

CONTENT CODE FOR NATIONWIDE MANAGED TRANSMISSION LINEAR TELEVISION SERVICES

PREAMBLE

1. The Info-communications Media Development Authority ("the IMDA") is empowered to issue, and from time to time, review codes of practice relating to the standards of programmes and advertisements. Television and radio programmes, especially local productions, can exert a significant influence on the community. This Content Code for Nationwide Managed Transmission Linear Television Services ("the Code") seeks to ensure that programmes on such services offered by service providers licensed under the Broadcasting Act (Cap. 28) are not against public interest or order, or national harmony, or offend good taste and decency. The IMDA is also empowered under the Broadcasting Act (Cap. 28) to impose sanctions, including the imposition of financial penalties, on any service provider who contravenes the Code.

2. The Code outlines the general standards to be observed by licensed service providers¹ offering the following:

(a) Free-to-air Television ("FTA TV") Services; and

(b) Linear channels of Nationwide Subscription Cable and Internet Protocol Television ("Subscription TV") Services.

3. The provisions set out in this Code must be applied in spirit and read in conjunction with other relevant legislation, regulations, codes and/or licence conditions. The IMDA may require service providers to withdraw programmes that do not comply with this Code.

4. The Code deals in general principles and does not seek to address each and every possible case or scenario that could arise. Service providers may face cases or scenarios which are not specifically referred to or directly addressed in this Code. Examples included in the Code are not exhaustive. However, the principles and provisions in the following sections should make clear what the Code is designed to achieve and help service providers make the necessary judgments.

¹ This Code does not apply to Over-the-Top and Video-on-Demand services.

PART 1: CLASSIFICATION

1.1 To aid parental guidance and allow for informed viewing choice, all content must be rated according to the Film Classification Guidelines (appended in Annex A). The six ratings are as follows:

- G - General
- PG - Parental Guidance
- PG13 - Parental Guidance for Children below 13
- NC16 - No Children below 16 years of age
- M18 - Mature 18, for persons 18 years and above
- R21 - Restricted to persons 21 years and above

1.2 Any content disallowed or prohibited under the applicable laws, regulations, codes and/or licence conditions in Singapore must not be offered.

PART 2: SCHEDULING

FTA TV

- 2.1 All programmes broadcast between 6am and 10pm must be suitable for family audiences and hence not exceed the PG rating.
- 2.2 Programmes rated PG13 can only be broadcast between 10pm and 6am.
- 2.3 Programmes rated higher than PG13 are not allowed for broadcast.

Subscription TV

- 2.4 Service providers may offer content rated at NC16 or M18, only if parental locks are made available for their entire service.
- 2.5 Programmes rated M18 can only be broadcast between 10pm and 6am.
- 2.6 Programmes rated R21 are not allowed for broadcast.

PART 3: DISPLAY OF CLASSIFICATION RATING AND CONSUMER ADVICE

FTA TV

- 3.1 For programmes rated PG and PG13:
- (a) The classification rating must be displayed before the start of the programme;

- (b) The consumer advice describing the main elements² which have contributed to the rating:
 - (i) must be displayed before the start of programmes rated PG13;
 - (ii) should be displayed before the start of programmes rated PG, where applicable; and
 - (iii) should be clearly worded and displayed in a legible typeface that should remain visible for at least 5 seconds;
- (c) The classification rating should be displayed alongside the title in the electronic programme guide, where applicable; and
- (d) Classification information should be superimposed at the top left-hand corner of the screen at the beginning of the programme and after every commercial break for one minute.

Subscription TV

3.2 For programmes rated PG13 and above:

- (a) The classification rating should be displayed before the start of the programme;
- (b) The consumer advice describing the main elements which have contributed to the rating:
 - (i) should be displayed before the start of the programme; and
 - (ii) should be clearly worded and displayed in a legible typeface that should remain visible for at least 5 seconds; and
- (c) The classification rating should be displayed alongside the title in the electronic programme guide, particularly for programmes rated NC16 and M18.

PART 4: CONTENT ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

4.1 Advertisements of services and programmes by service providers on TV and radio must comply with the relevant content codes.

4.2 Service providers are encouraged to include the relevant classification rating and consumer advice for programmes rated PG and higher in print and online promotional and publicity materials, e.g. TV guides in print or programme

² This includes the intensity and/or frequency of the elements, e.g. "Due to strong violence and frequent horror scenes, parental guidance is advised."

listings on websites. Some examples are: PG13 (Violence), NC16 (Sexual References), M18 (Mature Themes).

PART 5: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

National and Public Interest

5.1 Programmes must:

- (a) comply with the prevailing laws of Singapore;
- (b) not undermine national interest, national security, public interest, public security or public order;
- (c) not be detrimental to Singapore's relationship with other countries; and
- (d) not contain extremist or anarchic messages, such as advocating or promoting the use of violence.

