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Interactivity allows our audiences to engage with us in many different ways, from choosing which game to watch at Wimbledon and voting for a Personality of the Year, to taking part in our competitions and contributing to radio phone-ins.

Interactivity provides choice and gives opportunities to be heard and to create content. We aim to offer it to everyone by using our different platforms in different ways, but we will not exclude viewers and listeners who do not choose to interact.

INTERACTIVITY EDITORIAL PRINCIPLES

When we offer interactivity to our audiences we should ensure that it:

- adds public value and enhances our output in a way which fits our public service remit.
- is distinctive and has a clear editorial purpose.
- matches the expectations of the likely audience.
- respects the privacy of the user and only collects personal information with their consent.
- does not act as a commercial service.
- is not designed to make a profit unless it is raising money for a BBC charitable initiative.
- does not cost a prohibitive amount to participate.

PHONE-IN PROGRAMMES

Phone-in programmes may use comments sent via text, email and the red button as well as talking to callers. The live nature of phone-ins means we should be alert to the possibility of contributors breaking the law or causing widespread offence. We should also be careful not to allow phone-ins to become a vehicle for the opinions of the presenter. The following best practice may help to minimise the risks:

- contributors to phone-ins should normally be called back and if necessary briefed before they go on air.
- content producers should read emails and texts before they are broadcast.

- presenters should be adequately briefed on BBC Editorial Guidelines and the law and be able to extricate the programme from tricky situations with speed and courtesy.
- when producing a phone-in on a difficult or controversial subject such as child abuse, the production team should be briefed on how to deal sensitively with contributors and support systems should be in place.
- when a programme is contacted unexpectedly by someone wishing to share their difficult story, we should consider the implications and refer if necessary. See Section 3 Accuracy – Anonymity.

TELEPHONE SERVICES

Telephone services are used for programme support, phone-ins, voting and interacting with game shows and competitions.

We should not use premium rate lines for help lines. Help lines should be offered as a free phone number.

We should not normally use premium rate lines for phone-ins.

We should normally ensure that premium rate calls are priced at the lowest tariff. They should not normally be used to generate a profit with the exception of BBC charity appeals

With premium rate numbers we must tell people how much calls cost. With other numbers we should try wherever possible to tell people the cost.

We must prompt children to seek permission to call from the bill payer.

Any proposal to use premium rate lines for BBC output must be referred and approved by a senior editorial figure or for Independents the commissioning editor. In addition, any proposal to use a premium rate for phone-ins must be referred to Chief Adviser Editorial Policy.

Any proposal to set up phone lines to make a profit or to give out a premium rate number on air not directly related to BBC output must be referred to Chief Adviser Editorial Policy.

We must comply with the code of practice issued by the industry regulator, the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services (ICSTIS). See Section 9 Children: Consent and Competitions below.

EVENT INFORMATION LINES

We may trail on air phone lines which provide information about events or performances being covered by BBC programmes. These lines should not normally be premium rate or a means of purchasing tickets, though they may give details of telephone sales numbers. **Any exceptions must be referred to Chief Adviser Editorial Policy.**

MOBILE DEVICES

Mobile devices are constantly evolving and with them the creative possibilities they offer. However the following editorial principles apply:

- users of all mobile networks should normally be able to take part in any BBC mobile interactivity. **Proposed exceptions must be referred to Editorial Policy.**
- we should keep the cost to the audience to the lowest tariff possible except for specific charity initiatives.
- it is unusual to offer interactivity exclusively via a mobile device, though in a few cases, depending on the demographic of the target audience, it may be appropriate, for example, a Radio One competition.
- privacy and consent issues may arise when mobile devices are used to make video or sound recordings or take pictures for BBC output. See Section 6 Privacy.
- any mobile interactivity trailed in a programme must not be designed to make a profit.

COMPETITIONS

We must not promote any competition which is not organised by or run in conjunction with the BBC.

We should ensure there is a clear editorial purpose for our competitions

whether on television, radio, mobile devices or online.

We should offer a genuine test of skill, knowledge or judgement appropriate to the audience. Skill must be required to win when premium rate lines are used for competitions, otherwise the competition may be illegal. **Any proposal to set up a competition involving premium rate lines must be referred to Programme Legal Advice.**

We should retain our editorial independence and not promote any service, product or publication. This includes avoiding competition questions that refer to any branded goods or services that are provided as prizes.

We should not require people to buy anything to enter a competition unless it is linked to a BBC charity appeal.

We should publish rules to make sure competitions are run properly, fairly and openly.

We should normally only require entrants to our competitions which require the submission of original work, for example, scripts, stories, photographs, and paintings, to grant to the BBC a licence to use their work for the purposes of the competition or related public service activities. Any exceptions should be referred to Chief Adviser Editorial Policy.

PRIZES

We should not mislead competitors about the nature of the prize.

We should normally pay for the prizes we offer in our competitions and aim to offer original, rather than expensive prizes. If there is a range of prizes, there should be a range of brands or suppliers but we should normally avoid offering prizes of branded products or services which are referred to editorially elsewhere in the programme or on the same section of the website. We should avoid shots of brand logos on air and online. We should not normally refer to brand names or give details about the manufacturer or supplier of a prize.

