this was England's best ever finish in the Euros.

We appreciate that not everyone is as interested in football as others, however this was a big

national event, hosted in the UK, that attracted 31 million viewers on television, making it one of the most watched events on record.

As well as the story of the game itself on the pitch, the match was also closely followed by millions of fans and families across the UK; had a significant economic impact, in particular for the hospitality industry; and was part of the Government's Live Events programme looking at how the UK moves out of Covid restrictions. The final also saw some serious security issues at Wembley that have led to an FA investigation. After the final, some of the England players received racist abuse, raising important questions about the role of the social media companies and the wider political climate around race. Together, all of these issues were an important part of the wider news story concerning the final and the tournament as a whole and explain why we consider the level of coverage was appropriate.

Wimbledon 2021, BBC One and BBC Two

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about our Wimbledon coverage and the impact it has had on our TV schedules.

Our response

The BBC is proud to bring live coverage of global sporting events such as Wimbledon to audiences in the UK.

Due to the nature of live sport, we sometimes need to react and amend our schedules accordingly to accommodate the order of play and match durations. In situations like this, we have to make tough calls on schedule amends.

We understand that last minute changes can be frustrating, and we make every effort to signpost these changes as early as possible using on screen graphics or continuity announcements. Programmes are also available to watch, uninterrupted, shortly after broadcast on BBC iPlayer.

We hope all our viewers are able to find something in our schedules to enjoy.

BBC News Special: Dominic Cummings - The Interview, BBC Two, 20 July 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who felt we shouldn't have interviewed Dominic Cummings, and that this interview was biased against the Prime Minister.

Our response

As the Prime Minister's former Chief Adviser and someone who held a key role in the Vote Leave campaign, Dominic Cummings has been an influential figure in British politics in recent years; participated in and been privy to many significant political developments. This was Mr Cummings' first major broadcast interview, and we believe the insights he offered into the government's handling of the pandemic and other issues of importance would be of interest to our audience.

Laura Kuenssberg conducted this interview in a robust manner, repeatedly challenged Mr Cummings on the substance of the allegations he was making, and the motives behind them; asking him to address questions over his credibility and agenda. She scrutinised his past actions which have been a source of controversy, such as his breach of lockdown, his campaign tactics during the EU referendum, and the implications for democracy of the way he conducts politics.

We made clear that this was Mr Cummings' version of events, gave Downing Street a right of reply, and featured their response to claims he had made. We reflected the context in which this story occurs; the acrimonious circumstances in which he left government and the personal animosity that exists between him and some of the individuals involved.

Tokyo Olympics, 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about the amount of coverage available on the BBC for the 2020 Olympics.

Our response

As announced in February 2017, the BBC's coverage of the Olympic games has changed. The BBC will continue to bring extensive coverage from the Games including all the must see moments. A network channel alongside a live stream on BBC iPlayer will offer live coverage and highlights – so throughout each day of the Games, this global sporting event will be brought to the widest possible audience. Alongside this there will be extensive coverage on radio and digital channels providing a comprehensive mix of live and on demand action for fans. The BBC is no longer able to offer live streams of every sport during the Olympics due to the terms of the licensing arrangements laid down by the rights-holder (Discovery).

Tokyo Olympics schedule changes

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about our coverage of certain sports moving or changing during the Olympics.

Our response

As announced in February 2017, the BBC's coverage of the Olympic games has changed. The BBC continues to bring extensive coverage from the Games including all the must see moments. A network channel alongside a live stream on BBC iPlayer offers live coverage and highlights – so throughout each day of the Games, this global sporting event is brought to the widest possible audience. Alongside this there is extensive coverage on radio and digital channels providing a comprehensive mix of live and on demand action for fans. All the biggest moments, including major medal wins are available to watch again on BBC iPlayer and the BBC Sport website.

As the BBC is no longer able to offer live streams of every sport we often have to make difficult decisions about which sports to show live and which to show on delay. Priorities may shift as live

events unfold, and so, while we will do all we can to keep all viewers happy, we might need to jump in and out of sports to ensure we bring as many of the big moments as possible.

You can read more about this here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/articles/2021/olympic-games-moments>

We hope this explains why our offering is different this time around compared to previous Summer Games.

Tokyo Olympics commentary, 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about the commentary, presenting, and punditry of our Olympics 2020 coverage.

Our response

Our Olympics coverage is watched by a very diverse audience, each with differing views and opinions, and for that reason we aim to reflect those across our programmes.

We believe we've put together a very strong line-up of presenters, pundits, and commentators. Our presenting team includes Gabby Logan, Clare Balding, Jason Mohammad, and Hazel Irvine, each with a wealth of experience of covering former Olympic Games, alongside a variety of other broadcasters and former sportspeople. Our presenters are joined by an expert team of pundits and commentators, including Michael Johnson and Team GB legends Chris Hoy, Jessica Ennis-Hill, Colin Jackson, Nicola Adams, Mark Foster, Rebecca Adlington, Katherine Grainger, Kate Richardson-Walsh and many more.

