

Reference: 02015818

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

16 July 2025

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about internal records related to government guidance regarding broadcasters inclusion of public health, climate and anti-extremism themes in programming.

We received this request on 18 June 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request

The following information held from 1 January 2020 to present:

1. *Any internal records, emails, or briefings discussing:*
 - *Government guidance, pressure, or influence over broadcasters regarding the inclusion of public health, climate, or anti-extremism themes in programming*
 - *Meetings or correspondence with any UK government department (including DCMS, Cabinet Office, Home Office, UKHSA) concerning narrative alignment, messaging compliance, or thematic editorial direction*
2. *Any policy reviews or ethical assessments regarding potential conflicts between regulatory independence and collaboration with government on public messaging.*

If needed, please prioritise documents from 2020–2022, and limit to UK national broadcasters.

Our response

Under Section 12 of the FOI Act Ofcom is not obliged to comply with a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the 'appropriate limit'. The appropriate limit is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 ('the Regulations'), and is, for Ofcom, £450. The Regulations provide that costs are to be estimated at a rate of £25 per person per hour, which equates to 18 hours of time. That sum is intended to cover the estimated costs involved in determining whether Ofcom holds the information requested, identifying, locating, retrieving and extracting the information from any document containing it.

Ofcom estimates that it would take at least 18 hours to search for and retrieve the information requested. The broad nature of the request would mean that every employee within the public policy team, and some employees within the broadcasting team, would have to search through all of their correspondence with government from 2020 onwards, to identify and extract any information in scope of your request. As such the cost of complying with your request will exceed the

appropriate limit. We have therefore been unable to fulfil your request taking into account Section 12 of the FOI Act.

However, it is important to state that Ofcom is an independent regulator as established in the Communications Act 2003. We act independently from Government and are accountable to Parliament.

You may wish to consider submitting a narrower, more focused request, for example by narrowing in on one of the themes present in this request and providing a narrower timeframe to search for. Should you narrow the request, we shall consider your request under the FOI Act including whether disclosure is exempt under that act in the particular circumstances.

If you have any further queries, then please send them to information.requests@ofcom.org.uk – quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).