5.2 Service providers must ensure that due impartiality is observed in programmes dealing with matters of public policy or controversial issues of public importance in Singapore. Due impartiality requires programme producers to deal even-handedly when opposing points of view are presented in a programme. On matters of public importance, balance should be sought through the presentation, as far as possible, of principal relevant viewpoints. Programmes should not be slanted by the exclusion of facts or by misleading emphasis. Every reasonable effort must be made to ensure that the factual content of programmes is accurate.

Racial and Religious Harmony

5.3 For the purposes of this Code, race includes dialect groups and ethnic groups.

5.4 Service providers should bear in mind Singapore's multi-racial and multi-religious context. They should exercise due caution and discretion when featuring the activities, beliefs, practices, or views of any racial or religious group. In featuring any religious belief or view, service providers should ensure these do not disparage or cast other religious faiths in poor light.

5.5 Programmes must:

- (a) be kept secular and not be of a proselytic nature;
- (b) present references to race and religion accurately and in a dignified and sensitive manner;

- (c) not denigrate or be likely to offend the sensitivities of any racial or religious group; and
- (d) not incite or be likely to incite racial and/or religious intolerance or misunderstanding.

5.6 Racial and religious stereotyping should be avoided.

Social Norms and Values

5.7 Service providers should bear in mind the importance of the family as the basic unit of society. The institution of marriage should be respected.

5.8 Programmes should not:

- (a) make references to any class or group of persons as being innately or inherently inferior; and
- (b) encourage or in any way lead to discrimination against any section of the community on account of race, religion, gender, age, occupational status or disability.

5.9 Harmful behaviours such as smoking, alcoholism and self-harm should not be presented as glamorous or desirable, especially in local programmes.

5.10 Service providers should be mindful of social and cultural sensitivities. For instance, kissing in Malay programmes should be avoided.

5.11 Service providers should exercise sensitivity regarding humour that may offend good taste and decency, e.g. jokes based on negative stereotyping or caricatures in relation to race, religion, gender, age or disability, which can cause hurt or humiliation.

5.12 Programmes involving children (e.g. talent contests for children) should not be exploitative or distasteful.

PART 6: GAMBLING, CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Gambling

6.1 Service providers should be mindful of the potential cumulative effect of programmes normalising gambling, crime and anti-social behaviour. No programme should encourage or promote gambling even with regard to legalised forms of gambling.

6.2 Programmes depicting gambling or the use of gambling devices should be presented with discretion and in a manner that does not encourage viewers to gamble.

6.3 The broadcast of all forms of gambling tips is strictly prohibited.

Crime

6.4 Service providers must not broadcast any information from any source which could endanger lives or prejudice the success of attempts to deal with any crime or emergency.

6.5 For FTA TV programmes dealing with criminal activities, service providers should exercise discretion and, where appropriate, seek advice from the police, before information is given about law-breaking, or methods to counter law enforcement or other security measures.

Anti-Social Behaviour

6.6 FTA TV programmes should not:

(a) Glorify gangs and secret societies; and

(b) Glamorise or present in a favourable light hooliganism, vandalism, juvenile delinquency and other anti-social behaviour.

Supernatural, Fortune Telling and Other Beliefs

6.7 Belief in superstition and the worship of the occult should not be promoted.

6.8 Programmes exploring occult or other 'psychic' phenomena, particularly those with actual demonstrations of exorcisms or occult practices should be treated with caution.

6.9 For FTA TV, programmes of such nature should be scheduled after 10pm, especially in instances where the treatment or presentation of such themes is dark and frightening for children.

6.10 Programmes based on or dealing with fortune-telling, fengshui, palmreading, numerology, mind-reading, tarot reading, astrology, new age healing and the like should not give the impression that these practices are exact sciences.

PART 7: CLASSIFIABLE CONTENT ELEMENTS

7.1 The major content concerns addressed in this Code are as follows:

- Theme
- Violence
- Nudity
- Sex
- Coarse Language
- Drug Use
- Horror

7.2 The different degrees to which each content concern can be allowed at the various classification levels are spelt out in detail in the IMDA's Film Classification Guidelines (appended in Annex A). These Guidelines serve as a basis for classifying programmes and should be read in conjunction with all the other provisions set out in this Code.³

Coarse Language

7.3 For FTA TV, obscene or offensive jokes, words, gestures, songs, dialogues and subtitles should not be broadcast.

PART 8: ADDITIONAL CONTENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 When considering the suitability of a programme for broadcast, other factors apart from the classifiable content concerns would also need to be taken into account.

Language Standards and Requirements

8.2 Programmes should maintain high standards of language and speech in the four official languages of Singapore.

8.3 Standard English, which is grammatically correct, should be used for locally produced programmes such as news, info-educational programmes and children's programmes. Local English, which is also grammatically correct but pronounced with a Singaporean accent and which may include local terms and expressions, can be used for programmes like dramas, comedies and variety shows. In interviews where the interviewee speaks only Singlish⁴, Singlish can be allowed. The interviewer himself, however, should not use Singlish.

