From 1 April to 30 September 2019 the Unit reached findings on 383 complaints concerning 269 items (normally a single broadcast or webpage, but sometimes a

It has been stressed to the presenter that the way questions are framed should make it clear to the audience that this is for the proper purpose of impartial challenge and that a personal view is not being expressed.

A representative of the Good Thinking Society complained that the item gave the misleading impression that ear-candling was a safe and effective alternative to syringing.

There is no evidence that ear-candling is an effective treatment for any condition, and the website version of the item (though not its Facebook iteration) was accompanied by text stating the NHS view was that the practice was not supported by evidence and that sinus/ ear problems should be referred to a doctor or pharmacist. However, this was entirely offset by comments from the presenter which recommended the treatment and endorsed claims for its effects.

The Head of Editorial Standards, Scotland, has discussed with the team the importance of accuracy in items which feature or make reference to practices which might be harmful.

A viewer complained about the occurrence of the f-word in the coverage of this event.

meteorologists involved in D Day planning when, despite having rehearsed a revised version, the actor in question had reverted to the original script. While the ECU accepted that the circumstances were such that it would have been difficult to include a timely apology in terms compatible with the character of the event, the inadvertent use of the word in question in this daytime broadcast was certainly a breach of editorial standards which, in the absence of an apology, remained unresolved.

The production team has been reminded of the need to ensure an on-air apology is made, even if belatedly, where there has been an unforeseen use of potentially offensive language in a live broadcast.

The article included the case of an ethnic minority academic said to have been "on a grade just below professor when she discovered she was being paid about £8,000 less than white male lecturers on lower grades in the same department". A reader questioned the accuracy of this statement, on the basis that the salary grade structure could not accommodate a disparity of that magnitude.

The inaccuracy lay in the reference to *"lower grades"*; in fact the academic in question had been on the same grade as the white male lecturers, and the wording complained of gave a misleading impression of the nature of the pay disparity.

The article has been corrected and teams have been reminded of the importance of

you could get some battery acid...that's just me. I'm not going to do it, it's purely a fantasy but I think milkshakes are pathetic. I honestly do – sorry". 20 listeners complained that the joke was offensive and/ or likely to incite violence.

message in favour of more civility in political discourse, the ECU did not consider the joke likely to incite violence, but accepted that, against the background of a significant problem with acid attacks, it was capable of causing offence beyond what was editorially justified, and should have been edited out before transmission.

The adjudicatio

The series features saleable items made from salvaged waste. In this edition, parts from a 1930s brush-cutter were used to make a desk lamp which the commentary said had been "tested to comply with all UK safety standards". On the basis of previous correspondence with the BBC, a viewer complained that it had not been tested to the appropriate standard, and that the item might have the effect of encouraging dangerous imitation.

In view of the rarity of the salvaged item in this instance, the ECU saw little likelihood of imitation, but accepted that the claim of compliance with safety standards was inaccurate. It had been made on the understanding that the lamp could be classed and tested as second-hand, but the Chartered Trading Standards Institute does not regard re-purposed items incorporating an electrical element as second-hand for regulatory purposes, and different tests are required.

All electrical items made on the programme will be tested to ensure they comply with the relevant standards.

This programme, offering "everyday solutions to the climate crisis" included the advice that putting denim jeans in the deep freeze would disinfect them while economising on the energy and water used in washing them. A listener complained that this advice was misleading.

The disinfectant effect of freezing on the microbes most likely to be found in jeans is slight, and the advice was misleading.

The programme was edited and replaced on BBC Sounds and will not be rebroadcast in its original form.

The programme included a report on special educational needs provision. A viewer complained that it did not make clear that different considerations applied in Scotland.

The report was based on the results of Freedom of Information requests to English local

choice of photograph w

way or the other. The source for the statement that she had been sanctioned was an authoritative one and, although she latter provided a letter from the Labour Party as evidence that it was incorrect, the terms of the letter seemed to the ECU to warrant the use of the term "sanctioned".

The Editor of re-emphasised to the programme team the requirement to provide a fair opportunity to respond to allegations.

The programme included

April 2019 to levy a charge on loans to employees now deemed to be disguised remuneration. A listener complained that it was one-sided.

Though the item reflected the fact that the provisi

participated. Five listeners objected to the fact that an invitation to another speaker, Nicola Williams, had been withdrawn after Dr McKinnon had made that a condition of her own participation, and complained that the resulting discussion was one-sided.

comment at the time of his signing. In that context, the description of him as the first "'high-profile' Catholic" player sufficed as a correction of the original error.

In response to the claim of Chris Williams MP (in an interview with him earlier that day) never to have seen anti-Semitism in the Labour Party, Nick Robinson tweeted "Did you forget you'd agreed to screen a film in Parliament by a woman suspended from Labour for saying the Jews controlled the slave trade?". A reader complained that this was inaccurate, in that the woman in question (Jackie Walker) had been the subject, not the maker, of the film, and that the phrase "the Jews controlled the slave trade" misrepresented what she had in fact said.

Ms Walker was the subject, not the maker of the film, but this element of inaccuracy was immaterial to an understanding of the issue raised by the tweet. But her original words (in response to a friend who had raised the question of "the debt" owed to the Jews because of the Holocaust) were "Oh yes – and I hope you feel the same towards the African holocaust? My ancestors were involved in both – on all sides as I'm sure you know, millions more Africans were killed in the African holocaust and their oppression continues today on a global scale in a way it doesn't for Jews... and many Jews (my ancestors too) were the chief financiers of the sugar and slave trade which is of course why there were so many early synagogues in the Caribbean. So who are victims and what does it mean? We are victims and perpetrators to some extent through choice. And having been a victim does not give you a right to be a perpetrator". Even allowing for the element of compression

Nick Robinson tweeted that he accepted the BBC Complaints process finding that his paraphrase gave "an insufficiently accurate impression".

The programme included an interview about the political situation in Spain with Irene Lozano, the Secretary of State for Global Spain. A listener complained that terms used by both Ms Lozano and the interviewer had given the false impression that the leaders of the Catalan independence movement had been convicted of crimes.

As was made clear in the interview, the trial of Catalan leaders had not yet begun. However, the use of terms such as "these crimes that they committed" by the interviewer and "political leaders that have committed criminal offenses" by Ms Lozano conveyed the false impression that their guilt had already been established.

The presenter has been reminded of the importance of precise language, especially when legal proceedings are imminent.

The programme included a discussion on the involvement of girls in gang crime. A viewer complained that one of the participants, Claudia Webbe, was not identified as a senior member of the Labour Party.

Ms Webbe was introduced as the former Chair of Operation Trident, set up to tackle gun and gang crime in London, which established her qualifications as a participant and would have sufficed if the discussion had kept clear of party political issues. However, Ms We *"government-let austerity since 2010"* as a salient component of the problem took it into an area where the information that she was a member of the

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