

Analysis of complaints

From 1 April to 30 September 2017 the Unit reached findings on 173 complaints concerning 141 items (normally a single broadcast or webpage, but sometimes a broadcast series or a set of related webpages). Topics of complaint were as follows:

Table 1
Topics of Complaint

	<u>No of Complaints</u>	<u>No of Items</u>
Harm to individual/organisation	8	8
Infringement of privacy	1	1
Bad example (adults)	2	1
Bad example (children)	1	1
Political bias	11	11
Other bias	48	33
Factual inaccuracy	61	52
Offence to public taste	12	10
Offensive language	6	4
Offence to religious feeling	4	3
Sexual conduct	1	1
Violence	2	2
Sensitivity and portrayal	1	1
Racism		

Summaries of upheld/resolved complaints

Christmas University Challenge, BBC Two, 27 December 2016

Complaint

The answer to a question about Billy Connolly's banana boots attributed their design to the playwright John Byrne. The daughter of Edmund Smith complained that the answer was incorrect, her father having designed and made the boots in question

Outcome

Evidence from several sources, including a detailed account of the matter in Pamela Stephenson's biography of Billy Connolly, confirmed that the boots had been designed and made by Edmund Smith.

Upheld

Further action

The Executive Producer responsible for oversight of the series drew the finding to the attention of the independent production company which makes it.

Outcome

Although the reporter's general point was soundly based, the exchange gave the impression that Mr Corbyn had not referred to Brexit in the body of the speech in question. As he had done so twice, albeit briefly, this impression was inaccurate.

Further action

The need for accuracy even when making a general observation about the ambition of a political speech has been stressed to the news team.

Newsnight, BBC Two, 21 April 2017

Complaint

A viewer complained that, in a package on the French Presidential election, Evan Davis's approaches in back-to-back interviews with representatives of the Macron and le Pen campaigns was so marked as to constitute bias.

Outcome

The difference was partly accounted for by the fact that the interview with the Macron representative was recorded while news of the killing of a policeman on the Champs Elysees was breaking, while the le Pen representative was recorded the following day and after Ms le Pen herself had provoked controversy with her comments on the event. However, it was indeed marked, and Evan Davis gave the impression of endorsing Mr Macron's claim that Ms le Pen had illegitimately sought to make political capital out of the incident.

Upheld

Further action

Newsnight has been reminded of the requirements of due impartiality, so that the perception of its coverage matches its intent.

Points West, BBC One (West), 13 April 2017

Complaint

The programme included an item on the campaign in Bristol for a cannabis café. A viewer complained that it left the impression that use of cannabis was legal and included footage of cannabis use which would have facilitated imitation at a time when children would have been watching.

Outcome

The item made clear at several points that the use and cultivation of cannabis were illegal, but there was no editorial justification for the explicitness with which cannabis use was illustrated.

Partly upheld

Further action

Radio 1's Big Weekend, Radio 1, 27 May 2017

Complaint

A listener complained about the use of the ftenep tkT1 0c0/P AMCI844.02mo0 tenep t6.26 Tm5TJETe fisten

Sarah Champion quits Labour front bench over rape article, bbc.co.uk
Complaint

Further action

The programme has been removed from the available iPlayer archive.

The Nolan Show, Radio Ulster, 7, 13, 14, 16 & 19 December 2016

A Nolan Show Investigation, BBC One Northern Ireland, 15 December 2016

A Nolan Show Investigation (radio repeat), Radio Ulster, 27 December 2016

Complaint

The programmes in question were concerned with the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme, and reported the emergence of conflicting accounts of the actions taken by Northern Ireland Ministers, officials and special advisers after a serious flaw in the scheme had become apparent. On behalf of the Democratic Unionist Party, Nigel Dodds MP complained that the programmes had been in various respects inaccurate, biased and (principally in the case of the Nolan Show Investigation in both it

Further action

The programme team has been reminded of the need to reflect the world as it is without giving the impression of undue prominence.

The World at One, Radio 4, 27 March 2017

Complaint

A listener complained that Nick Bryant, in a report from Florida, had overstated the effect of global warming on sea levels.

Outcome

Nick Bryant's statements about rising sea levels were soundly-based, except for the claim that the sea level at Miami was rising at ten times the global mean. Data from the measurement stations closest to Miami show little divergence from the global mean.

Partly upheld

Further action

The World at One has been advised not to repeat scientific claims about a specific event without confirming them.

Three Palestinians killed after deadly stabbing in Jerusalem, bbc.co.uk

Complaint

Three readers of the article complained that the headline gave the misleading impression that Palestinians had been the victims of the stabbing in question.

Outcome

The ECU agreed that the headline might have given the impression that the Palestinians in question had been victims of the stabbing (whereas they were in fact the perpetrators), but considered that the change to "Israeli policewoman stabbed to death in Jerusalem" shortly after publication sufficed to resolve the issue of complaint.

Resolved

Today, Radio 4, 10 August 2017

Outcome

The Ottoman Empire did not extend to Spain. In the context of a programme dealing with the history and culture of Turkey, this was a material inaccuracy.

Upheld

Further action

The programme has been edited to remove the inaccuracy.

Tweet about Jeremy Corbyn at Glastonbury, 24 June 2017

Complaint

A listener complained that a tweet showing a picture of Je