Racist language by its very nature is offensive, derogatory, and hurtful. Its effect will depend on the choice of words, the speaker and the context. Different words cause different degrees of offence in different communities as well as in different parts of the world.

As the latest Ofcom research has shown [1], discriminatory language continues to be of concern to audiences:
https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0021/225336/offensive-language-summary-report.pdf .

Racist language, like other strong language, is most likely to cause offence when used gratuitously, in a discriminatory way, and without clear editorial purpose.

The use of racist language must be editorially justified, and signposted, to ensure it meets audience expectations, wherever it appears. Meeting audience expectations does not preclude causing offence, but there must be exceptional editorial reasons to use the strongest racist terms.

Although this guidance is about racist language, the same principles apply to racist gestures.

An updated list of racist language in the UK is available from the 2021 Ofcom research at:
https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/225335/offensive-language-quick-reference-guide.pdf#page=16 [2]

The BBC's Editorial Guidelines give some examples of the "strongest" language, but Ofcom's research sets out a fuller list including racist words perceived as highly offensive and requiring clear and strong contextual justification. The 2021 list no longer differentiates between "strong" and "strongest" words so for the purpose of this guidance, all words classified as "strong" will be covered by this guidance.

Under this updated guidance, all words in Ofcom's "strong" category for racist language will be _____ (see below) to the relevant Divisional Director or their named delegate.

The words which require a mandatory reference are: ching chong; chinky; coon; darky; gippo; golliwog; gol ly; half -caste; jungle bunny; kike; negro; nigger; nig - nog; paki; pikey; raghead; sambo; spade; spic; un cle tom; wog; yid.

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Ofcom's lates t research states that   *"Audiences told us that, although they want broadcasters to give careful consideration to when and how offensive language is used on TV and radio, they stressed the important role it can play in broadcasting"*.

When it comes to i ssues around race, the report states   *"Viewers and listeners said they expect broadcasters to take the utmost care to carefully contextualise the strongest forms of discriminatory language to ensure that audiences are protected"*.

At the BBC, the guidance since 2020 ha s been tha t using the strong est racist langua ge even where the intention might be to expose or condemn discrimination is not in itself sufficient edito rial justification. The guidance continu es to be that justification for the use of stron   g[3] racist language r equi res th at ther e must be a specific edit orial reason why it should be used, for in stance, where it might make a difference to audience und   erstanding, or for particular reasons of clarity, or where a contributor is talking about their own personal experience , or where a term might be seen to   have been "reclaimed", or in history

When re-using archive content – written and broadcast – reflecting standards of the day is no longer, in itself, sufficient justification. Editorial judgement needs to be applied, including looking at purpose and context – and if the language is deemed to be gratuitous, it should be removed.

The Editorial Guidelines already require that use of the strongest language must be referred to and approved by the channel controller/editor (5.3.23). This same requirement applies to racist language on TV, Radio and Online/Digital. The

The Ofcom Broadcasting Code does not permit certain offensive swear words and their derivatives to be used before the TV watershed, 9pm. Ofcom has not placed the same restriction on the use of strong racist language though it makes clear it is unacceptable to many without clear and strong contextual justification.

The advice for this guidance remains that the use of strong racist language should never be gratuitous or used simply for effect. It requires serious editorial purpose.

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The watershed does not exist for Radio and Online/Digital. In Radio, considerations such as the likely audience, the remit and audience expectations of the station, the type of output played, and the person presenting the programme are all key considerations when deciding whether to play such language. For online/digital it 0 Td [(r)--9 (o)-2 tifica

bleeped/dipped   word s are not made obvious by visible mouth mo vements or b y
captions only partly redacted.

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As with all strong lan guage it is important   that presenter s/r eporters apologi se