³ Provisions in the Film Classification Guidelines relating to Trailers and Publicity Materials are not applicable to licensed service providers subject to this Code.

⁴ Singlish refers to ungrammatical local English, and includes dialect terms and sentence structures based on dialect.

- 8.4 All content on Chinese services must be in Mandarin, except for the allowances as set out in Clauses 8.6 and 8.7 or where it is specifically approved by the Authority. Dialect may also be allowed provided the context justifies usage and is sparingly used.
- 8.5 For FTA TV, sub-standard Mandarin (characterised by poor syntax or use of vocabulary, or poorly pronounced Mandarin) should not be used for locally produced Chinese programmes such as news, info-educational programmes and children's programmes.
- 8.6 For all Chinese services, allowances for dialect content are as follows:
- (a) Operatic performances;
 - (b) News, current affairs and info-educational programmes, where older people or foreigners respond to interviews in dialect. Subtitles or voice-overs should be provided for these interviews;
 - (c) Dialect terms where the Mandarin equivalents may not be easily understood or commonly used, such as 'ang ku kueh' and 'kopi gao'; and
 - (d) Dialect theme songs played during the opening or closing programme credits of acquired Chinese dramas.
- 8.7 For Chinese services on Subscription TV services, additional allowances for dialect content are as follows:
- (a) One dialect art-house movie per week per Chinese channel or service; and
 - (b) In every clock hour, up to 30% of songs or music videos broadcast on a music channel may be in dialect.
- 8.8 Dialect in English programmes may be allowed provided the context justifies usage and is sparingly used, or specifically approved by the Authority. Allowances in Clauses 8.6 (b) and (c) also apply.
- 8.9 The use of Bahasa Melayu Baku (standard pronunciation of Malay) is encouraged for all Malay programmes, particularly news, info-educational and current affairs programmes. Specifically:
- (a) Local Malay news, info-educational and current affairs programmes must be in Bahasa Melayu Baku.
 - (b) Foreign or acquired programmes that require dubbing should be in Bahasa Melayu Baku. However, acquired programmes that are already in Malay need not be re-dubbed into Bahasa Melayu Baku.
- 8.10 Standard Tamil, which refers to accurate grammar use, pronunciation and intonation, should be used for locally produced Tamil programmes such as

news, current affairs and info-educational programmes. Flexibility can be accorded in instances where the interviewee is not fluent in Tamil. The interviewer, however, should still use standard Tamil. Conversational Tamil, which refers to the use of local terms and expressions in Tamil, may be used in entertainment programmes like dramas, comedies and variety shows.

Children's Programmes

- 8.11 For the purpose of this section, "children" refers to persons below the age of 14 years.
- 8.12 Children may not be able to distinguish real life from fiction and are likely to be disturbed by realistic portrayals of violence, horror, etc. Thus, children's content should not be presented in a manner which may be disturbing or distressing to children, or which may in any way adversely affect their general well-being.
- 8.13 Children's programmes should generally be wholesome and designed to impart a broader knowledge of the world around them, and to promote good social and moral values, and respect for law and order.
- 8.14 Children's programmes must not contain scenes depicting the consumption of liquor or tobacco products unless an educational point is being made, or in very exceptional cases if there is strong editorial justification.
- 8.15 Coarse language must not be used in children's programmes.
- 8.16 Children's programmes should avoid portrayals of dangerous and harmful behaviour that are easily imitated by children in a manner that is likely to result in physical or mental harm.
- 8.17 Programmes for younger children require special care as they may find violence and horror scenes or programmes in both realistic and fantasy settings to be disturbing. For programmes which may be frightening to pre-school children, service providers should provide an advisory to alert parents.

News and Other Factual Programmes

- 8.18 Significant errors in factual programmes such as news, current affairs and info-educational programmes should be corrected and made available at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.19 News and other factual programmes, such as current affairs and info-educational programmes, that contain violent or graphic real-life visuals should carry consumer advice to alert viewers.
- 8.20 The Government or its agencies are to be granted, as soon as practicable, a right of reply or an opportunity to respond to correct mistakes, wrongful reporting or misrepresentations. For private individuals or groups, an

opportunity to respond should be considered based on the merits of each case. The IMDA may direct a service provider to give an aggrieved party the opportunity to respond over an appropriate medium.