We appreciate that not everyone will enjoy every one of our presenters, pundits, or commentators, but we are proud of the range of talent and expertise our Olympics 2020 team bring to our coverage.

Tokyo Olympics coverage, 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about the amount of discussion, analysis and interviews in our Olympics coverage.

Our response

Our output strikes a careful balance between live sport coverage and highlights of key moments, as well as studio discussion, interviews, and analysis, which we hope helps add context and explanation to the action. We are pleased to be able to bring live coverage and highlights programmes on a network channel, as well as a second stream on BBC iPlayer and Red Button, bringing the must-see moments of the Games to our viewers.

We appreciate that some viewers may prefer less discussion, analysis and interviews, and we are

continually feeding these comments back to our Olympics team.

BBC Newsline, BBC Northern Ireland, 11 August 2021

Summary of complaint

We received numerous complaints following a BBC Newsline report about the Chelsea vs Villarreal fixture in Belfast on 11 August.

Our response

Our report included footage of some Chelsea fans who were singing 'Sweet Caroline' in a marquee with loud/distorting musical accompaniment.

We had no reason to think that any of those featured had used sectarian or offensive language and this wasn't something that we identified during the editing of this package, or its subsequent broadcast.

We responded immediately to the concerns that had been raised by BBC Newsline viewers, taking time to review the audio track during this section of the report and seeking input from the staff involved.

We took the view that the improvised chorus of 'Sweet Caroline' was indistinct (due to the acoustic of the marquee, the volume at which the music was being played and the fact that people weren't singing in unison) but also that no sectarian or offensive language could be heard. This assessment was caveated on the basis that we couldn't be sure that none of those present had used such language and it was for this reason that we decided not to re-run this package in later bulletins.

We remain satisfied that the words that have been attributed to Chelsea fans in this report are inaudible and that their use can only be inferred, rather than proven. And whilst we have been able to confirm that one person may have used/mouthed sectarian language, we can't reasonably (or evidentially) extrapolate from that to say that anyone else was doing the same.

We take seriously the BBC's editorial requirements in relation to the avoidance of harm and offence in its output and there are no circumstances in which we would knowingly, or casually, have broadcast offensive language in this context or time slot.

If we had heard, or suspected, that our footage contained abusive comments about the Pope, (and by extension the Catholic Church and faith community), it would not have been broadcast in this way. And it's likely that it would have led to a different, or separate report.

BBC teams are drawn from, and reflect, the diversity of the communities that we serve and our programmes have consistently highlighted (and challenged) the effects of sectarianism on local society. Inclusivity and respect are fundamental to our work and we seek to maintain the highest editorial standards in everything that we do.

We regret the upset that many people have described in response to this BBC Newsline report, including the actions that may have been caught on camera.

Sickness and Lies, BBC News 5 August 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who felt the programme reinforces suspicions that some social media influencers are faking chronic illnesses.

Our response

We felt it was important to investigate this story and give a voice to the lived experiences of those who have chronic illnesses, those who have been wrongly accused of illness faking, and those who have been impacted by Munchausen Syndrome (while being clear that the latter condition is rare).

The film drew on material in the public domain and its use was in accordance with copyright law. We were absolutely not accusing any of the individuals featured in this material of faking or exaggerating their conditions.

Throughout the production of this documentary the team thought very carefully about the issues at play. The negative impact of the Illness Fakers Reddit group, and its off-shoots, and its effect on those who have chronic illness is the primary focus of the film. It does not at any point defend or endorse the Reddit group, while giving those involved a fair right of reply in accordance with the BBC's editorial guidelines.

However, some BBC News social media headlines did not reflect the full context of the documentary. They have been removed, and we would like to apologise for any offence they caused.

It was never our intention to upset the chronic illness community. We take complaints of this nature very seriously.

BBC Radio London, 2021

Summary of complaint

We have received complaints about the changes to the Radio London schedule.

Our response

All stations make changes to their schedules from time to time. Radio London's line-up hasn't changed significantly for many years and this change is part of a new line-up which also involves a change to the content of our daytime programmes Monday – Thursday.

Robert and Jo are brilliant presenters and we're delighted that they will still be an important part of Radio London.

Robert will be on air every Friday - Sunday morning with his usual mix of guests and music, and you will be able to hear Jo 10pm-1am every Monday - Thursday and from 3-6pm every Sunday afternoon.

Question of Sport, BBC One

Summary of complaint

We have received some complaints from viewers about the new format of Question of Sport.

