

Webinar

LHF: The Basics

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CAP 

What we'll cover today



- 1 What the new rules say
- 2 The ASA and CAP's role
- 3 What advertisers need to consider
- 4 Clearcast's perspective
- 5 Q&A



The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)



- The UK's independent ad regulator
- Ensuring ads are legal, decent, honest & truthful
- Deliver fair competition and protect consumers
- ASA appointed by Ofcom



LHF Rules

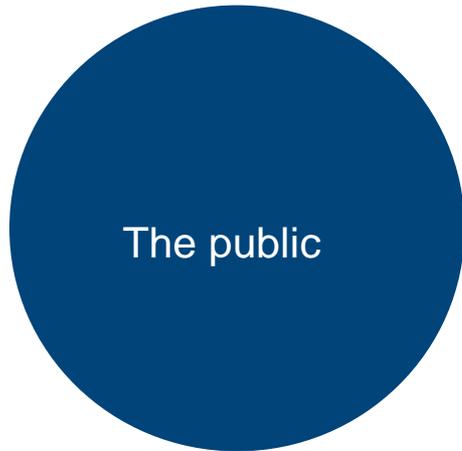
What do they say?



- Government's aim: to reduce exposure & tackle child obesity
- From 5 January, a major shift in regulation
- Prohibit ads for identifiable LHF
 - On Ofcom-licensed TV (5.30am-9pm)
 - On Ofcom-regulated ODPS (5.30am-9pm)
 - Online, at any time, if paid for ad to be placed



Where are complaints likely to come from



Substance, not volume, is important



How the ASA processes complaints



- Structured and evidenced-based process
- Initial assessment
- Case opening
- Assessing advertiser's response
- Ruling



Reversing the burden of proof



Tell us why your ad is compliant



Compliance checks before you publish



Best placed to explain content of ad and your view of its impact on the audience



Fills in knowledge gaps



Expectations on advertisers



When we reverse burden of proof, we expect:

- Primary regard to the rules and the guidance
- As relevant, why an ad is not in scope
- Why an ad is not identifiable



How rulings will develop clarity



The rules and guidance are tools for compliance.

The rulings will:

- Clarify how the ASA interprets key concepts
- Highlight compliant brand advertising and ads for specific identifiable products
- Practical examples



Proactive regulation & Active Ad Monitoring



- Using Data Science to identify potential non-compliance
- Early days: limited, targeted and proportionate
- Focus on probable clear breaches



Rules and guidance

The basics



The Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP)



- CAP: the “self” in advertising self-regulation
- UK Ad Codes set standards for responsible ads
- Rules & guidance benefit from public consultation
- Advising to practitioners on compliance



When an ad is in scope



For an ad to be restricted it must satisfy the following

- 1 An ad must be for an “identifiable” LHF product
- 2 It must “depict” a specific LHF product
- 3 Placed in a restricted medium
- 4 Non- SME advertiser



The “identifiability” test: where it fits in



Whether persons in the UK could reasonably be expected to identify the ad as being for that specific less healthy product

Can an average consumer reasonably be expected to identify the ad as being for a specific LHF product?

Holistic, case-by-case assessment



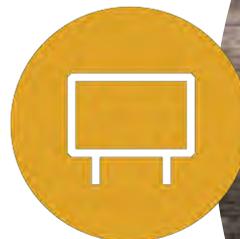
Exemptions

What is not restricted



There are four major exemptions

- 1 Out-of-scope products
- 2 SME advertisers
- 3 Out-of-scope media
- 4 Brand advertising



Brand advertising exemption in detail



- Significant change to policy introduced by 2025 Regulations
- Exempt ads can promote a company, master brand or range of products *provided* they don't depict a specific LHF product
 - ✓ No specific less healthy product shown
 - ✓ Uses generic product imagery not uniquely tied to specific LHF product
 - ✓ Uses branding techniques not uniquely tied to specific LHF product



Reducing risk: 'safe zones'



Non-LHF products

- Direct product promotion
- Use of specific non-LHF to promote a brand or range generally
- Non-LHF in the role of 'generic' imagery



Reducing risk: 'safe zones'



Out of scope media

Out of scope media: outdoor, radio etc.

Own socials, organic content

Own sites & apps



Reducing risk: 'safe zones'



Brand advertising

- Simple logo-based brand awareness
- Product promotion using generic imagery
- Product promotion using non-LHF variant imagery
- CSR without product focus



LHF ads

Where the danger zones lie



Very likely to breach the LHF rules if:



Pack shot of specific LHF product



Imagery or characters directly representative of specific LHF products



Music, colours, logos, or themes that identify specific LHF product



Pay for influencer(s) to post LHF product content



Listings or placements are paid for on delivery platform



CLEARCAST

Less Healthy Foods (LHF)

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Less Healthy Food restrictions

- Ofcom-licensed television services, and on-demand programme services (“ODPS”), from including advertising and sponsorship for identifiable LHF products between 5:30am and 9:00pm.
- LHF restriction has been live and in place since 1st October 2025.
- Identifiable products must be both HFSS **AND** fall within scope of one of the 13 govt. categories in order to be restricted.
- HFSS rules still exist and are separate to LHF.

COPY CLEARANCE

Food and drink ads: HFSS v LHF



If you make ads containing food or drink, you'll likely be aware of the restrictions for **HFSS** (High Fat / Salt / Sugar) foods, which are long established. Plus, more recently, additional restrictions were announced for **LHF** ('Less Healthy Food and Drink').

Below we explain what each restriction means and clear up some misconceptions about how they work together.

CLEARCAST

data

HFSS & LHF: Two sets of rules & guidance.

[Website Blog: Food and drink ads: HFSS v LHF | Clearcast](#)

Watch outs!

- Co-promotions
- Advertisers not immediately associated with food/drink
- Brand adverts
- Showing Non-HFSS products & reformulation

Ways we can help you!

- Script & storyboard templates and support documents
- Copy Development service.
- Training- LHF vital update webinar is launching next week and will take place on Wednesday 4th March.



Get expert pre-publication guidance

-  CAP Copy Advice for non- broadcast ads
-  Clearcast for TV ads
-  Reduces the risk of breach and regulatory safe check
-  Audit trail
-  Facilitates creative freedom
-  Secondary advice resources





Any questions?

We'd greatly
appreciate **your**
feedback!

Thank you!

