



Note to Broadcasters

Politicians as newsreaders, interviewers or reporters

On 28 February 2025, the High Court handed down a Judgment in a Judicial Review case brought by GB News against Ofcom's decisions on two editions of *Jacob Rees-Mogg's State of the Nation*.

In March 2024 we found these programmes breached Rules 5.3 and 5.1 of the Broadcasting Code because a politician read the news, and the news was therefore not presented with due impartiality.

For the reasons set out in the Judgment, the Court quashed Ofcom's decisions in these two cases and remitted them to be reconsidered by Ofcom.

We accept the Court's guidance on this important aspect of due impartiality in broadcast news and the clarity set out in its Judgment. We will now review and consult on proposed changes to Rule 5.3 of the Broadcasting Code to restrict politicians from presenting news in any type of programme to ensure this is clear for all broadcasters.

We will carefully assess relevant cases involving this rule in line with the guidance provided by the Court and will determine whether any further regulatory action is warranted.

Interim Guidance for broadcasters

Until Ofcom publishes its consultation on proposed changes to Rule 5.3 of the Code, broadcasters who use politicians as a news presenter, reporter or interviewer should take account of the guidance set out in the Judgment and in particular the points set out below.

In summary, Rule 5.3 currently restricts politicians from acting as a newsreader, interviewer or reporter **in news programmes** unless, exceptionally, it is editorially justified. In that case, the political allegiance of that person must be made clear to the audience.

If a politician acts as a newsreader, interviewer or reporter **in any other type of programme, including current affairs programmes**, broadcasters should carefully consider the compliance of that content with Rule 5.1 of the Code, which requires that news, in whatever form, must be reported with due accuracy and presented with due impartiality.

In particular, the Judgment makes clear that whether Rule 5.1 is breached in such circumstances would depend on a full contextual analysis, in which the fact that the news had been presented by a politician would be a relevant factor, alongside the nature and content of the news and of the programme. Broadcasters should note that there is no exceptional editorial justification test in Rule 5.1.

We will consult on proposed changes to Rule 5.3 as soon as possible, so as to ensure clarity going forward for all broadcasters.

Ofcom cannot provide specific compliance advice to broadcasters, but any broadcaster who would like further information about Rules 5.1 and/or 5.3 should email:
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