

Editorial Guidelines
Contractual Requirements for all Staff

Current Contract Template (since September 2007)

Employment contracts for all staff involved in content production contain the following clause:

**Editorial
Guidelines**

As an employee, you contribute to our work producing compelling content and services, so it is essential that your decisions and actions are in the interests of the BBC and its values. To help you with this you agree to familiarise yourself with the BBC Editorial Guidelines. You are required as part of your duties to observe and abide by the BBC's Editorial Guidelines, as varied from time to time. Failure to work within the Editorial Guidelines is regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and could place your continued employment with the BBC at risk.

In addition, employees working within the following job families also receive the attached 'Information About You: Editorial Guidelines' form within their contract pack which they must sign and return.

- Commission and Scheduling
- Interactive
- Broadcast News Journalism
- Online
- Radio Production
- Television Production
- Policy
- Legal
- Rights & Business Affairs
- Broadcast Operations
- Any roles with the words Production, Broadcast, Edit, Researcher, Runner, Director or Presenter in the title



Information About You

Editorial Guidelines

The BBC requires you to familiarise yourself with, and work in accordance with its Editorial Guidelines and associated guidance.

The Editorial Guidelines outline the standards the BBC expects of all BBC content wherever and however it is received. They are designed for everyone who makes content for the BBC, to help them deal with difficult editorial decisions.

When you begin with us you may be required to undertake specific Editorial Policy training and you will be advised of this training requirement upon joining.

During your employment with the BBC you must seek advice on any issue about which you are uncertain or any proposal that will involve stepping outside of the Guidelines. It is your responsibility to refer upwards to your more senior manager when you are in any doubt about the right approach.

Remember, to put at risk the relationship of trust between the BBC and its audience, for example by knowingly misleading the audience, is a serious breach of conduct which could lead to the termination of your engagement.

Please visit <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/> to view the BBC Editorial Guidelines. If you require a hard copy version please contact Editorial Policy on 020 8008 1819.

It is a requirement of your role that you adhere to the BBC Editorial Guidelines, and you must confirm your agreement below. If you have any questions please contact BBC HR Direct.

*Mandatory fields are marked with an asterisk **

I have read and agree to comply with the BBC Editorial Guidelines and associated guidance, and to undertake any required training specified for my role.

Name *

Date *

Position *

Signature *

Any questions?
Contact BBC HR Direct on 0800 082 8080 or hr@bbchrdirect.co.uk

<insert employee name>
<insert staff number>

<insert date>
Version 1.0

Dear A***** (Staff Number 3*****)

The BBC Editorial Guidelines contain the standards the BBC expects of all BBC content wherever and however it is received. They are for everyone who makes content for the BBC, and are designed to help them deal with editorial decisions.

In the last few weeks, you should have received a hard copy of the new BBC Editorial Guidelines. If you haven't, you can get a copy from Editorial Policy (internal ext 02 81819 or editorial.policy.adviser@bbc.co.uk). You can also see them on the BBC Editorial Guidelines website, which also contains associated Editorial Policy guidance, to help you meet the Guidelines.

We are now asking you to agree to work to the Guidelines when making the BBC's content. Many of you will remember we asked you to do the same thing last year, and we plan to do the same every year, to emphasise the Guidelines' central importance to the BBC's standards.

What do I need to do?

- Familiarise yourself with the BBC Editorial Guidelines and how they apply to your work.
- and then**
- Click 'reply' at the top of this email, mark **X** in the box below and then send.

I agree to work to the new BBC Editorial Guidelines and associated Editorial Policy guidance, and to continue to undertake any required training specified for my role.	
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Everyone who makes the BBC's content should reply to this email. However, if you believe that your role does not involve making content and you should not, therefore, have received this e-mail then please contact your divisional HR contact to discuss this.

If you have any other queries on the process please contact HR Direct on 0800 082 8080 and select option 4.

