Introduction

The BIC Standard Subject Categories & Qualifiers scheme is the standard classification scheme for the UK book trade and other English language markets.

Version 2 of the BIC scheme (BIC2) was released in April 2006. It replaces the interim Version 1.1.

It is available from www.bic.org.uk as a pdf document, arranged as a hierarchical listing of Categories and Qualifiers complete with usage notes and cross references. These user guidelines are designed to be used in conjunction with that hierarchical listing.

Also available from the BIC website are:

- Summary of changes in BIC2
- Conversion instructions for migrating from BIC1.1 to BIC2.
- Excel files of BIC2 Categories and Qualifiers, with all formatting and notes removed, suitable for loading as authority files in bibliographic systems
- Indexes (see Part 2)
Part 1: General Rules

The basic rules for assigning BIC2 Categories and Qualifiers, put most simply, are as follows:

Rule 1: Ensure the first Category entered is the primary subject.

Taking advantage of all available information about the subject and scope of the work, ensure the first BIC Category indicates the most pertinent and important subject of the work.

Rule 2: Classify titles as precisely as possible or as broadly as required.

If a book is precisely on a specific topic matching a BIC Category, use that precise code only; if it is broad-ranging in its scope within a single subject area, use a single broad BIC Category rather than listing all the more specific Categories listed beneath it (see Note A below).

Rule 3: Assign as many Categories as are required.

If the book covers several subject areas, assign relevant Categories from across the BIC scheme to indicate this, as many as are required and that space allows (see Note B below). Assign only Categories for subjects that the book is substantially about as a whole, not for subjects that are peripheral.

Rule 4: Observe any usage notes and instructions linked to Categories.

In the hierarchical listing, many Categories carry specific usage notes and instructions; sometimes these are listed under a broad Category (eg Level 1 or Level 2) but they apply to all Categories listed beneath it. These usage notes and instructions carry important and useful information about using the BIC scheme and help maintain consistency.

Rule 5: Add Qualifiers whenever appropriate.

The Qualifiers are a key feature of the BIC scheme structure and provide great flexibility, enabling the expression of a vast range of subjects with a comparatively small number of values. Note that the Qualifiers are associated with the book as a whole and not with a specific Category, although the link between Category and Qualifier is often implicit (eg CJ* “Language teaching & learning” Categories and Language Qualifiers).

Note A: Because of the hierarchical nature of the codes, it is not necessary to use “high-level” codes in conjunction with immediately subsequent codes denoting specific subjects. With the specific Category JMTD “Sleep & dreams”, for example, there is no need to add the broader (i.e. shorter) code JM “Psychology” to indicate the wider context of the subject. The fact that the subject is an aspect of Psychology is implicit in the code.

Note B: There are no fixed limits on the number of Categories or Qualifiers that may be applied in the BIC scheme; limitations tend to be imposed by the different systems on which users are working. The BIC scheme cannot be used to best effect if only a single value may be assigned; it is designed to allow multiple values. In practice, a limit of 4 or 5 each of Categories and Qualifiers will be sufficient to cover nearly all circumstances.
Part 2: Use of Indexes or Text Search

In addition to the hierarchical listing, a series of indexes to BIC2 is to be made available for users:

- Index of Adult Categories
- Index of Children’s Categories
- Index of Geographical Qualifiers
- Index of Language Qualifiers

(The other Qualifier listings are so short they can be quickly scanned in their entirety and require no index.)

Similarly, users may have access to a text search facility that enables them to search for words from the subject headings, without having to specify the code.

These indexes and text search facilities provide very useful ways for users to locate appropriate Categories. However, it is important that any Category found in this way must *always* be checked in the context of the full hierarchical listing however, to ensure it is the most appropriate, and to make use of usage notes and cross references associated with specific Categories.

This is less of an issue with Qualifiers, which can generally be safely be taken on face value from the index or search results.

In the absence of an index or text search facility, users must familiarise themselves with the location of broad subject areas and individual Categories in the hierarchical listing.
Part 3: Readership / Treatment

Whether working with an index or directly from the hierarchical listing, the aim is to assign the most appropriate Category or Categories for the book in question. This involves making some key decisions about the intended readership of the book and its treatment of the subject.

Is the book intended for children or adults (or both)? If it is for children or young adults, or is an educational item up to minimum school leaving age, then a Category from Section Y must be assigned. Section Y codes alone must not be used on adult books.

For adult material, is the book for the general reader or for a specialist, professional or academic readership? Many subjects relate only to general books (eg crime fiction) or to specialist material (eg medical textbooks), but other subjects may each be covered by very different kinds of books. Thus, a number of BIC Categories relate to the same subject, strictly speaking, but indicate a different treatment (or intended readership) according to the Section they are in. This is a clear example of the need to evaluate each Category in the context of its Section and its placement within it, as stated in Part 2 above.