8.21 Presentation of news on FTA TV must observe the following additional guidelines:

- (a) News reports and bulletins should always be presented with due accuracy and impartiality, and without the interjection of personal views by presenters.
- (b) News reports and bulletins should be clearly distinguished from other programmes.
- (c) Morbid, sensational, or alarming details not essential to factual reporting should be excluded.
- (d) Particular care must be taken when reporting on sexual crimes. Reports must not carry information which could lead to the identification of such victims.
- (e) News reports must be sensitive to the use of materials or information relating to a person's personal or private affairs. The broadcast of such materials or information is acceptable only if there is an identifiable public interest for doing so.
- (f) Visuals that may seriously distress or offend should only be displayed when there is an identifiable public interest for doing so. Such visuals should be suitably edited and carry consumer advice to alert viewers. Sensitivity must be exercised in broadcasting visuals of or interviews with bereaved relatives or survivors and witnesses of traumatic incidents.
- (g) Sexual or other sensational material should not be exploited as news items without justification.

8.22 Any simulation of a television news bulletin or news flash to be included in any FTA TV programme should be clearly distinguishable from an actual news bulletin.

8.23 Opinion should be clearly distinguished from fact in all factual FTA TV programmes. Personal view programmes in which an individual is given the opportunity to put forward his or her own views, without necessarily referring to opposing views, are subject to the following guidelines:

- (a) The programme must be clearly identified as one which contains personal opinions or views, both in advance announcements and at the start of the programme.
- (b) Acknowledged or undisputed facts must be respected, and service providers have an obligation to do what they can to ensure that the

opinions expressed, however partial, do not rest upon false or inaccurate facts.

- 8.24 Dramatised “reconstructions” in factual FTA TV programmes that seek to reconstruct actual events should not distort key facts. Such dramatised reconstructions should also be identified clearly to the viewer.

Privacy

- 8.25 Programmes should be sensitive to the use of materials or information relating to a person's personal or private affairs.
- 8.26 Special care should be exercised before using material relating to a child's personal or private affairs in programmes. Consent must be obtained from a parent or guardian before naming or visually identifying a child on a criminal matter or disclosing sensitive information concerning the health or welfare of a child.
- 8.27 Sensitivity should be exercised in broadcasting images of or interviews with bereaved relatives or survivors and witnesses of traumatic incidents. Images that may seriously distress or offend should only be displayed when there is identifiable public interest for doing so and be suitably edited.

Stimuli Beyond Normal Perceptual Threshold

Subliminal Messaging

- 8.28 Programmes with subliminal messaging, which is the use of images, sounds or any other devices or means to convey messages or influence the minds of audiences without their being aware of it, are not allowed.

Flashing Images and Regular Patterns

- 8.29 Flashing lights and certain types of regular visual patterns may cause problems for some viewers suffering from photosensitive epilepsy or other related conditions. Care should be taken to minimise these risks in all programmes, especially programmes where children are likely to be watching as they could be more susceptible.

Hypnotism

- 8.30 For any broadcast demonstration of hypnotism for entertainment, care should be taken to minimise the risk of hypnosis being induced in susceptible viewers.

PART 9: INTERACTIVE SERVICES

Contests and Chargeable Services

- 9.1 If, during a programme or programme promotion, viewers are invited to use a chargeable service to obtain information, register a view on a matter or participate in a competition or other activity, the service provider must provide clear information about the cost of the service and charging mechanisms. If the programme is one that can have a substantial audience of children, the programme must present information on the cost of the service and charging mechanisms in a form that children can understand. Such programmes must also make it clear to children that they should obtain their parents' permission to use such services.

“Live” and Interactive Content

- 9.2 Programmes that feature viewers' comments submitted through messaging services, online platforms (e.g. Twitter, Facebook) and otherwise are subject to the guidelines in this Code.
- 9.3 For FTA TV, all comments should be screened and moderated before broadcast. For Subscription TV, all comments should be screened and moderated to the best of the service providers' ability. Offensive content should be removed immediately upon detection or knowledge.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE

This Code shall come into effect on 1 March 2018 and replaces the Free-to-air Television Programme Code that took effect on 24 June 2013 and the Subscription TV Programme Code that took effect on 20 December 2012. The IMDA may from time to time revise or update the Code to maintain accuracy.

- END -

**BOARD OF FILM CENSORS
CLASSIFICATION GUIDELINES**

Preamble

1. These Guidelines have been prepared to raise awareness and understanding of the Board's film classification process. This is not a legal document and is not intended to limit in any way the Board's exercise of functions under the Films Act (Cap 107). While care has been taken to define the content concerns and classification categories, the Board reserves the right to classify any film in such manner as it deems fit.

2. The following guidelines serve as a basis for classifying films, drama, documentaries and TV series on free-to-air TV, subscription TV and video-on-demand. It will enable subscription TV and free-to-air TV to adopt the same ratings for films which have been classified by the BFC for the cinemas and video release.

Introduction

3. Classification Guidelines aim to reflect community standards, while ensuring that due consideration is given to the film's artistic, educational or literary merit. The purpose of classification is to protect the young while allowing more choice for adults.

