



## Content policy

Blizzard Comedy was founded to be a space that is safe and friendly to all those who take part – either as audience, performers, backstage support, or any other manner. In order to facilitate this, we have some rules for performers at our club both on and off stage – breaches of which may result in being asked to leave, and repeat/severe breaches blacklisting entirely.

**Please ensure that you have read and understood our content policy before applying to perform at Blizzard.**

We have a traffic light system for content we allow on stage at Blizzard Comedy. It is not our wish to stifle anyone's freedom of speech, however in order for our audience to feel safe and assured that they are not going to be victimized or deliberately targeted our nights, we have 3 categories of material – **Red** being content which we do not tolerate in any context. **Amber** for content which is allowed but we require advance trigger warnings for, so we can communicate with the audience if any of those topics are likely to come up and they can decide whether they are in a headspace to handle those topics in a comedy context. And **Green** for content which is permitted without any advance notice.

### Red

These are things we do not allow on account of them being at best punching down if not outright hate speech. Examples of this include\* but are not limited to:

- Racism
- Sexism
- Homophobia/Transphobia
- Xenophobia
- Classism
- Ableism
- Fatphobia
- General bigotry

If any of your material falls into or relies on stereotypes based on one of the above in a way which is harmful/hurtful to the demographic, we reserve the right to deny your application or avoid rebooking you.

That isn't to say that these topics are off limits from discussion, material – far from it! Especially from acts who are part of demographics that are the victims of one or more of these things – but we would ask that you content warn ahead of time as below – if you are going to discuss these topics and your experiences of them.

Please also be mindful if your material is self-deprecating based on these topics as well. For example: It may be all well and good making a fat joke about yourself for instance, but will that joke collaterally impact anyone else watching? You might be fine with it, but consider how that looks to anyone else in that demographic. Is it something cathartic that can be laughed at as a shared experience? Or is it more likely to make anyone else in the demographic feel self-conscious and bad about who they are? There is some nuance here and you won't be banned for making a bad judgement on a joke like this – but try to be thoughtful about the impact of the joke before bringing it to our stage.

The following topics are not off limits, but require content warning ahead of time. This is usually done by sending us a list of any potentially difficult or triggering content you may cover in your set, which we will flag before bringing you on stage, and on the backdrop of the stage during your set and the intervals.

This is so that our audience have the information they need to make an informed choice on whether they wish to/are able to process comedy about those topics in case they touch on personal traumas or fears.

This is NOT a discouragement from doing material about these topics, a lot of them are very important points of discussion and particularly if you have experience of one of these, voices bringing light to them is a net good. We just want our audience not to be blindsided by something that may trigger some traumatic memories/issues for their own mental well-being at our club.

Anything that is potentially related to traumatic or uncomfortable experiences should be flagged here – some examples that have come up previously include:

- Rape/Sexual Assault
- War/Extreme Violence
- Terminal Illness
- Torture
- Grooming/Child Abuse
- Pregnancy & Childbirth
- Domestic Abuse
- Death
- Hate Crimes
- Any of the topics covered in “Red” in a permitted way, see above.
- Non-Consensual Audience Interaction\*

We understand that the nature of stand-up is often very loose with elements of improvisation – and as such it is unrealistic to meticulously content warn the entirety of your set – but if you know that you cover certain topics that could fall under this bracket frequently, or know you’ve got a new bit that would qualify – we’d always prefer that you warn over something you don’t end up using rather than miss warning about something you do. You can always also add trigger warnings on stage verbally if you go into a bit you hadn’t planned on doing that needs one.

And remember – trauma can be deeply personal and people will have vastly different experiences and tolerances to potentially traumatic events. If you are recalling an experience you have had as a part of your set that you don’t consider to be traumatic, that doesn’t mean that other people won’t have difficult relationships with those topics. Please be mindful and considerate about the topics you are discussing, and if there is a chance that it may be uncomfortable for some people to have joked about for reasons related to trauma, make sure you flag that to us before the live show.

\*Audience Interaction is permitted but only with audience members who have signified they are comfortable with it by wearing one of our audience participation stickers (we can show you what these look like on the night and point them out to you). Please note that we discourage audience put downs and picking on for the sake of banter – and interactions should be generally more friendly and not mean spirited.

In the unlikely occurrence of hecklers (uncommon but has happened on occasion) – this rule is forfeited, and you are allowed to respond and we aren’t going to tone police that. Repeat offenders will be asked to leave, so it shouldn’t come up.

## Green

Green content is really anything that isn't punching down or covering topics that are potentially traumatic or difficult. It's very hard to exhaustively list everything that counts in each category – but as a general rule if you're not punching down, and if you're content warning anything potentially triggering, you're in the green!

If in doubt, we're always happy for you to run bits by us for feedback beforehand, and we'll let you know whether that needs a content warning or if you should just drop it from our gig entirely.

Please note, that while we do not necessarily expect acts to strictly keep to our content policy whilst doing other gigs – if we do find clips of you doing material antithetical to our ethos, we reserve the right to refuse to rebook you or cancel upcoming bookings you have with us. We appreciate most clubs do not share our policy and it may not be fair to expect acts to stick to our guidelines elsewhere – but if you are making a name or presence for yourself based on ideas that are extremely at odds with our guidelines, we cannot expect our audiences to feel as safe as we are aiming with these policies.

## Behaviours

Blizzard Comedy is more than just what happens on stage. In order to curate a truly safe environment, especially for marginalized groups, we do require everyone who comes to our shows to act with respect and mindfulness towards everyone at the show. That includes other acts, audience, volunteers, bar staff, and anyone who you may encounter at the venue.

Harassment, abuse, bullying or bigotry of any kind will not be tolerated, and if we witness, or have reason to believe that you have been behaving in these ways and making people uncomfortable, you will be asked to leave, and you may be blacklisted from the club.

We also reserve the right to withdraw gig offers at any time if we find that you have any violent criminal convictions or credible allegations of domestic, violent or sexual assault. This includes cyber harassment, sending non-consensual explicit photos, stalking etc.

As a part of our application processes we do due diligence checks on social media, news outlets and any other internet presence – if from this check we have reason to believe you have broken any of these policies, we will not approve your application.

Blizzard Comedy does its best to remain inclusive and welcoming for everyone – to ensure this it does mean we have to curate that environment, and anyone who behaves towards people in a way that makes them feel unsafe will be required to leave and will not be rebooked, and be blacklisted from attending as audience in future as well.

Inclusivity isn't just about saying anyone is welcome – it's about curating an environment where everyone, particularly those who are most vulnerable feel safe and secure that they aren't going to be targeted or harassed either on stage or off – and as such we take instances and allegations of any of the aforementioned behaviours very seriously, and will not be welcoming or platforming anyone we have reason to believe has committed these acts or is otherwise a danger to the members of our community.

Just don't be a cunt yeah? Thanks.