

Get The Trolls Out

Dear Editors Code of Practice Committee,

I am responding to your public consultation on the Editors Code of Practice.

I would like to draw attention to Clause 12 of your code, as it is no longer fit for purpose. It currently punishes publications that incite hatred against individuals, but not against groups.

While a free press should be allowed to criticise groups, this policy crosses a line when criticism becomes discrimination. At this point, attacks on marginalised communities are commonplace in the British press. When the public complains to IPSO, their complaints are overwhelmingly rejected on the basis that it is not against IPSO policy to criticise groups.

In practice, this fosters hatred, and legitimises discrimination.

As a result, racism, anti-religious hatred, misogyny, homophobia and transphobia are regularly found in the UK media. In its current state, Clause 12 often protects those who are spreading such views, allowing them to publish without consequence. The Code needs to hold our newspapers to a higher professional standard, which should begin by amending Clause 12 to include groups, as well as individuals.

I am looking forward to seeing how the Editors Code of Practice Committee will respond to this request and I hope to see a concrete change in policy that advances our quality of journalism by protecting all groups from discrimination.

Kind regards,