

From: [bbc\\_complaints\\_website@bbc.co.uk](mailto:bbc_complaints_website@bbc.co.uk)  
Date: Fri 18/04/2014 8:17  
To: [debbiekennett@aol.com](mailto:debbiekennett@aol.com)  
Subject: BBC Complaints - Case number CAS-2661021-0QVP81

Dear Mrs Kennett

Reference CAS-2661021-0QVP81

Thank you for your correspondence regarding The Mark Forrest Show broadcast on BBC Local Radio on 6 March. I am sorry to learn that you feel our previous response did not fully answer your concerns.

As previously explained, the programme was not at the time aware of, for example, the UCL's deep misgivings about what it calls the 'pseudoscience' of BritainsDNA.

The programme team makes its own independent editorial decisions on who should be invited onto its programme and does not agree with your description of the interview as "a PR stunt". But it does accept that, had it been aware of the concerns raised over Mr Moffat's claims, it would have approached the interview differently – either by putting the scientific arguments you raise or, as you suggest, by choosing an additional guest for the feature.

It is not, of course, the case that each and every interview needs to be balanced by an interviewee on each side of the argument – but the BBC should show due impartiality over time. Certainly, the programme editor would be interested in re-visiting the issue of DNA testing at some point in the future and examining the science in greater detail as it arises in the course of the programme's agenda.

Turning to your question about how the team had become aware of Mr Moffat, you should know that the BBC approached him, rather than the other way round. A member of the team heard an interview with him on BBC Radio York last year. They felt that he was an engaging speaker on the subject of DNA and noted that he might be an interesting guest for the programme.

I can confirm that the programme was aware that BritainsDNA is a commercial enterprise. While Mr Moffat did not talk about it 'being massively subsidised' (as he did on Today), in retrospect it could have perhaps have spelled this out overtly given the background you outline. It was of course unaware of the particular sensitivities of this matter as the ECU's finding was not published until 15 April. I should stress, however, that the ECU finding on Today was based on a different form of words and this aspect was not a major focus of the Mark Forrest interview.

Finally, I can assure you that the programme team have been made aware of the points you have raised and that the ECU's findings on Today have been circulated more widely across the BBC and externally.

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/helpandfeedback/corrections\\_clarifications/index.html](http://www.bbc.co.uk/helpandfeedback/corrections_clarifications/index.html)

We do hope you feel that we have addressed the points you have raised but if you would like to take your complaint further, you can contact Stage 2 of the complaints process, the BBC's Editorial Complaints Unit, within 20 working days, and they will carry out an independent investigation. You can email them at: [ecu@bbc.co.uk](mailto:ecu@bbc.co.uk), or alternatively write to

them at the following address:

Editorial Complaints Unit  
Media Centre  
MC3 D3  
201 Wood Lane  
London  
W12 7TP

Should you choose to escalate your complaint we would ask that you include the reference number provided above in your correspondence.

With kind regards

Paul Moseley  
Senior Complaints Adviser  
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