Many thanks
BBC HR Direct

BBC HR Direct is committed to continuous improvement and we welcome your feedback on our service. If you are internal to the BBC, please click on the link below to visit our contacts page where you can access the feedback form and leave your comments <http://home.gateway.bbc.co.uk/bbcpeople/hrdirect/contacts.shtm>

Dear J**** (Staff Number 4*****)

We e-mailed you recently to ask you to familiarise yourself with the BBC's new Editorial Guidelines, and to confirm that you agree to work to the Guidelines when making content for the BBC. We haven't yet received your response.

It is an important requirement of your contract that you agree to work in accordance with the BBC Editorial Guidelines when making content for the BBC.

The Guidelines contain the standards the BBC expects of all BBC content wherever and however it is received. They are for everyone who makes content for the BBC, and are designed to help them deal with editorial decisions.

You should have received a hard copy of the new Guidelines. If you haven't, you can get a copy from Editorial Policy (internal ext 02 81819 or editorial.policy.adviser@bbc.co.uk). You can also see them on the BBC Editorial Guidelines website, which also contains associated Editorial Policy guidance, to help you meet the Guidelines.

What do I need to do?

- Read the revised BBC Editorial Guidelines and ensure that you understand the editorial standards required.
and then
- Click 'reply' at the top of this email, mark X in the box below and then send.

I agree to work to the new BBC Editorial Guidelines and associated Editorial Policy guidance, and to continue to undertake any required training specified for my role.	
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Anyone who does not reply to this email will not be allowed to continue making BBC content. However, if you believe that your role does not involve making content and you should not, therefore, have received this e-mail then please contact your divisional HR contact to discuss this. Otherwise, a response by 31st January would be appreciated.

If you have any other queries on the process please contact HR Direct on 0800 082 8080 and select option 4.

Many thanks

BBC HR Direct

BBC HR Direct is committed to continuous improvement and we welcome your feedback on our service. If you are internal to the BBC, please click on the link below to visit our contacts page where you can access the feedback form and leave your comments <http://home.gateway.bbc.co.uk/bbcpeople/hrdirect/contacts.shtml>

Dear Colleague,

The public rightly expect the highest standards and values from the BBC. That's something that most BBC programme-makers have always known. It's also something which was underlined once again by the controversy over The Russell Brand Show.

Occasionally I still hear programme-makers talking about this issue as if it was just about the process of 'compliance' and was entirely about form-filling or some other kind of bureaucratic process. It really isn't. Procedures are inevitably part of the way in which we ensure that our output meets the right standards and it's important that, when there is a mandatory procedure, everyone follows it. But editorial standards and values have always begun and ended with the judgement and common sense of our production team and editorial leaders. There are plenty of experts on hand to help - editorial policy, our programme-legal advice team, senior editorial managers to whom difficult decisions can be referred. But the primary responsibility rests with the person who makes or commissions the content. It is not some separate activity or something for someone else to worry about, but a central part of what means to be a BBC programme-maker. It is about your values, your professionalism and your conviction about the BBC and it requires imagination and lateral thinking as well as diligence.

It also requires knowledge - and specifically a thorough and up-to-date grounding in the BBC's Editorial Guidelines. Everyone who makes content for the BBC is already required in their contract to be familiar with and to follow the Guidelines, and for some time we have asked new joiners to acknowledge this requirement explicitly. As we start 2009, we are taking a further step and asking everyone who makes content at the BBC to register their acknowledgement of this important obligation and we will ask you to do this once a year from now on.

All programme makers should have a hard copy of the Editorial Guidelines (you can get them from Editorial Policy) and you can find the current edition online at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/>. Don't forget the Editorial Policy Guidance which you will find there too: it supplements and expands upon the Editorial Guidelines and must also be adhered to.

Please complete the form included with this letter. But please don't stop there. Read the Guidelines and the Guidance: they are a useful, clear, practical compendium of editorial wisdom built up by thousands of your colleagues over the years. Far from adding a new burden to an already busy working life, they help build confidence in editorial judgement-calls, help us all to make decisions quicker, should reduce any anxiety you feel about the whole topic of 'compliance', and will actually help you take more genuine creative risks.

All the best,

Mark Thompson.