

# NewsLetter



## “Curated by Michelin starred chefs” berated by ASA Michelin Stars claim ruled misleading

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) has ruled against an advert placed on Tik-Tok by Simmer Ltd in June.

The advert included a sequence taken from ITVs “This Morning” programme in which a consumer expert discussed various meal kits with the programme’s hosts. During the conversation, the on-screen expert stated, “All of these dishes [...] curated by Michelin starred chefs”.

In response to a complaint that the term “curated by Michelin Chefs” was misleading, Simmer replied that they believed the statement was factually correct because it reflected the calibre of chefs they worked with.

They provided the ASA with details of a professional chef who had worked on the development of their menu, who had in the past worked at various restaurants which held multiple Michelin stars.

## What was Simmer’s response?

Simmer stated that the term “Michelin-starred chef” had, over time, developed a broader meaning in the culinary industry and among consumers and that the term had become widely used in media, marketing and the restaurant trade to describe chefs with significant experience in Michelin-starred kitchens, not solely those who held the title of head chef at the point of award.

They said the reference to “Michelin starred chefs” reflected the direct involvement of a chef with Michelin-star experience in curating their menu, and had not been presented as a standalone claim, or intended to suggest that Simmer itself held a Michelin star.

## ASA’s Ruling

The ASA considered that consumers would interpret the claim “curated by Michelin starred chefs” to mean that Simmer’s meal kits had been designed and planned by chefs who the public would view as having been awarded a Michelin star, either through their role as the restaurants head chef or position as owner, or chef patron.

However, the chef who had been consulted on the development of the meal kits had merely undertaken unpaid work experience at restaurants which held Michelin stars at the beginning of their career, and had later spent nine months working at a restaurant which held two Michelin stars.

Because the claim “curated by Michelin starred chefs” would be understood to mean that Simmer’s menus had been designed and planned by a chef consumers would view as having been awarded a Michelin star, when that was not the case, ASA concluded that the claim was misleading.