

# INFO-COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (IMDA)

## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR FILMS

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Films and videos that are intended for distribution or public exhibition have to be submitted to IMDA for classification, unless exempted.

Applicants are advised to obtain the classification ratings before publicising or advertising their films.

A Film Licence is required for distribution or public exhibition of films that are of a restricted classification (i.e. NC16, M18 or R21). Only videos classified up to M18 can be distributed.

To ensure ratings are provided in time for licence application and publicity plans, applicants should submit their films at least **two months** before date of distribution or public exhibition. Please also note that as some films may require consultation, more processing time will be needed.

The IMDA has drawn up the following guidelines to facilitate the submission of films<sup>1</sup> meant for distribution and public exhibition, for classification. To avoid any delay or rejection, applicants are advised to check their films before submitting them for classification.

### 1. IMDA ONLINE SUBMISSION

- (a) All applications must be accompanied by a fully completed Submission Form made through IMDA Online. Incomplete and inaccurate applications will be rejected.
- (b) Where a film is to be exhibited at a festival, the name of the festival, venue and exhibition dates must be indicated.
- (c) The submitted film must be a finished product (including credits) and must be identical to the final exhibition or distribution copy unless it is submitted as a screener (SA/NSA).
- (d) Express service applications which require consultations will be converted to Standard Service, and applicants will be notified.
- (e) Running time for Express service applications meant for distribution must be declared accurately for timely processing. Applications with inaccurate running time will be rejected.
- (f) For provision of online links to download/stream films (i.e. non-physical media), you are required to email [Customer\\_Services@imda.gov.sg](mailto:Customer_Services@imda.gov.sg) to notify IMDA to register the links, quoting the in-receipt number of the submission.

### 2. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- (a) Picture and sound quality must be good. Audio and visual must be in sync.

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<sup>1</sup> "Film" means a cinematograph film or video recording; or any form of recording from which a moving visual image including a computer generated image, can be produced and viewed (together with its soundtrack); and includes any trailer for a film and any part of a film.

**INFO-COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (IMDA)**  
**SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR FILMS**

---

- (b) Watermarks (e.g. "For Preview") must not cover or block the screen and impede the viewing and/or assessment of a film for classification. They must not occupy a significant proportion of the screen, or be positioned at the centre of the screen. The letters/logo of the watermark must not be opaque.
- (c) IMDA reserves the right to request for the film to be submitted in a different format if the submitted format is incompatible for playback.

Discs (BluRay, DVDs)

- (d) All features (including extra/bonus features) in the disc(s) must play from start to end without glitches and/or drop in audio-visual playback quality.
- (e) All video selectable options (Special Features) must play without glitches from start to end when selected.
- (f) Submitted discs of different formats must be compliant with the different format specifications. For example, a DVD must be able to play in a DVD player or in the case of Blu-ray disc, a Blu-ray player or Sony Playstation 3.
- (g) Submissions are accepted on DVD-R, DVD+R (single or dual layer), BD-R or replicated (factory pressed) check discs.
- (h) To ensure videos are easy to examine, functions must not be "user disabled". A disc may be rejected if it contains any significant portions which will not allow the user to pause, fast forward and rewind or chapter search.

Digital Cinema Package (DCP)

- (i) For DCP submissions, IMDA Online submissions should only be made after a screening slot has been successfully booked with IMDA.
- (j) The DCP and any required Key Delivery Message (KDM) should be submitted to IMDA two working days before the scheduled screening slot. If these materials are not provided on time, IMDA reserves the right to reject the submission and cancel the screening slot. The applicant will need to book a new screening slot (subject to availability) and submit a new application.

USB Mass Storage Devices

- (k) Submissions are accepted on USB storage devices (e.g., thumbdrives, portable hard discs) as long as they are plug-and-play-ready, without the need for additional readers.
- (l) Submitted content must be in a common file format (e.g., mp4, mpg, avi, etc) playable on media players commonly available in laptops.
- (m) Prior to submission, storage devices must be scanned to ensure they do not contain harmful content such as viruses, malwares, trojan horses etc.

Online Links (Streaming Videos or Downloadable Videos)

- (n) Videos provided on streaming platforms (Eg. Vimeo) must remain accessible for the entire duration of the classification process.
  - It must be playable through a web browser and should not require the installation of any additional application clients or signing up of accounts.
  - If the platform is access-controlled, the access credentials must be provided to IMDA. You can send us a password protected link for streaming with unlimited access.

**INFO-COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (IMDA)**  
**SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR FILMS**

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- (o) Links to videos hosted on online repositories (Eg. Dropbox, Google Drive) for downloading must be accessible and valid for the entire duration of the classification process.
  - The submitted content must be in a common file format (e.g., mp4, mpg, avi, etc) playable on media players commonly available in laptops.
- (p) Indicate the relevant information for online links under the “Remarks” field when you make the online submission.
- (q) Prior to submission, the video files must be scanned to ensure they do not contain harmful content such as viruses, malwares, trojan horses etc.