Our response

Question of Sport has been a firm favourite of BBC One audiences for over 50 years. One of the reasons the show remains successful is because the hosts and captains change. It's always been important that Question of Sport remains an authentic sports quiz which we hope continues to entertain.

6 Music, Sept 2021

Summary of complaint

Some listeners contacted us following Shaun Keaveny's last show on the station.

Our response

As Shaun said on his final day, radio is an incredibly personal and much appreciated medium. Radio networks always evolve over time, but we understand it may be difficult for some listeners when a favourite presenter leaves and the schedule changes. Shaun is a much loved presenter on 6 Music, and we respect his decision to leave the station. We wish him the best of luck for the future of course. You might be interested to know he's covering for Liza Tarbuck again on Radio 2 this Saturday, 25th September.

Some people have also commented on the general direction of the network. We'll continue to offer the best music beyond the mainstream, championing artists and genres from around the UK and the world. Craig Charles has been a long-appreciated part of the 6 Music family, whether he's hosting his own Saturday night show or deputising for weekday presenters. So although we'll miss Shaun, we look forward to the launch of Craig's new show.

BBC News, Sept 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who felt our reporting on petrol supply problems amounted to scaremongering/led to panic buying at filling stations.

Our response

This is an important story of national significance and interest to audiences. We have reported on the advice from fuel operators and the government not to panic buy. We have stressed that there is no shortage of fuel at refineries and highlighted that the key issue is the lack of tanker drivers to deliver it to garage forecourts. We do not agree that this amounts to scaremongering.

BBC News has reported developments in this story accurately and responsibly and continues to do so as events unfold.

The Andrew Marr Show, BBC One, 3 October 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from viewers who felt the interview with Boris Johnson was aggressive, and he was interrupted too much.

Our response

There were many issues covered in the interview with the Prime Minister, such as violence against women, the HGV driver shortage and the National Insurance Tax rise, and so it was imperative for Mr Marr to keep the conversation on track in order to have time for them all. Sometimes Mr Marr repeated his question to press the Prime Minister into giving a clear answer for the audience.

As Prime Minister, Mr Johnson is no stranger to robust and challenging interviews, and we consider it is appropriate to hold the leader of the nation to account on different issues. However we're satisfied that Mr Marr questioned Mr Johnson in a fair, duly impartial and professional manner.

Today, Radio 4, 5 October 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about Nick Robinson's interview with the Prime Minister.

Our response

In a live interview presenters have to judge how far to press for direct answers before moving the interview on. There was certainly no desire to appear rude and post broadcast, and on reflection, Nick Robinson himself would have preferred to have used different language. Having said that, Nick Robinson covered a wide range of topics within a short space of time with the Prime Minister, who was able to set out his points on the issues raised.

BBC News Website, 26 October 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints that the article 'We're being pressured into sex by some trans women' is transphobic and poorly evidenced.

Our response

Thank you for getting in touch. We have received a wide range of feedback from those who find the article challenging as well as those who welcome its publication.

The article was carefully considered before publication, went through a rigorous editorial review process and fully complies with the BBC's editorial guidelines and standards.

Some argue that the article is flawed because it is "based on a survey of 80 people". The article itself states there is little research in this area; that the survey featured was conducted on social media

and is therefore self-selecting; and even the author of the survey admits it may not be a representative sample. Furthermore, there is a link to the detail of the findings which enables the reader to make up their own minds about the replies the sample generated.

But the article is more than just the survey.

The journalist's work involved months of speaking to many people about the topic and the article includes testimony from a range of different sources and provides appropriate context.

As a public service broadcaster we explore a wide range of issues and perspectives. And we believe it deals with a matter worthy of investigation. We have a strong commitment to impartiality, which means we constantly consider and evaluate which stories to cover and how. Impartiality is fundamental, and includes covering stories on any point of the spectrum of debate. And stories should be seen not just individually, but in the broader context of our wider coverage.

The piece has prompted many complaints and many appreciations and we will consider all feedback carefully.

BBC News Website, 26 October 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints that the article "We're being pressured into sex by some trans women" included an inappropriate contributor.

Our response

We have updated this article, published last week, to remove a contribution from one individual in light of comments she has published on blog posts in recent days, which we have been able to verify.

We acknowledge that an admission of inappropriate behaviour by the same contributor should have been included in the original article.

BBC News, 1 November 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from audience members who felt that our Climate Editor was disrespectful and aggressive when interviewing the Prime Minister about climate change.

Our response

As the host leader of COP26, Boris Johnson has been very vocal about the changes that need to be made to combat climate change and reduce global temperatures. This was a lively and robust interview which addressed a number of Boris Johnson's key priorities for the summit, and he was challenged on whether he had been consistent in his role in meeting these.