4. When making a classification decision for a film, the Board takes careful consideration of the film's content as well as all other relevant factors and concerns. The description of each of the classification categories and the indication of the suitable audience in terms of age may be found in these guidelines. To clarify the usage of words in the guidelines, a glossary of terms is included.

5. There are six ratings in film classification. They are:

- G - General
- PG - Parental Guidance
- PG13 - Parental Guidance for Children below 13
- NC16 - No Children below 16 years of age
- M18 - Mature 18, for persons 18 years and above
- R21 - Restricted to persons 21 years and above

6. G, PG and PG13 categories are advisory ratings while NC16, M18 and R21 are enforceable by law. Cinema operators are required to obtain a licence to screen NC16, M18 or R21 films. They should ensure that the age restriction is enforced.

7. In exceptional cases, a film may not be allowed for all ratings (NAR) when the content of the film undermines national interest or erodes the moral fabric of society.

General Principles

8. In general, the Board's classification decisions are guided by the following principles/considerations:

- Generally accepted social mores
- Need to protect the young
- Racial/religious harmony
- National interest
- Treatment of theme, content and context
- Evaluation of impact

a. Generally Accepted Social Mores

Films screened must be sensitive to community standards of morality and decency, as well as social norms acceptable to the general public.

b. Need to Protect the Young

For the lower ratings, particular attention will be paid to content that may be harmful to or unsuitable for the young.

c. Racial/Religious Harmony

As Singapore is a multi-racial and multi-religious society, films that denigrate any racial or religious group, or create misunderstanding or disharmony amongst the races are not allowed for all ratings.

d. National Interest

Films deemed to undermine public order, national security and/or stability will be disallowed for all ratings.

e. Treatment of Theme, Content and Context

How a film is classified depends on its theme or message, presentation of content, and the context in which scenes are presented.

f. Evaluation of Impact

The impact of a film or a scene will be evaluated based on the presentation, duration, frequency, degree of visual and audio details, and their cumulative effect.

The impact may be stronger where a scene:

- Is shown in greater detail; uses close-ups and slow motion
- Uses special effects such as lighting, sound, colour, or size of image to heighten emotions
- Is prolonged and/or frequent
- Is more explicit than implied

- Is realistic rather than stylised
- Is one in which the local audience can identify with
- Is visual rather than verbal or written.

9. In addition, films produced in a 3D format heighten the viewing experience and will be assessed for impact. They may be considered for a higher rating.

10. In classifying films, due consideration will be given to the artistic, educational or literary merit of the film.

Major Content Concerns

11. This part of the guidelines spells out content concerns that are applied in different degrees at all classification levels. The seven major content concerns are:

- Theme
- Violence
- Nudity
- Sex
- Language
- Drug Use
- Horror

a. Theme and Message

The theme (subject matter or topic) and message are important in the classification of a film. The acceptability of a theme is determined by its suitability and treatment i.e. the way it is presented and the context in which scenes are presented. Suitability and treatment of a theme is especially important for the lower classification ratings as they have an impact on the young. Films dealing with mature content (e.g. drug use, prostitution or homosexuality) would generally be classified as NC16, M18 or R21.

b. Violence

- (i) The depiction of violence may frighten, unnerve, unsettle or invite imitation, especially from children. Therefore, only mild portrayals that are relevant to the plot may be allowed in films meant for children. For the higher classifications, a stronger depiction of violence is permitted if it is justified by context.
- (ii) The concerns in violence are:
 - Depiction of graphic/gratuitous violence
 - Normalising the use of violence as a solution to resolve problems;
 - Depiction of violent gangster behaviour (e.g. self mutilation rites);
 - Emphasis on violent techniques/acts (e.g. methods of torture, gangfights, combat techniques);
 - Encouraging aggressive and sadistic attitudes towards infliction of pain and violence;

- Explicit and prolonged sexual violence or erotic portrayal of sexual assault /coercion.

c. Nudity

Nudity is not allowed for a G rating. Rear nudity is allowed in PG films if it is discreet, justified by context and not meant to titillate. Side nudity in a nonsexual context is allowed under PG13. Upper body frontal nudity in a non-sexual context is allowed under NC16. Full frontal nudity may be allowed for M18 or R21, if it is justified by context and without gratuitous close-ups.

Nudity featured in health programs such as breast-feeding can be rated PG, PG13 or NC16 depending on its portrayal and treatment. More explicit portrayals including child birth could be given a higher rating.

d. Sex

The level of sexual activity allowed on screen depends on the explicitness and frequency of the activity, its relevance to the storyline and the target audience. Generally, depictions of sexual activity are not allowed for G, PG, PG13 and NC16.

Scenes depicting sexual activities such as sado-masochism, bondage or sexual violence will be subject to strict review and may only be allowed under a higher rating, depending on the treatment and context. The content should also not be gratuitous or excessive.