For example, academic and specialist books may be classified as PSVW6 “Birds (ornithology)” within Section P Mathematics & Science, while general books on the subject should be classified under WNCB “Wildlife: birds & birdwatching” in Section W “Lifestyle, Sport & Leisure”.

Other examples of this distinction include (specialist Category first):

- AF* “Art Forms” Categories (in Section A “The Arts”) as distinct from WF* Handicrafts, Decorative Arts & Crafts” Categories (in Section W “Lifestyle, Sport & Leisure”)
- AKTA “Fashion Design & theory” (in Section A) and JFCK “Fashion & society” (in Section J “Society & Social Sciences”) as distinct from WJF “Fashion & style guides” (in Section W)
- AMR “Professional interior design” (in Section A) as distinct from WJK “Interior design , decor & style guides” (in Section W)
- JKV “Crime & criminology” (in Section J) as distinct from BTC “True crime” (in Section B “Biography & True Stories”)
- JHBK “Sociology: family & relationships (in Section J) as distinct from VFV “Family & relationships” (in Section V “Health & Personal Development”)
- MBNH “Personal & public health” (in Section M “Medicine”) as distinct from VFD “Popular medicine & health” (in Section V)
- RGS “Geographical maps (specialist) (in Section R “Earth Sciences, Geography, Environment, Planning) as distinct from WTRM “Travel maps” (in Section W)

In short, it can be generally said that Sections V and W include many Categories that are designed for use with “popular” treatments of subjects that might also feature in more specialist or academic works.
As a general rule, the different Sections have certain connotations as regards treatment or readership:

- Used for children’s, young adult and educational material (except ELT, see below): Section Y. Note use of Educational Purpose and Reading Level Qualifiers with Section Y codes

- Used for general and popular adult works: Sections B, F, V, W

- Used mainly for academic, technical or specialist works: Sections K, L, M, P, R, T (note PDZ “Popular Science” for general readers, and codes from the RN* Environment section can be used on a range of material)

- Note that all material on computing and digital technology goes in Section U, from consumer guides to professional and specialist research material (Note the UD “Digital Lifestyle” sub-section in particular for consumer/user guides)

- Section E is used only for all ELT material – whether for adult or children.

- Other adult sections cover a mix of types (A, C, D, G, H, J), although within these, some sub-sections are more specialist than others (eg within Section J, JH “Sociology & Anthropology” is for specialist & academic works, JF “Society & Culture: General” may be used for works of broader general appeal)
Part 4: Special Rules and Conventions

There are a number of Categories and Qualifiers that have special characteristics or which may be used in particular ways. Other values, new to BIC2, represent a significant change from BIC1.1 practice. These are listed and explained here, illustrated by examples. (Note: worked examples of the application of General Rules on more straightforward records follow in Part 5 below.)

The examples are a mixture of real and imaginary works, chosen purely for their illustrative value.

4.1 Children’s, Young Adult & Educational

Section Y contains all Categories for use with books for children and young adults (up to c 16 years). This includes baby and activity books, children’s fiction and general interest, and educational material up to minimum school leaving age (ie up to GCSE in England & Wales; Standard Grade in Scotland). Section Y has been radically revised in BIC2, resulting in a much shorter and simpler section, designed from the bottom up to reflect the particular features of this special sector of publishing.

There are extensive scope notes throughout Section Y in the hierarchical listing to guide the user, but a few key points are worth repeating here.

With all Y* Categories, also assign an appropriate Qualifier from the Educational Purpose or Reading Age / Level sections. It is particularly important to assign Educational Purpose Qualifiers with all Categories from YQ “Educational Material” and Reading Age /Level Qualifiers with all Categories from YF “Children’s & Young Adult Fiction & True Stories”.

Note that “reading age/level” should be interpreted in the broadest sense as the lowest age for which the book is intended: it is more to do with the interest level rather than any actual reading ability. Material specifically designed for reluctant readers, or children whose reading ability is lower than that expected for their age, should also be given a Qualifier of 5AR “For reluctant readers (children)”. 

Example 4.1.1

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

Bloomsbury advise that the lower reading age for Harry Potter (leaving aside Adult editions) is 8 years.

Assign: YFH Fantasy & magical realism (Children's/YA)  
5AJ Reading age: from c 8 years

Example 4.1.2

Pants

This picture book is an unashamedly silly celebration of pants, for very young children.

Assign: YBC Picture books  
5AB For children c 0-2 years
Example 4.1.3

Access to British History KS2

A history textbook designed for Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum: as such it needs a Category from YQ “Educational Material” and, if possible, an Educational Purpose Qualifier.