We consider that it was entirely appropriate for Justin to challenge the Prime Minister on these points, as there has been criticism of the failure to increase tax on short haul flights and for the

opening of a new coal mine. We're satisfied that Justin acted in a fair and professional manner.

BBC News, 12 November

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints about our news coverage of trans activism.

Our response

The BBC is committed to ongoing coverage of this subject, hearing a wide range of viewpoints across our output.

Impartiality is a core value of the BBC, something we apply to all our news coverage and we do not take an editorial position on the stories that we cover. Throughout our coverage we seek to reflect the opinions of key figures, include contributions from organisations involved in the debate, and address questions or concerns raised by members of the public.

We appreciate that the BBC plays an important role in informing and facilitating debate about subjects of public interest, some of which are divisive.

BBC News, 11 November

Summary of complaint

We received complaints about our coverage of the 'Two Minute Silence' for Remembrance Day on 11 November.

Our response

We note that some viewers were disappointed with our coverage of the 'Two Minute Silence' for Remembrance Day.

The two minute silence at 11am was observed across all BBC broadcasts. The presenter welcomed viewers joining on BBC One for the silence. This meant that we were not able to broadcast the Last Post in full on this occasion.

We always aim to be sensitive and respectful in our coverage.

The Ashes, Radio 5 live, December 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received some complaints from people who are unhappy that Michael Vaughan won't be part of our Ashes team this year.

Our response

We're in regular contact with Michael and have had positive conversations with him in recent days.

Our contributors are required to talk about relevant issues, so Michael's involvement in a story of such significance means it's not possible for him to be part of our Ashes coverage or wider cricket coverage at the moment. We're pleased with how our conversations are going and expect to work with Michael again in the future. He remains on contract to the BBC.

The Princes and the Press, BBC Two, 22 and 29 November 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from viewers who believe the programme was disrespectful to the Royal Family and therefore should not have been broadcast.

Our response

The Princes and the Press explored the relationship between the media and the monarchy, focusing on the younger royals.

It included interviews with a range of print and broadcast reporters who follow the royals closely and heard their views on the relationship the press has with the Royal Family and what influences the stories that are published.

We conducted more than 80 hours of interviews and sought views from a wide variety of contributors.

This included approaches to Buckingham Palace, Kensington Palace and Clarence House for comment or for a representative to be interviewed for this series. A joint statement issued by them was included in both programmes.

BBC News, December 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who found the video and audio recordings used in our coverage of the murder of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes upsetting, and felt these were unnecessary to include.

Our response

The murder of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes, and the abuse he was subjected to prior to his death, are crimes of imaginable horror, and we fully appreciate that many of the details related to this case would be upsetting to our audience. We took careful consideration as to the information included in our coverage, and gave warnings prior to our reports as to the distressing information they contained. We realise that this story would have particular resonance with some of our viewers which is why we signposted the BBC Action Line website in certain programmes.

The audio clips and video files included in our coverage were played during the trial as evidence; we understand that these were harrowing, but we believe they were necessary to fully and accurately reflect the circumstances involved. While we used this content in the immediate aftermath of the verdict, we would only use this in future in exceptional circumstances. The tragic nature of this case

meant that there were hundreds of other video and audio recordings played in court which were far more disturbing than anything used in our reports. As we reflected, the details heard during the trial had a profound effect on those present, including our experienced correspondents.

We were mindful at all times during our coverage of this story to report with sensitivity. We sought to offer detailed analysis of the wider implications of the issues raised by this case, and to reflect on Arthur's life, as well as the devastating details concerning his death.

BBC News, December 2021

Summary of complaint

We received complaints from people who feel there has been too much coverage of the 2020 Downing Street Christmas Party allegations and/or this is biased against the Conservative Party.

Our response

We take our responsibility to report accurately and with due impartiality very seriously and we don't agree our coverage of the Downing Street party story has been biased or disproportionate.

We believe our coverage has reflected the seriousness of these allegations and how much national interest there is in the story.

We have reported on reactions from within the Conservative Party itself, as well as from other political parties and the public, and the decision by the Metropolitan Police not to investigate.

Our coverage has made clear that the government maintains that no rules were broken.

BBC News has also reported in detail on other stories such as the resurgence of Covid in the UK with the arrival of the Omicron strain, the government's Borders Bill and the situation regarding crossings across the Channel; in foreign news we have also reported on Russia's intentions in Ukraine.

BBC News, 29 December 2021

Summary of complaint

We've received complaints from viewers who felt that Alan Dershowitz was an inappropriate commentator regarding the Ghislaine Maxwell trial.

Our response

The interview with Alan Dershowitz after the Ghislaine Maxwell verdict did not meet the BBC's editorial standards, as Mr Dershowitz was not a suitable person to interview as an impartial analyst, and we did not make the relevant background clear to our audience. We will look into how this happened.