We should normally only accept modest donated prizes such as theatre tickets, football tickets, books, CDs or DVDs. We may accept prizes of visits to special events, including the hospitality offered at the event, but we should pay for the majority of costs for travel and accommodation.

Donations of substantial prizes are permissible only in exceptional circumstances and must not bring the BBC's editorial integrity into question. **They can only be accepted if they have been referred to and approved by a senior editorial figure or for Independents by the commissioning editor.**

We should use a wide range of donors over time, to ensure we do not appear to favour any institution or company

Programmes must never give an assurance that there will be an on air or online credit or any publicity in exchange for the donation of a competition prize.

We should not normally link to the site of a supplier or manufacturer of a prize.

We should not offer cash prizes for viewer and listener competitions.

Any proposal to offer a cash prize for a game show must be referred to and approved by the relevant Output Controller.

Cash prizes should never be offered for any children's competition.

Prizes in children's competitions should be appropriate to the age of the target audience and the competitors and should normally be modest or rely on "money can't buy" experiences. High value prizes should normally be avoided.

JOINTLY RUN COMPETITIONS

We may run competitions jointly with an appropriate organisation such as an academic or artistic institution. But we must pay a substantial part of the costs and no money from the outside organisation should flow into any programme budget

We should not normally run competitions with a commercial organisation. However, it may be possible:

- to join with a publication or other media organisation to run a competition for a co-sponsored award or an award for skills associated with broadcasting such as journalism, music or drama or other BBC initiatives.

- for local radio stations to join a regional publication to present a local award.

Any proposal to jointly run a competition or award should be referred to Editorial Policy.

BBC PUBLICATIONS

If we run competitions in association with a BBC publication the associated programme or website must not refer to the publication. The publication may print entry details for a competition but there should be no mention on air that entry forms are available either in a BBC magazine or any other publication or outlet. A BBC publication may not accept large donated prizes from a third party to award as prizes to competition winners of on air competitions.

We should only use the personal information provided with competition entries for the purpose for which it was sent. See Section 6 Privacy – Personal Information.

INTERACTIVE TV SERVICES

Interactive TV services are accessed via the red button and should not promote any specific platform.

We should ensure they are appropriate for the related television programme, observe the Watershed and provide content information if necessary.

We should aim to provide something for everyone who can use the red button.

We should make it clear to our audience where payment is required and display the total cost where practical.

Interactive TV services should not be designed to make a profit.

VOTING

Voting is a popular form of interactivity which gives audiences the chance to participate and to see a result, but votes linked to a programme or website will only represent those people who have chosen to respond and should be clearly

reported as such. They should not be reported with the editorial prominence of carefully conducted opinion polls. See Section 10 Politics and Public Policy – Polls and Surveys.

We should ensure the robustness of the voting mechanism matches the vote's editorial significance and that output which relies on voting is normally based on a vote run or directly commissioned by the BBC.

We must take particular care about the robustness and integrity of votes for competitive awards from the earliest stages in order to protect the integrity of the programmes around which they are built. A great deal may ride on the result for participants, as well as lobby or campaigning organisations, who may have a strong interest in the outcome of the result. High profile programmes built around the voting process can lead to a public award such as the Sports Personality of the Year, or an award which involves money or opportunity, such as Restoration, or a talent competition.

We should normally publish rules when running votes so that, for example, we can disqualify for cheating or fraud.

We should allow enough time in the period between closing the vote and announcing the result for the votes to arrive, be processed and checked and consider carefully whether to announce running totals before the final verified result.

GAMES

The use of games on mobile devices, online and on interactive television can be a powerful way to reach new audiences and enhance our output. However, we must ensure that the public value of using games with BBC content is clearly established and the cost of accessing them kept to a minimum. The games must not be designed to make a profit.

USER GENERATED CONTENT ONLINE

The guiding principle is that we offer shared space for our users to enjoy. Successful online communities operate by consent and encourage a genuine sense of ownership among their users. To enhance the experience of contributors who wish to publish their own content we should ensure there are clear rules and that any messages which break them, for example if they contain abusive or inappropriate material, are removed. We must also be able to implement a swift

and robust escalation strategy for example if illegal material is posted or illegal conduct is suspected.

Every online space where user generated content is published must have someone editorially responsible for that content and should have a host to provide a visible and active presence and a moderator who can remove illegal or inappropriate content.

See Section 4 Impartiality – Personal View and Authored Programmes and Websites.

User generated content is moderated in one of three ways:

1. Pre-moderation is where material cannot be accessed by visitors to the website until the moderator has seen it and decided it is suitable for posting. Sites designed to appeal to children are pre-moderated. Sites which invite users to email pictures are pre-moderated.

2. Post-moderation is where the moderator sees the material after it has been posted and decides whether it is suitable to remain. This is likely to be appropriate for sites which attract robust debate about current affairs.

3. Reactive moderation is where visitors to the website alert the moderator to an inappropriate or offensive message. It is likely to be suitable for a mature online community where few messages have to be removed. It is not suitable for a site which is likely to attract a high proportion of children.

Any proposal to reactively moderate a website with user generated content must be referred in advance to Head of Editorial Affairs, New Media & Technology, and Editorial Policy.

For advice about the degree of moderation a site should receive refer to Head of Editorial Affairs, New Media and Technology or Editorial Policy, who will liaise with Programme Legal Advice if necessary.