

**Updated 6 October 2023*

Quarterly Report of Appeals, Complaints and Advice

The BBFC is the regulator of commercial and internet content delivered via the mobile networks of EE, O2, Three and Vodafone.

In the interest of transparency, the BBFC publishes all of its adjudications in relation to cases reported to it of purported underblocking or overblocking, along with requests for advice on whether particular content should go behind parental controls or adult filters.

We keep this list updated as and when new cases are reported to us and publish updates every three months.

In all cases, the BBFC conveys its adjudication to (i) the complainant, appellant or person or body seeking advice; (ii) Mobile UK; and (iii) the relevant mobile network operator(s).

The adjudication that a website contains no material that we would classify 18 does not necessarily mean that we believe it is suitable for younger children.

In the following cases, the adjudications represent an assessment of the content according to the dates listed below. Any subsequent changes to content have therefore not been viewed by the BBFC, although we reserve the right to change our adjudication should altered content be brought to our attention subsequently.

October 2022

4th October 2022

Website

<https://www.safetest4.co.uk/>

Issue

A mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18, following a complaint from a member of the public that it had been placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

The URL led to a retail site which sold kits for testing the content of illegal drugs such as cocaine, heroin and LSD. The kit tells the user whether certain chemicals are present in the drug. The test kits allow users to determine the relative safety of potentially life-threatening drugs. The site is not instructional on the misuse of drugs, and nor does it promote, glamourise or encourage that misuse. On the date above, we found no material which we would consider 18 or refuse to classify.

November 2022

22nd November 2022

Website

www.rt.com

Issue

The BBFC originally adjudicated on the website in May 2022. Following this adjudication, a mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for further advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18.

Adjudication

The BBFC provided a further adjudication on a revised version of the website.

As previously, we noted that the URL led to a Russian news site with articles, features and opinion pieces on current affairs, some of which contained opinions that certain readers would find offensive. The comment section on numerous articles still contained extensive examples of discriminatory language and attitudes, including homophobia, racism, sexism and transphobia. As such, our position on the site did not change and we did not consider it suitable for people under the age of 18..

December 2022

12 December 2022

Website

<http://vtmarkets.com>

Issue

A representative of the website contacted the BBFC directly to complain that the site was placed behind adult filters, despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the URL led to a site which acted as a stockbroker making trades on multiple financial assets across different global markets. The site claimed to be regulated by authorities in Australia and South Africa. It included a description of its services, customer FAQs and an emphasis on the rewards associated with referral of new clients. On the date above, we found no material which we would consider 18 or refuse to classify.

Website

<http://accesscbd.uk>

Issue

A mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18.

Adjudication

We noted that the website retailed a range of CBD based products. The website reinforced in text that none of its products contained any psychoactive substances and that all of its products contained less than 0.2% THC. The site was at pains to explain the laws relating to CBD products to its customers, and there was broad discussion of the lack of proven efficacy of CBD products as medical treatments. Rather, the FAQs clearly assert that its products are marketed as food supplements. We found no material which we would consider 18 or refuse to classify.

Website

<http://elixinol.co.uk>

Issue

A mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18.

Adjudication

We noted that the website retailed a range of CBD based products. The website reinforced in text that none of its products contained any psychoactive substances and that all of its products contained less than 0.2% THC. There were depictions of marijuana plants, but nothing related to illegal misuse. Disclaimers asserted that the products should not be used to 'treat, cure or prevent' disease. On the date above, we found no material which we would consider 18 or refuse to classify.

Website

<http://canabidol.com>

Issue

A mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18.

Adjudication

We noted that the website retailed a range of CBD based products. The product was marketed as a 'supplement' and it is repeatedly said not to have an illegal THC strength. There were references to the lack of medical evidence supporting the use of CBD in place of medicine, and customers were warned that the products should not be used in conjunction with medicine without consulting a doctor. A disclaimer stated that the products should not be used to 'treat, cure or prevent' disease. Consequently, we found no material that we would classify 18 or refuse to classify. We found no material which we would consider 18 or refuse to classify.

*Website

<https://www.conservativewoman.co.uk/>

Issue

In May 2022, a mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18.

Adjudication

We noted that the URL led to a site which publishes news and commentary on current affairs. While we did not find any content within the main pages of the website that we would consider unsuitable for people under the age of 18, we found material across the comments section of the website that reflected discriminatory attitudes towards particular groups, including Muslims, Black people, and women, as well as comments advocating white supremacy and denying the Holocaust. Accordingly, we advised the operator that the website should be considered suitable for adults only.

Following the initial adjudication, we entered into a dialogue with the website owner with a view to finding a solution that would enable the mobile operators to lift the filters they had applied to the website. As an interim measure, in September 2022, we advised the mobile operators that only the comments section of the website should be filtered.

The website owner ultimately introduced an enhanced moderation process and removed the comments that we considered unsuitable for under 18s. We consequently notified the mobile operators in December 2022 that they should remove any filters they were applying to the comments section of the website.

BBFC

31st December 2022