Films likely to encourage deviant sexual activities such as paedophilia, bestiality and necrophilia are not allowed for all ratings.

Films that depict a homosexual lifestyle should be sensitive to community values. They should not, promote or justify a homosexual lifestyle. However, non-exploitative and non-explicit depictions of sexual activity between two persons of the same gender may be considered for R21.

Content considered to be pornographic or obscene in nature is not allowed for all ratings.

e. Language

Coarse language and gestures with sexual connotations are not allowed in G films as they are easily imitated by young children. In PG13 films, expletives such as 'fuck' may be permitted if infrequent. Stronger language is acceptable in NC16 films. When classifying M18 and R21 films, consideration would be given to the degree of offensiveness (i.e. vulgarity and religious association) and frequency of such language.

Films with dialect content are allowed on a case-by-case basis. Chinese films meant for theatrical release should generally be in Mandarin, in line with the Speak Mandarin Campaign.

f. Drug Use

Clear, instructive details are not allowed in G, PG and PG13 films as they can be imitated by the younger audience. Such scenes are more acceptable for higher ratings if they are justifiable by context. Portrayals glamorising or encouraging the use of illegal drugs are not allowed for all ratings.

g. Horror

Classification of horror films will take into consideration the impact and shock effect of such films to ensure that younger audiences are protected from disturbing materials.

Documentaries

12. Documentaries will be classified in accordance with the general principles and content concerns expressed in this document. If the information/content is distorted or misrepresented, or requires maturity to comprehend and discern the message and/or intent, the documentary may be given a higher rating.

Consumer Advice

13. Film ratings are usually accompanied by consumer advice. Films classified PG may be given consumer advice where necessary, for example, in the case of violence. Films rated PG13, NC16, M18 and R21 must carry consumer advice.

14. Rating and consumer advice must be clearly visible and legible in publicity materials including website synopses, advertisements in newspapers and magazines. This is to provide more information for consumers to make informed decisions. It also serves as a guide to parents about the suitability of a film for their children.

Trailers

15. All trailers of films must be submitted for classification. Where the trailer content is not suitable for a general audience, a higher rating will be imposed. Trailers classified as NC16 and above can only be exhibited to persons who meet the stipulated age requirement.

16. Trailers rated PG13 should not be shown prior to a G-rated or PG-rated film, or in public places such as video walls.

17. Trailers of NC16 and M18-rated films may be screened during films of a lower rating and/or at cinema lobbies and at video walls. However, in all cases, the content should be suitable for a general audience, including children. Trailers for R21 films can only be shown before films of the same rating. Film distributors should also observe any conditions imposed by the BFC on the screening of the trailers.

Publicity Materials

18. To avoid offending unsolicited viewers and attracting the under-aged, stricter content standards are applied to publicity materials. These materials include posters, banners or billboards displayed in public places, advertisements in newspapers and magazines. Publicity materials for all ratings should conform to community standards and should not offend the general public. Detailed guidelines for print publicity materials are available on the IMDA website.

19. Once a film is classified, posters displayed at public places should clearly display the rating and consumer advice. The display of posters and banners for R21 films should be restricted to cinemas licensed to exhibit R21 films. More sensitivity should also be exercised in the dissemination of publicity materials for films in the lower rating categories as they can be displayed in public places where young audiences are exposed to them.

Periodic Review and Implementation of Guidelines

20. The Board will continue to review guidelines periodically in the light of changes in lifestyle, public expectations and concerns.

01 October 2016

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Coarse language:	Crude and/or offensive language lacking refinement or taste.
Denigrate:	To belittle or distort in a negative way the character of a person/race/religion
Depiction:	Representation, and/or portrayal on screen.
Detail:	Treatment of or attention given to the amount of audio or visual information in the representation of a subject. Detail can include close-ups, repeated, prolonged or slow motion visuals.
Deviant sex:	Sexual behaviour or activities that are not considered socially acceptable. Examples are paedophilia, bestiality, necrophilia and orgies.
Discreet:	Subtle, not explicit, lacking in details and close-ups.
Disturbing:	Upsetting or troubling.
Drug abuse:	Improper or excessive use of drugs.
Excessive:	Beyond reasonable limits, especially in terms of detail, duration or frequency.
Expletive:	An exclamatory word or phrase that is obscene or profane.
Explicit:	Language or depiction with strong details, usually relating to sex and violence.
Exploitative:	Appearing to take advantage of or abuse the situation for the enjoyment of viewers or for sensationalism; lacking moral, artistic, or other values.
Fetish:	An object, an action or a non-sexual part of the body which gives sexual gratification.
Gratuitous:	Materials which are unwarranted or uncalled for, and included without the justification of a defensible storyline or artistic merit.
Horror:	A strong feeling of fear or distress that is inspired by images or acts that are frightful and shocking.

