

Coronavirus (COVID-19) & ABC Reporting



Business Magazines Standards - temporary changes

Introduction

This document sets out further areas where there is now a temporary change to/or suspension of our requirements for Business Magazines to enable media owners to cope with the challenges facing them during the COVID-19 pandemic. Other updates can be found on our dedicated webpage <https://www.abc.org.uk/coronavirus>.

Please contact us if you have any questions or would like any advice on changes you are planning.

Headlines - Business Magazines

- Substituting digital copies for paid or requested print copies.
- More flexibility for new requests to receive free digital copies.
- Extension to age limit for controlled circulation requests and supporting sources
- Non-controlled free circulation opened up to digital copies to replace unfulfilled print circulation.
- Flexibility to select the analysed Audit Issue for periods ending June 2020
- Optional COVID-19 certificates will not include an analysed Audit Issue

1. Supplying an individual with a digital copy instead of a print copy

We've temporarily suspended the requirements that specify a payment or request must specifically be for a digital copy. This means you may claim a digital copy that you've substituted for a paid or requested print copy that is usually mailed to a known individual (i.e. single and multiple copy subscriptions and controlled free circulation).

2. New requests to receive free digital copies

As circulation through retail, paid multiple and free distribution outlets are adversely affected, you may be engaging with your audience by offering free copies of your publication via online promotion/invitations.

In the majority of cases we expect you'll be able to comply with our existing standards in relation to capturing the publication request, the individual's details and providing evidence of delivery (email alert or evidence copy opened). However in recognition of the circumstances, please let us know if the evidence you hold differs from this so that we can review and consider if we can include the copies for this temporary period.

As there is a request to receive the publication, these copies would be eligible as controlled requested copies, providing they fall within the declared Terms of Control criteria that you report on the certificate. For this temporary period, the request alone will be sufficient to enable a copy to be eligible as controlled circulation, providing the Terms of Control include "*Individuals that have requested a free copy*" or similar wording.

3. Controlled Free Circulation - age of requests and ageing of supporting source documents

Due to the difficulty in undertaking planned reverification campaigns, some publishers risk unexpectedly losing copies from their controlled circulation. Therefore, for Reporting Periods ending in 2020 only, you may include requests up to 6 years old in the 5 year requested age band. The age limit for controlled circulation sources is also extended to 6 years.

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4. Non-Controlled Free Circulation

We've temporarily suspended the restriction on claiming digital copies in the non-controlled free circulation category in order that you may supply existing print recipients with a digital copy in its place or to replace those print recipients you are temporarily unable to fulfil with others to whom you can fulfil a digital copy (i.e. this is not for increasing your circulation over existing levels). You will still need to demonstrate that the copy has been circulated to a known individual or organisation.

5. Determination of analysed Audit Issue – temporary change for periods ending June 2020

Due to the potential variations in circulation and disruption to reverification campaigns for controlled circulation during this exceptional time, for reporting periods ending June 2020 you may select any issue reported on the certificate to be your publication's analysed Audit Issue.

We will review the situation for periods ending December 2020 in light of future developments and communicate any change.

6. Information reported on COVID-19 certificates

If you decide to report issues affected by the restrictions on a separate COVID-19 certificate (as detailed in our [update of 27th March](#)), this COVID-19 certificate will not include an analysed Audit Issue. It will include the issues' total circulations, analysed by print and digital copies, together with a narrative statement about the circulation covering this period.

For further guidance please email us via info@abc.org.uk or call our advice hotline on +44 (1442) 200 770.