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ABC Consumer Magazines Reporting Standards

This document details changes that have been agreed to the Reporting Standards for Consumer Magazines. You can view the updated ABC Reporting Standards on our [website](#).

Have a suggestion or a query about a rule?

As an ABC member you can ask us to look at any aspect of the information we publish or the rules behind them. If you have any suggestions or comments please contact your ABC Account Manager, Charlotte Brown (charlotte.brown@abc.org.uk) or any member of the ABC team.

1. Temporary variations to Reporting Standards - COVID-19

To acknowledge the entirely unusual nature of the general COVID-19 restrictions and their effect on circulations, we introduced in March/April the concept of COVID-19 certificates together with a number of [temporary variations](#) to the Reporting Standards:

- The COVID-19 certificates provided an option to retain transparency on circulations, yet remove affected issues from normal reporting, so they wouldn't form part of trend data and be compared to other periods.
- The temporary variations to the Reporting Standards allowed for greater flexibility in terms of changes to the product and how it's delivered to consumers.

Over the summer many of the general restrictions on movement and activities were lifted or eased. Of course, we're currently seeing the potential for these to be changed quickly and with little notice in local areas.

Different publications will be affected to lesser or greater degrees depending on the nature of their circulation and audience. We recognise that we may not get back to 'normal', as it was pre-pandemic, but we may have reached a state that might be considered the 'new normal' for the time being.



trust in media

As a result, the Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards Group have agreed the following:

1. COVID-19 certificates will remain available as an option for publications reporting to a period ending December 2020.
2. Only issues distributed post-lockdown in March 2020 up to the end of September 2020 may be included on a COVID-19 certificate for periods ending December 2020.
 - This provides, broadly, for issues from April to September (6 months) to be reported separately on a COVID-19 certificate, and therefore issues between January to March, and October to December (6 months) to be reported on a 'normal' certificate.
 - Please note that, if after the end of COVID reporting for your sector, the sudden introduction of local restrictions results in significant unplanned reductions in your circulation, you may be able to utilise the [existing exclusion rules](#) to exclude it from your publication's average circulation. Please contact us if you require any advice.
3. The remainder of the temporary variations in the Reporting Standards (available on our [website](#)) shall remain in place, to be reviewed again towards the end of the year.

2. Analyses - Paid Multiple Copies and Monitored Free Distribution [Effective from January 2021]

It has been agreed that from January 2021 the analyses for the above two circulation types will be aligned, to remove small historical differences. The table shows the existing categories and the revised categories that will apply to both circulation types from next year.

Paid Multiple Copies (current)	Monitored Free Distribution (current)	Revised categories for both Multiple Copies & MFD from JANUARY 2021
Airside & International Rail	Airports / airlines	Airports / airlines / international rail
	Cruise ships / ferries	Cruise ships / ferries
Trains		Trains / other travel points
	Other travel points	
Hotels	Hotels	Hotels
	Retail outlets	Retail outlets
Food/Beverage Outlets	Food and drink outlets	Food and drink outlets
	Street	Street
	Educational establishments	Educational establishments
	Medical establishments	Medical establishments
	Offices	Offices
Leisure centres	Leisure centres / clubs	Leisure centres / clubs
Sports Events		Events
Other Publication Insert		Other publication insert
Others	Other	Other
Voucher Redemption		