Implied:	Depiction of a subject in which an act or thing is inferred or indicated without actually being seen.
Incite:	To stir up or provoke strong emotions and actions.
Intensity:	The degree or extent to which a subject matter is acute or strong (The intensity of a scene depends on the duration, the audio/visual effects, language, context and the proximity from which the shot was taken).
Justified by context:	Where the depiction is relevant and necessary for the integrity and continuity of the film.
Mature themes:	Issues dealing with adult life, including adultery, alternative lifestyles, promiscuity, suicide, drug dependency, etc.
Moderate:	Depiction that features some details and may have some impact that is kept within reasonable limits, which is generally acceptable.
Nudity:	Nudity can consist of frontal or rear nudity, above and below the waist for both sexes. It is determined by the details of nudity shown, and also by other factors including the duration of visuals, repetition, close-up shots and clarity.
Offensive:	Material that causes outrage or disgust to most people.
Pornography:	The depiction of erotic behaviour intended to cause sexual excitement.
Sexual activity:	An act performed with another for sexual gratification. May include foreplay.
Sexual Connotation:	Words or gestures that imply sexual activity.
Sexual violence:	The act of sexual assault or aggression, in which the victim does not consent e.g. rape.
Sexual simulation:	Imitation or enactment of sexual activity that is not real but looks realistic.
Strong:	Detailed depiction likely to have high impact on viewers.
Suggestion:	Mild, discreet treatment of a subject in which an act or object is hinted at, generally through discreet manner, rather than the whole picture.

- Tone:** The quality of mood, such as sadness, humour, menace, lightness, or seriousness.
- Transvestism:** The lifestyle in which a person adopts the clothes and behaviour of the opposite sex for purposes of emotional or sexual gratification.
- Treatment:** The way in which material is handled or presented.

CLASSIFIABLE ELEMENTS

How a film is rated depends on seven classifiable elements: theme, violence, sex, nudity, language, drug and substance abuse, and horror.

Theme

G	Themes are suitable for viewers of all ages. Content should promote positive social values e.g. family bonding, respect for the elders.
PG	Themes should be suitable for children below 13 years. Themes should generally have a low sense of threat or menace, and be justifiable by context. Special attention should be paid to their Impact on children. Crime, violence, juvenile delinquency and promiscuity should not be glamorised or promoted.
PG13	Themes should be suitable for young teens between 13 and 15. Darker themes can be allowed. Crime, violence, juvenile delinquency, and promiscuity should not be glamorised or promoted.
NC16	Portrayal of mature themes (e.g. gangsterism and transvestism) may be allowed, provided they are treated with discretion and appropriate to those 16 years and above.
M18	Stronger portrayal and exploration of mature themes are allowed. Homosexual theme/content as a sub-plot may be permitted, if discreet in treatment and not gratuitous.
R21	Stronger and more explicit portrayal and exploration of mature themes are allowed. Films that portray, as a main theme, same-sex marriages or parenting will be subject to strict review.
NAR	Themes that promote issues that denigrate any race or religion, or undermine national interest will not be allowed. Themes that glorify undesirable fetishes or behaviour (e.g. paedophilia and bestiality) are not allowed. Promotion or glamorisation of homosexual lifestyle.

Violence

G	<p>Mild portrayals of violence are allowed.</p> <p>The occasional mild threat or menace is acceptable if justified by context.</p> <p>No portrayals of dangerous or harmful behaviour that can be easily imitated by children.</p>
PG	<p>Moderate portrayals of violence without details, may be allowed, if justified by context.</p> <p>Portrayals of violence should not dwell on cruelty, infliction of pain or torture of any kind.</p>
PG13	<p>Moderate portrayals of violence with some details, may be allowed, if justified by context.</p> <p>Portrayals of violence can include some infliction of pain and injury but should not be detailed, intense or prolonged.</p>
NC16	<p>The portrayal of infliction of pain and injuries may be allowed with some details of blood and gore but should not be prolonged or frequent. Explicit sexual violence is not allowed.</p>
M18	<p>Realistic depiction of violence and gore with strong impact is allowed if justified by context.</p> <p>However, the portrayal should not be excessive, gratuitous or exploitative.</p> <p>Stronger portrayals of sexual violence may be allowed if justified by context, infrequent or without strong details.</p>
R21	<p>Strong and realistic depictions of violence and gore are allowed if justified by context.</p> <p>Depiction of torture can be allowed, if not exploitative or gratuitous.</p>
NAR	<p>Detailed or gratuitous depictions of extreme violence or cruelty. Detailed instructions on methods of crime or killings.</p>

