

Case Report

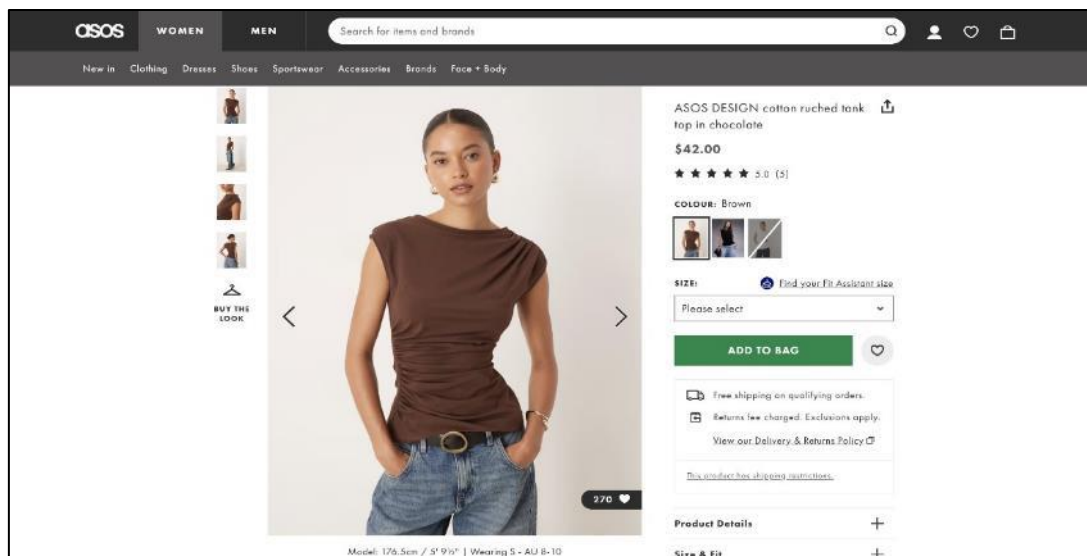
Case number: 0261-25
Advertiser: ASOS.com Limited
Medium: Online
Decision date: 5-Nov-2025
Decision: Breach
Action: Ad removed

ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMUNITY PANEL

- AANA Code of Ethics - 2.6 Health and Safety - breach

AD DESCRIPTION

This website ad featured a model wearing the 'ASOS DESIGN cotton ruched tank top in chocolate'. It also features an indication of the model's height and the size she is wearing.



SUMMARY

Complaint

A complaint was received on the grounds that the model was extremely slim, to a point that she did not seem to reflect a healthy or realistic body type for that height and size. The complainant expressed concern that this image could perpetuate unhealthy body standards.

Advertiser response

The advertiser responded that it was committed to inclusivity and representation, and that it strives to reflect these values across all marketing communications.

The advertiser added that it offered an extensive range of sizing, and that its model selection was deliberately diverse to represent various body types.

A full copy of the advertiser's response is included as Appendix A.

Decisions

The Panel found that the ad was in breach of section 2.6 of the AANA Code of Ethics as the ad depicted material contrary to prevailing community standards.

ASSESSMENT AND DECISIONS

Section 2.6: Advertising shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.

The Practice Note states:

Advertising must not portray an unrealistic ideal body image by portraying body shapes or features that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices.

The Code does not prevent the use of post-production, altering or digitally enhancing an image. Similarly, the Code does not require a disclosure that images have been digitally altered. However, where technology is used to digitally alter images of people to such an extent that their body shape, or features, are no longer realistic or attainable through healthy practices, or where the changes are not justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised, the advertisement may breach the Code if it is contrary to prevailing community standards relating to health and safety.

Panel assessment

The Panel considered that the model was clearly of slender build, and that she appeared to be standing at an awkward angle. However, the Panel considered that this positioning exaggerated her slim waist. The Panel considered that this image appeared to have been altered to create an impression that the model was thinner than normal.

The Panel noted that there were other images featuring this model, and that these appeared to represent what could be considered a healthy, albeit lean body image. A minority of the Panel considered that these images created an impression that the model, although very lean, did not depict a body shape that was unrealistic or unattainable.

However, the majority of the Panel considered that the image to which the complainant objected, appeared to have been altered to emphasise an unnaturally slim and long waist. The Panel considered that this alteration appears to have distorted the image to such an extent that the body shape shown was no longer realistic or attainable through healthy practices, and that this did not align with prevailing community standards on health and safety.

Panel decision

The Panel considered that the image reflected above breached section 2.6 of the AANA Code of Ethics.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Panel found that the ad did not breach any other section of the advertising codes.

ACTION

Whilst we are disappointed with the decision, we are committed to working cooperatively with regulators in the markets in which we operate. For that reason, we have taken down the image referenced in the complaint and will re-shoot the product imagery if required.

We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that ASOS is deeply committed to inclusivity and representation, and we strive to reflect these values across all our marketing communications. As such, our model selection is intentionally diverse, representing a variety of body types. The model featured in this image is one of many who reflect the broad spectrum of our global customer base.

All models booked by ASOS are measured according to specific industry standard guidelines during casting. We collaborate with reputable model agencies globally to ensure that all models are healthy and regularly review a model's measurements to maintain these standards.

APPENDIX A: ADVERTISER RESPONSE IN FULL

Thank you for your letter dated 14th October 2025 regarding case reference 0261-25. We appreciate the opportunity to respond and clarify our position on the matter raised.

After a thorough review of the advertisement in question, we do not believe it to be in breach of the AANA Code of Ethics, particularly under rule 2.6 concerning body image.

At ASOS, we recognise our responsibility to both consumers and society. As a brand, we are deeply committed to inclusivity and representation, and we strive to reflect these values across all our marketing communications.

We offer an extensive range of sizing to promote accessibility and inclusivity in fashion. Our model selection is intentionally diverse, representing a variety of body types. The model featured in this advertisement is one of many who reflect the broad spectrum of our global customer base.

All models booked by ASOS are measured according to specific industry standard guidelines during casting. We collaborate with reputable model agencies worldwide to ensure that all models are healthy and regularly review a model's measurements to maintain these standards.

Should you have any further questions or require additional information related to the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.