



Ex-Ofcom chair defends GB News giving voice to ‘white majority’

Description

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Lord Michael Grade, Chair of Ofcom speaks during a speech at the Queen Elizabeth II Centre on February 24, 2023.

Michael Grade, the former chairperson at Ofcom, has [defended](#) the media watchdog’s (lack of) handling of *GB News* under his leadership.

He lionised the far-right propaganda outlet as ‘giving voice to a strong body of opinion in this country which has been ignored for years’.

As part of an interview with the *Guardian*, Grade tried to argue that critics of *GB News* feared contrasting viewpoints.

He said:

The fact is, what people don’t like is the fact that there is a television station giving voice to a strong body of opinion in this country which has been ignored for years. They just don’t like the idea that there’s any voice or any agenda, news agenda, which is different from the kind of liberal, Islington consensus.

GB News failed impartiality rules under Grade

Former prime minister, Boris Johnson, appointed Grade, a Tory life peer, to the Ofcom role in May 2022. Grade had previously [held high-ranking roles](#) across the *BBC*, *ITV* and *Channel 4*.

However, Grade’s tenure at the head of the UK’s media regulator has been dogged by accusations of his utter failure to apply impartiality rules to *GB News*.

The [channel frequently platforms](#) (and pays) right-wing politicians to deliver segments which cross the line between news and discussion.

The receipts on GB News

GB News launched [in June 2021](#). From the outset, it showed clear right-wing bias, with many members of the public arguing that it [violates the laws of due impartiality](#) in UK broadcasting.

Broadcast news has a massive power to shape public opinion. As such, [broadcasting regulations require](#) that it shows no favour to one political side over another. Alongside this, the news must also maintain public trust by reporting with due accuracy.

However, in March 2026, a *New World* investigation [found](#):

GB News routinely [you might almost say systematically](#) disregards these requirements. Asked to rate the programmes on a scale of 0-5 (0 being not at all compliant with Ofcom's [Broadcasting Code](#) and 5 being wholly compliant), the overall score from our reviewers was just 1.5. Each review is made up with detailed reasoning.

The channel's reporting on the [white riots](#) in [Belfast](#) is a typical of GB News's disregard for due accuracy in action.

Far-right agitators targeted the [homes and businesses of people of colour](#) setting fire to vehicles and houses. However, GB News host, [Bev Turner](#) claimed this was fiction, despite people being charged for rioting.

There was no riot. There was no riot. There was no riot. There is not a house that has been burnt down. There are no riots. The police aren't even reporting riots.

What is [news](#) anyway?

However, when the *Guardian* asked about his [kid-glove treatment](#) of GB News, Grade argued that the channel *wasn't a news channel*.

Just because it's called GB News doesn't mean that all their programmes are news. They're discussion programmes, they're political chat shows. We could argue this forever, but we're dancing on the head of a pin. It's irrelevant really. The real point is you don't get any politicians delivering the news.

Ofcom's [own code](#) states that its approach to due impartiality may vary according to [the extent to which the content and approach is signalled to the audience](#).

However, apparently putting [news](#) in the name of the channel doesn't qualify as signalling a news channel.

As an example of Ofcom's arbitrary decision making in action, we might look at its treatment of the *GB News* show, [Saturday Morning with Esther and Phil](#) in 2023. It was presented by sitting Tory MPs, Esther McVey and Philip Davies.

The [pair interviewed](#) Jeremy Hunt, then Conservative chancellor, about the Spring Budget, and economic and fiscal policies.

However, the regulator only scolded the far-right media outlet over it not airing differing views. Ofcom failed to rule against the fact that two sitting [Conservative](#) MPs were posing as journalists interviewing a sitting Conservative minister.

Grade: We must "give the white majority a voice"

When Grade's chat with the *Guardian* explored the topic of ethnicity, Grade's mask truly fell and shattered.

The ex-Ofcom chief cited a recent interview with Tony Sewell. Sewell, a fellow Tory peer, [penned a widely-criticised](#) government report that claimed the UK was not an institutionally racist country.

Grade [told the Guardian](#):

If you want integration, which we all do, and we want everybody to live happily ever after, irrespective of their background or their race or religion or anything, [Sewell] said that you have to give the white majority a voice in that debate.

I hung on to that and I thought: "That is so brilliant. That's why Reform is doing well in the polls." Of course it's right.

He went on to add that the white majority "certainly hasn't been heard in recent years on channels like the *BBC*. Of course, it's a specific subset of the "white majority" that Grade is actually talking about "white supremacists and ethnonationalists who flock to vote for Reform.

Even under that definition, the [BBC](#) has hardly been [lacking in bias](#) favouring the [far-right party](#). But, reading Grade's "voice of the white majority" as meaning "racist zealots" makes far more sense of *GB News*'s segments.

For example:

- The [channel platformed](#) Thomas Corbett-Dillon claiming that a genocide is being waged against white people in the UK.
- It completely failed to challenge [Donald Trump in an interview last year](#). The US dictator made a series of wildly bigoted claims about Islam, immigration and the climate crisis. Grade merely said it "wasn't journalism's finest hour".
- Presenter Carole Malone [falsely claimed](#) that Doria Ragland, [Meghan Markle's](#) mother, had spent time in jail.

- It [published an article](#) by ex-presenter Colin Brazier complaining that there aren't enough white people in adverts.

Well, so long as you *look* impartial!

Grade finished his utter car crash of an interview [by stating](#):

Impartiality is a state of grace to which you aspire. And as long as you're aspiring and seem to be trying to be impartial, that's fine. One person's impartiality is another person's bias.

Oh, well that's fine then, so long as we *seem* to be trying to be impartial, whatever that means.

Meanwhile, Reform UK clearly recognises that *GB News* is its propaganda arm. [Only last month](#) the party told its councillors to [ignore local journalists](#) ordering them to speak only to *GB News*.

Remind us again what *impartiality* actually looks like there, Grade?

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