Sex

G	No sexual activity is allowed. Portrayals of affection (e.g. brief kissing) can be allowed.
PG	Sexual activity may be implied, and should be infrequent. Only mild displays of affection (e.g. kissing and caressing) and mild sexual innuendoes are allowed.
PG13	Sexual activity may be implied, and should be infrequent and brief. Sexual humour can be allowed. Sexual innuendoes, crude hand gestures and sexual imagery can be allowed if mild and infrequent.
NC16	Non-explicit depiction of sexual activities may be allowed but should not be detailed or prolonged.
M18	Sexual activity may be portrayed if justified by context, infrequent and without strong details. Depiction of occasional, mild sexual activity (i.e. kissing and hugging) between persons of the same gender may be permitted if justified by context and not gratuitous. Sexual violence may be allowed if justified by context, infrequent and without strong details.
R21	Simulated sexual activities are allowed if they are not excessive. Explicit images of sexual activity (e.g. masturbation, fellatio and sexual act) need to be justified by context. Explicit portrayals of sex between persons of the same gender are not allowed. Films likely to encourage an interest in abusive or unnatural sexual activity (e.g. paedophilia, incest and anal sex) are not permitted. Films with themes involving deviant sexual activities (e.g. sadomasochism, bondage, orgies or sex involving violence) will be subject to strict review and are likely to be disallowed.
NAR	Exploitative or pornographic sexual acts. Depictions of obscene and/or unnatural sexual activities (e.g. bestiality, necrophilia and paedophilia). Real sexual activities (e.g. actual penetration, actual ejaculation). Gratuitous, exploitative or offensive depictions or sexual activity including fetishes or practices which are offensive or abhorrent.

Nudity

G	There should be no nudity.
PG	Discreet portrayal of back nudity is allowed if it is brief and in a nonsexual context. Full frontal and side nudity is not allowed.
PG13	Discreet and fleeting side profile nudity may be allowed in a non-sexual context. Full frontal nudity is not allowed. However, infrequent portrayal of female frontal nudity of the upper body may be allowed only under exceptional circumstances and in a non-sexual context. For example, films which feature historical or dramatised events such as the World War II Holocaust, tribal ways of life, or health programmes.
NC16	Infrequent, brief and discreet portrayal of female upper body frontal nudity may be allowed in a non-sexual context.
M18	Full frontal nudity with moderate detail is acceptable if justified by context, and not excessive. No close up of genitalia is allowed.
R21	Full nudity is permitted but should not be excessive. Close ups of genitalia should be contextually justifiable.
NAR	Exploitative and excessive nudity.

Language

G	No coarse language is allowed.
PG	Infrequent coarse language is allowed if it is relevant and justified by context. Examples are "bitch" and "asshole".
PG13	The word "f**k" is allowed if used infrequently.
NC16	Infrequent use of expletives such as "motherf**ker", "cunt", "chee bye", "lan jiao", "puki mak" and "pundai" may be allowed if justified by context and not impactful. Coarse language which offends community and cultural sensitivities should not be allowed (e.g. "kan ni na lao bu"). Continued aggressive use of strong language and verbal sexual abuse is unacceptable.
M18	Coarse language is allowed if it is not excessive.
R21	Frequent use of strong coarse language may be allowed.
NAR	Language that denigrates religion or is religiously profane (e.g. Jesus F**king Christ).

Drug and Substance Abuse

G	No references to illegal drugs or drug abuse. Content meant for children should not promote consumption of alcohol and tobacco products.
PG	Only discreet references to illegal drug use are allowed on the condition that such references do not promote or endorse drug abuse and should be justified by context. Content targeted at children should not promote consumption of alcohol and tobacco products.
PG13	Only discreet depictions of illegal drug use are allowed on the condition that such depictions do not promote or endorse drug abuse and should be justified by context. Content targeted at children should not promote consumption of alcohol and tobacco products.
NC16	Drug taking may be allowed if brief and infrequent. The film must not promote or encourage drug and substance abuse.
M18	Drug taking may be allowed with some details. The film must not promote or encourage drug and substance abuse.
R21	Drug taking sequences may be allowed but instructive details of illegal drug use are not allowed. The film must not promote or encourage drug and substance abuse.
NAR	Materials glorifying or encouraging drug and substance abuse. Detailed and instructive depiction of illegal drug use.

Horror

G	Treatment of horror should not be too realistic, or threatening, as it is likely to cause fear and anxiety among children. Horror tinged with humour may reduce the impact. Scenes of horror should be mild and not psychologically disturbing.
PG	Frightening sequences should not be prolonged or intense. Horror tinged with humour and in a fantasy setting may be mitigating factors.
PG13	Depiction of horror can be more realistic and intense.
NC16	Films with disturbing or gory scenes without strong details may be allowed. Frightening scenes which are more prolonged may be allowed.
M18	Prolonged and/or intense sequences that invoke fear and/or terror may be permitted.
R21	Depiction of intense horror, and sustained threat or menace may be permitted if contextually justified. Portrayals of extreme abhorrent activity that may offend and cause great discomfort may be disallowed.
NAR	N.A.