**Virtual Reality (VR) Films**

- (r) VR films, i.e. non-panoramic or panoramic 180°/360° videos without user interaction, should be submitted in MP4 format, in a resolution and bitrate identical to the final version, and must be playable on commercial VR-playback devices. For VR films in 3D, the file submitted can be in Side-By-Side 3D or Top/Bottom 3D format.

**3. SUBMISSION TITLES**

- (a) The title declared must be the original title<sup>2</sup> as found in the film / main feature.
- (b) The AKA (Also Known As) title is to be used if the original title is in a foreign script and cannot be romanised.
- (c) Title declared must be complete with sequel and volume titles if available. E.g. Harry Potter and The Sorcerer's Stone, Harry Potter and The Order Of The Phoenix, Speed, Speed 2: Cruise Control.

**4. COVER INLAY**

- (a) Pictorials on the packaging/inlay of discs must meet the standards of the IMDA's print publicity guidelines. Inlay that breaches the Publicity Materials Guidelines will be rejected. A replacement inlay will need to be submitted for the approval.
- (b) Pictorials on the packaging/inlay must correspond to the content in the main feature. It should not mislead and/or misinform the consumer.
- (c) The title on the inlay or packaging must correspond to that in the main feature.

**5. SUBMISSION TYPES**

- (a) All titles that have not been rated before are to be submitted as Master<sup>3</sup> (FA/NFA for public exhibition or A/NA for distribution) copies.
- (b) Titles which have been classified before but fall within the following categories must be submitted for reassessment:
  - i. Films with the decision ‘Passed Clean with Condition’
  - ii. Films with dialect content meant for public exhibition

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<sup>2</sup> Original Title = Original wordings/punctuations/notations in the original language.

<sup>3</sup> A ‘Master’ copy submission refers to the first copy of a film submitted by a distributor or exhibitor.

**INFO-COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (IMDA)**  
**SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR FILMS**

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iii. Films rated R(A) are to be submitted for re-classification (FR/NFR for public exhibition or RA/NRA for distribution)

(i) and (ii) are to be submitted as Repeat Title (RT/FRT) if the content is identical to the classified version.

- (c) Submissions containing bonus features that are different from previously rated submissions can be submitted as an Extra Feature (EF/NEF) submission if the main feature is identical.
- (d) Express Service applications can be made for Master (XA/XFA) copy submissions, for expedited assessment at a fee. Such applications will only be accepted for films meant for commercial purpose. Should consultations be needed for the title, the application will be converted into a standard application.

## **6. CONTENT OF SUBMISSIONS**

- (a) Applicants shall ensure that their submissions are complete – i.e. there should not be any missing segments, missing discs or blank discs.
- (b) Films and discs submitted must not contain any raw or pre-production footage, and must contain the completed film unless it is submitted as a screener (SA/NSA).
- (c) A film submitted for classification for a theatrical exhibition should not contain any other material. Any trailers or advertisements intended to be shown with the film should be separately submitted for classification.
- (d) All submissions must contain opening and closing credits (and must appear within the frame of the screen, and not cut off by the edges). For series, as long as there are opening and ending credits found anywhere within the series, it is acceptable, but should be indicated in the submission. Cast information must be found within the film content.
- (e) For series, each episode must have **ONE** or **BOTH** of the following:
  - The corresponding episode title labelled in the content and/or menu page and/or
  - The corresponding episode number labelled in the video content and/or menu page.
- (f) Films in foreign languages should be accompanied with subtitles in any of the four official languages to aid the classification of the film, unless the films are meant to be distributed or publicly exhibited without subtitles. If so, this should be clearly stated in the submission form.
- (g) Videos must not contain any advertisements on medical products that have not been approved by the Health Sciences Authority (HSA).
- (h) For compilations<sup>4</sup> of short films, the application must be made with a main title, and the individual short film titles must be listed in the application remarks.
- (i) Films recorded off cinema/computer screens should not be submitted for classification.

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<sup>4</sup> A compilation is classified as a single film. As such, it is to be screened in its entirety, and modifications by way of screening only part of the compilation will invalidate the classification.

**INFO-COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (IMDA)**  
**SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR FILMS**

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- (j) The applicant should inform the IMDA of any "hidden" elements in DVDs and BluRay discs such as "easter eggs" or similar features.

The IMDA reserves the right to reject any applications which do not fulfill the above guidelines.

The guidelines take effect from 1 July 2021. The IMDA may from time to time revise this document to ensure that it is in line with developments in the industry.