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31 August 2021

ABC Reporting Standards changes

This document details changes that have been agreed for the Regional Publication Reporting Standards. 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, Lynn Kendrick (lynn.kendrick@abc.org.uk) or any member of the ABC team.

Digital only issues and Digital only publications [effective from periods ending December 2021]

From periods ending December 2021 you may report an issue (or issues) comprised of solely digital copies on a Regional Publication certificate (i.e. an issue does not need a 'print parent').

- This enables publications with a mixed print/distribution strategy throughout the period to be reported together.
- It also allows digital only publications to be reported on a Regional Publication certificate.
- As currently with print, if you claim any digital issues, you must include all digital issues published in the period (i.e. you cannot be selective).
- For transparency, if you report any digital only issues on the same certificate as other issues that contain print copies, then you must include an analysis of issue circulations to highlight the print/digital split (e.g. by day of week).

Standards amendments

We have updated the Digital Editions section to reflect the above change and replaced references to 'Digital Editions' throughout the standards with 'Digital Copies' where appropriate.

The text below shows the changes made to the Digital Editions section for your information:

DIGITAL EDITIONS COPIES

Definition

A digital edition is an edition of the print publication. Digital Copies are copies of a publication published electronically as a unit.

Eligibility and options for reporting

1. Digital Copies can be reported on a Regional Publication certificate providing they meet the relevant circulation and other requirements detailed in these Standards.
2. How the digital copies may be claimed will depend on whether print copies are also claimed and, if they are, whether the digital copies meet the requirements to be classified as an edition of the print publication. The scenarios are:
 - a) The publication is only published in digital format – the Digital Copies will be reported on their own certificate.
 - b) The publication is published in both print and digital formats (either for all issues or a mix where some issues are either print or digital only):
 - i) You may:
 - o Claim the print and digital copies on the **same** certificate, providing the digital copies meet the requirements to be classified as a Digital Edition of the print publication. **Note:** If you report digital only issues on the same certificate as other issues that contain print copies, then you must include an analysis of issue circulations to highlight the print/digital split (e.g. by day of week).
 - o Choose to claim the print and digital copies on **separate** certificates, even though the digital copies meet the requirements to be classified as a Digital Edition of the print publication.

If the digital copies cannot be classified as a Digital Edition of the print publication you can register the digital publication as a **separate product** and report the print and digital copies on **separate** certificates.

Definition of a Digital Edition

3. To qualify as a **Digital Edition**, that edition must be a Digital Edition is sufficiently similar as to be considered the same product as the print Parent Edition. In particular:
 - a) A Digital Edition must be identified as an edition of a print publication reported on the ABC Certificate (the Parent Edition). This means it must carry a logotype/masthead incorporating the generic name of the Parent Edition and be consistent with the general appearance of the Parent Edition.
 - b) A Digital Edition is published electronically as a unit.
 - c) It may be reformatted to suit the different delivery medium. *For example: changes in page size or order.*
 - d) Editorial or advertising may include electronic enhancements or be adapted to take advantage of the medium. *For example: pictures replaced with video*
 - e) Compared to the print Parent Edition you can change editorial content, providing at any point in time:
 - i) A minimum of about 75% of the editorial in the print Parent Edition is present in the Digital Edition.
 - ii) Additional editorial, not in the print Parent Edition, can be added to the Digital Edition up to about 25% of the total editorial by volume in the print Parent Edition

You must declare editorial changes when submitting your claim to ABC and be able to demonstrate they fall within the permitted parameters.

 - f) A Digital Edition may include live social media feeds, news feeds and/or video feeds. These will be ignored in relation to the editorial change requirements.
 - g) A Digital Edition must carry all of the ROP (not classified) advertisements (by number and advertisers) that appear in the print Parent Edition unless agreed otherwise with the advertiser/agency.
 - h) You can sell advertisements for inclusion in the Digital Edition only.

- i) If editorial or advertising renders the Digital Edition illegal for publication the specific advertising/editorial may be removed. In this instance you can ignore the relevant editorial/advertising from your calculations of changes.
- j) Digital Editions and their Parent Edition must be published on or about a common distribution date.

Note: In cases where individual issues do not have a Parent Edition (being only published in one format/edition only), then requirements 3e, 3g and 3j above do not apply.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Prior notification of ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copy claims and plans are required

- a) ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copy claims must be audited by ABC Staff Auditors +44 (0)1442 870800
www.abc.org.uk
- b) You must register your intention to claim in advance of the publication of the issues as part of the audit is carried out during the reporting period.
- c) You must provide planned distribution dates in advance and notify us of any changes.

