

The publisher conduct requirement

Under the UK's new digital markets competition regime, a conduct requirement (CR) places rules on how a firm conducts itself. The Publisher CR is the first CR the CMA has imposed. Publishers, (any party that makes content available on the web) will now be able to prevent their content being used to power Google's AI search features in the UK.

What do we want to deliver for publishers?

Control

Google must provide publishers with controls to withhold their content from:

- training its generative AI models used within and outside search
- grounding (formulating and fact checking) responses in its generative AI features inside search (such as AI Overviews and AI Mode) and outside search (e.g. Gemini AI Assistant)

Google shall not penalise publishers, for example by downranking them in the rest of Search. The controls covering grounding inside search must be offered at directory and page level.

Transparency

Google must provide:

- clear information on what the controls cover and how they work
- information on how publisher content is used to train and ground generative AI services
- transparency metrics for search AI features, including impressions, clicks, and click-through rate, aggregated across features such as AI Overviews and AI Mode
- referral data so publishers can assess the quality of traffic from search AI features

Attribution

Google will be required to:

- take reasonable steps to ensure that publisher content in generative AI search features is clearly and accurately attributed, with a clear way for users to access the original source
- publish explanatory information on how publisher content is selected for attribution, how attribution accuracy is monitored, how Google approaches factuality, and how publishers can flag inaccurate or missing attribution

When will this take effect?

Google has until 3 December 2026 to comply with the CR, with an additional 3 months to develop and roll-out a page level control. We expect Google to start making changes to comply with the CR sooner than this - Google is already rolling out parts of the control and elements of enhanced transparency.

Find out more on our [Google search publisher conduct requirement - GOV.UK](#).

We also welcome comments on your experience with Google's changes at searchsms@cma.gov.uk or via your trade association.