

## Complaints to the BBC

This fortnightly report for the BBC complaints service<sup>1</sup> shows for the periods covered:

- the number of complaints about programmes and those which received more than 100<sup>2</sup> at Stage 1 (Audience Services);
- findings of subsequent investigations made at Stage 2 (by the Executive Complaints Unit)<sup>3</sup>;
- the percentage of all complaints dealt with within the target periods for each stage.

NB: Figures include, but are not limited to, editorial complaints, and are not comparable with complaint figures published by Ofcom about other broadcasters (which are calculated on a different basis). The number of complaints received is not an indication of how serious an issue is.

### Stage 1 complaints

Between 29 March – 11 April 2021, BBC Audience Services (Stage 1) received a total of **110,053** complaints about programmes. **118,711** complaints in total were received at Stage 1.

*The higher than usual level of correspondence this fortnight was driven by reaction to the amount of coverage given to the death of the Duke of Edinburgh which accounted for 104,010 complaints during this period. At time of publication the overall total was 109,741.*

BBC programmes which received more than 100<sup>2</sup>complaints during this period:

Programme	Service	Date of Transmission	Main Issue(s)	Number of Complaints
Election Scotland 2021: Leaders' Debate	BBC One Scotland	30/03/2021	Bias against Nicola Sturgeon and the SNP and/or in favour of unionist parties.	277
BBC News Special: Coronavirus Update	BBC One	05/04/2021	Prime Minister felt to use the briefing to comment unfairly on Sadiq Khan.	190
Blue Peter	CBBC	06/04/2021	Green campaign launch felt to be biased against farming/meat industry.	156

<sup>1</sup> Full details of the service are in the [BBC Complaints Framework and Procedures](#) document.

<sup>2</sup> As defined in the [BBC Complaints Framework and Procedures](#) and regulated under [Ofcom's Broadcasting Code](#).

<sup>3</sup> Excluding investigations of online material outside Ofcom's remit.

BBC News Special: Death of the Duke of Edinburgh	BBC Television	09/04/2021	Reference to 'Indian brides' / Negative obituary of the Duke of Edinburgh	433
BBC News Special: Death of the Duke of Edinburgh	BBC One	10/04/2021	Inappropriate to commentate over the 41 gun salute for the Duke of Edinburgh	119
Breakfast	BBC One	10/04/2021	Presenters not appropriately dressed to mark the death of the Duke of Edinburgh	130

96% of all complaints dealt with between 29 March – 11 April 2021 received an initial response within the stage 1 target period of 10 working days.

Recent BBC public responses to significant complaints at Stage 1 are published at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/complaints/complaint/>

## Stage 2 complaints – Executive Complaints Unit (ECU)

The Executive Complaints Unit made 12 findings at Stage 2 between 29 March – 11 April 2021. Highlighted text links to published findings. Further information on complaints which were upheld or resolved after investigation by the ECU can be found here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/complaints/comp-reports/ecu/>

Programme	Service	Date of Transmission	Issue	Outcome
Today	Radio 4	18/11/2020	Misleading on Jeremy Corbyn's response to EHRC report	Not upheld
The Morecambe and Wise Show: The Lost Tapes	BBC Two	26/12/2020	Offensive reference to IRA	Not upheld
Sunday Morning	Radio Scotland	13/12/2020	Misuse of "Palestinian"	Not upheld
Newsnight	BBC Two	17/11/2020	Biased approach to interview on Labour anti-Semitism	Not upheld
The Nine	BBC Scotland	18/02/2021	Bias against Christian beliefs	Not upheld
Politics North	BBC One (Yorkshire and Lincolnshire)	25/10/2020	Bias in favour of facemasks	Not upheld

Emma Barnett	Radio 5 Live	17/11/2020	Understated Marie Stopes' connection with Eugenics	Not upheld
Coronavirus Update	BBC One Scotland, BBC Scotland	Various	Gives SNP a political platform	Not upheld
Ski Sunday	BBC Two	21/02/21	Inappropriate discussion of diversity x2	Not upheld
Panorama: China's Coronavirus Cover-Up	BBC One	27/07/2020	Bias against China	Not upheld
Frankie Boyle's New World Order	BBC Two	24/09/2020	Offensive language	Not upheld

75% of complaints (9 out of 12) dealt with between 29 March – 11 April 2021 received a response within the target time.