~~2. A Digital Edition is sufficiently similar to be considered the same product as the print parent edition~~ [moved to definition above]

32. ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copies are opted in

- a) The individual must have either specifically purchased the ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copy, or requested to receive/view it.

43. ~~A Digital Edition is~~ Digital Copies are published and available to the consumer

- a) You must provide ABC with free access to the ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copies for every issue.

54. ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copies must meet requirements of the relevant ~~print circulation~~ category except where varied by this section

- a) ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copies can be claimed only for specified circulation categories depending on the sector. The requirements of those categories in relation to print copies apply to ~~Digital Edition~~ copies except as varied by this section.
- b) In relation to all paid categories you must be able to demonstrate the copy has been sold and at what price.
- c) If an individual the end recipient receives the ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copy free, you need to comply with either proof of notification or proof of active opening ~~copies may be claimed via either of the following methods:~~
 - i) ~~Proof of Notification~~ Notification method
 - o You must capture ~~their~~ the recipient's name and email address.
 - o You can only claim one ~~Digital Edition copy~~ Digital Copy per individual
 - o You cannot claim the copy if you have provided a paid or free print copy to the same individual (where known).
 - o You must be able to demonstrate the copy is distributed to the individual. *For example: by providing evidence that an email alert has been sent to the individual informing them that the issue is available for view/download.*
 - o Recipients may be contacted as part of the audit process.
 - ii) ~~Proof of Active Opening~~ Actively opened method
 - o Evidence of delivery to identifiable individuals must be demonstrated by the measurement of active openings of the copy.
 - o The delivery process/database must have a mechanism to minimise the risk of significant duplicates to the same individual within the distribution method.
 - o The auditor must have access to verify the claim in relation to the delivery process/database and measurement of active openings.
- d) For Corporate Subscription ~~Digital Editions~~ Digital Copies:
 - i) There must be a contractual arrangement between the purchaser (a third party employer) and the publisher for at least two issues.

- ii) The copies are purchased by the third party employer for its employees
 - iii) The claimed quantity must be restricted to those employees that have personally opted to receive/view the ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copy. *For example: A company takes out a subscription for each of its 100 employees. If only 40 of those employees personally register to receive/view the digital edition copy then only those 40 copies may be included on the ABC Certificate.*
- e) Gift subscriptions, where the recipient receives a subscription as a gift from a paying subscriber (up to a maximum of 12 gift subscriptions per subscriber), can be claimed as ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copy Single Copy Subscription Sales as follows:
- i) The recipient's email address must be provided. +44 (0)1442 870800
 - ii) The recipient is deemed (for ABC purposes) as having paid for the subscription. www.abc.org.uk
 - iii) The recipient's geographical location for reporting purposes will be treated as being the same as that of the purchaser making the gift.
- f) You must retain and supply us on an issue by issue basis (or as otherwise agreed) a list of individual recipients for each issue (the 'Total Distribution List' (TDL)) which includes details of all the recipients of individually distributed print copies and all free ~~Digital Edition~~ copies Digital Copies. We must be able to identify the circulation category/type each copy is claimed in. As referred to above, this list should exclude:
- i) Duplicate records (i.e. each individual on the list can only be claimed once – the print copy takes precedence).
 - ii) Individuals where Hard Bouncebacks have arisen from email notifications for ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copies.
- g) You must supply us the claim for ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copies on an issue by issue basis (or as otherwise agreed).

REPORTING

See specific circulation categories for mandatory and optional reporting of ~~Digital Editions~~ Digital Copies. Note:

1. Corporate Subscriptions (which can only be claimed for ~~Digital Editions~~ Digital Copies) will be reported as Paid Subscription Copies.
2. If you are breaking out Paid Single Copies into Full Rate and Below Full rate then ~~Digital Edition~~ Digital Copy sales must be claimed in the appropriate rate band by comparing the price paid with the UK print copy Basic Cover Price. In the case of a digital only publication, copies must be claimed in the appropriate rate band as defined by the Digital Copy Basic Cover Price (single copy sales).
3. If you report digital only issues on the same certificate as other issues that contain print copies, then you must include an analysis of issue circulations to highlight the print/digital split (e.g. by day of week).