

## Complaints about commissioning - guidance

This procedure is for production companies working with BBC Content Commissioning.

If a producer is unhappy with how they or their idea has been treated, they should raise this with the relevant commissioning team in the first instance

This process should be used only where a company believes it has concerns relating to the BBC's commissioning process that have not been fully addressed by the commissioning genre.

There are three stages in the complaints procedure.

### Stage one: refer to BBC Content Complaints team

Complaints should be submitted to the Content Complaints team within four weeks following the conclusions reached by the commissioning genre.

Please contact the [Content Complaints team](#).

In order for a complaint to be accepted it must:

- Relate to a Network-commissioned (TV or radio) idea.
- Have been submitted through PiCoS or the relevant submission process.
- Relate to an issue where BBC Network commissioning (TV or radio) has fallen short of its published commitments on fair and meritocratic processes that go beyond an explanation of why an idea was not commissioned.

If the complaint does not meet these criteria the complainant will be informed in writing of the reasons why and, where relevant, referred to an alternative complaints route if one exists.

Complaints should clearly articulate:

- The specific facts and events which give rise to the complaint.
- Which of the BBC's published procedures or processes are believed to have been breached as a result of the BBC's actions (or inactions) and how.
- The specific outcome(s) being sought.

The Content Complaints team will take an impartial view of the case with reference to the BBC's published commitments on commissioning, discuss it with both the company concerned and the relevant BBC commissioning or business affairs representative, and seek a resolution.

The Content Complaints team will undertake an impartial investigation of the issues raised in the context of the BBC's published commitments on commissioning. The issues forming the basis of the complaint investigation will be agreed with the complainant in writing. The Content Complaints team will discuss the issues with all relevant BBC commissioning and/or business affairs representatives before coming to a conclusion.

This stage of the process should typically be completed within six weeks.\*

## Stage two: appeal to BBC Content Complaints Panel

Should the complainant believe they have not received a full or fair outcome from the Content Complaints team they may appeal to the Content Complaints Panel (or the Sports Complaints Panel if relevant).

The appeal should identify:

- Which aspects of the stage one findings remain in issue for the complainant and why.
- The specific outcome(s) being sought.

The panel is comprised of the following contacts:

### For Television and Radio complaints:

- Chief Content Officer, BBC Content
- Chief Operating Officer, BBC Content
- Head of Business not connected to area of complaint

### For Sport complaints:

- Director of BBC Sport or equivalent if necessary
- Chief Operating Officer, BBC Content
- Head of Business not connected to area of complaint

Appeals to the Panel should be submitted to the [Content Complaints Panel Manager Jo Korn](#) within two weeks of receipt of the response. The Content Complaints Panel Manager will consider if there are issues that have not been fully or fairly addressed at stage one, or fundamental process issues such that an appeal to the Content Complaints Panel is warranted. If this is the case, the Content Complaints Panel Manager will prepare a report for consideration by the Content Complaints Panel seeking additional information if necessary.

The Content Complaints Panel will:

- Review the report compiled by the Content Complaints Panel Manager and relevant documentation.
- At its discretion:
  - Hear evidence in person from the complainant, or
  - request more information.
- Uphold or reject the appeal.
- Write a response, through the Content Complaints Panel Manager.
- Ensure that lessons learned are fed into BBC editorial and managerial process.

This stage of the process should typically be completed within six weeks.\*

## Stage three: commissioning compliance

Should the complainant believe that the response from the Content Complaints Panel does not adequately address any issue(s) of fairness relating to BBC's commissioning system then they may appeal such issues to the Director Editorial Policy and Standards. The Director is independent of

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Content Management and is charged by the BBC Executive with investigating complaints. The Content Complaints Panel Manager will notify the Director Editorial Policy and Standards of any such appeal.

A request to appeal to the Director Editorial Policy and Standards should be made to the Content Complaints Panel Manager within two weeks of receipt of the decision of the relevant Panel.

Requests for an appeal to the Director Editorial Policy and Standards should identify:

- The basis on which the stage two findings fail to adequately address an issue(s) of fairness relating to BBC's commissioning system.
- The specific outcome(s) being sought.

Should the Director Editorial Policy and Standards believe the complaint merits further investigation they will conduct their own investigation.

This investigation will generally take six weeks.\*

\* Six weeks is typically the length of time taken for an investigation. However, please note that in specific cases an investigation may take longer, in which case the complainant will be notified of any likely delay.