Assign:  

YQH Educational: History  
1DBK United Kingdom, Great Britain  
4KHJ For National Curriculum Key Stage 2

Example 4.1.4

Outlaws, Bandits and Pirates (Amazing History series)

An entertaining but informative history book designed to be read at home: as such it should have a code from YN “Children's & Young Adult: General Non-fiction”, rather than YQ. It benefits from a Reading Age Qualifier rather than a formal Educational Purpose Qualifier.

Assign:  

YNH History & the past: general interest (Children's/YA)  
5AF Reading age: from c 5 years

It is acceptable to assign both YN* and YQ* codes to the same book, especially for early years material, but a clear distinction should be made between textbooks and books for home wherever possible. For books specifically identified as “home learning”, use the appropriate YQ* code plus the Qualifier 4Y.

Example 4.1.5

Carol Vorderman’s English Made Easy

A home learning title designed to support work done at school; it is of a clearly educational nature but is not a textbook. It is legitimate to assign Educational Purpose Qualifiers (eg for National Curriculum) if indicated.

Assign:  

YQC Educational: English language & literacy  
2AB English  
4KHJ For National Curriculum Key Stage 2  
4Y Designed for home learning
Note that the same codes, in YX “Personal & Social Issues”, are used on both fiction (with YF* codes) and non-fiction titles that address the specific issues. This enables all such material to be found with a single search.

Example 4.1.5

Four Days till Friday

This novel addresses the issue of bullying.

Assign:  
YFS  School stories (Children’s/YA)  
YXC  Personal & social issues: bullying, violence & abuse (Children’s/YA)  
5AL  From c 10 years

Example 4.1.6

Bullies, Bigmouths and So-called Friends

This non-fiction book tackles same issue through puzzles and practical advice.

Assign:  
YXC  Personal & social issues: bullying, violence & abuse (Children’s/YA)  
5AL  From c 10 years

Note also the use of Y codes in 4.2 and 4.3 below.
4.2 Classroom Resources & other Educational material

All textbooks and educational material for use by school-age children should be classified with Categories from YQ “Educational Material”, ideally with an appropriate Educational Purpose Qualifier, as explained in 4.1 above. [If Readership or Audience level values are indicated (nb these are outside the BIC Subject Category scheme), they should reflect the educational level of the students, eg Primary education.]

All background material and general advice on teaching techniques for teachers should be classified with Categories from JN Education. [Audience = Professional / Undergraduate / Postgraduate as appropriate.]

In between these two types of material, are classroom resources such as photocopiable resources, teacher’s editions of textbooks, etc, which are used in the classroom by or through the teacher. These should be classified primarily with JNUM “Teacher’s classroom resources & material” and also with a Category indicating the subject, typically from YQ*, and an appropriate Educational Purpose Qualifier. [Audience should indicate both Professional and the educational level of the students.]

Similarly, books for teachers on teaching a specific subject should similarly be classified primarily with JNU “Teaching of a specific subject” and also with a Category indicating the subject, typically from YQ*. Educational Purpose Qualifiers are not required. [Audience should indicate Professional / Undergraduate / Postgraduate, as appropriate.]

Example 4.2.1

Key Stage 2 Science: photocopy masters

This is a binder of photocopy masters for use in the classroom by teachers and students of general science at Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum.

Assign: JNUM Teacher’s classroom resources & material
YQS Educational: Sciences, general science
4KHJ For National Curriculum Key Stage 2

Example 4.2.2

The Effective Teaching of Mathematics in Secondary Education

This teaching guide is intended for adult teachers and trainee teachers, not for secondary school students. As this work applies to mathematics at secondary level, a Category from Section Y is appropriate. It is also useful to add a reference to the relevant level in the educational system.

Assign: JNU Teaching of a specific subject
YQM Educational: Mathematics & numeracy
JNLC Secondary schools

(Books on teaching specific subjects at further or higher education level are treated in the same way, but do not require the use of a Y* code to indicate the subject. The appropriate adult code is used instead.)
4.3 Study & Revision Guides

Whereas BIC1.1 had a single Qualifier 4R to indicate study & revision guides, this is replaced in BIC2 by a series of Categories placed within the appropriate subject area, for use with the vast majority of such items. For the key vocational and professional areas where study & revision guides proliferate, these are:

- KFCX “Accounting: study & revision guides”
- KFFX “Banking & finance: study & revision guides”
- LR “Law: study & revision guides”
- MRG* “Medicine: study & revision guides” & following

There is also a single Category within Section Y for all school-level study & revision guides up to minimum school leaving age (GCSE in England & Wales, Standard Grade in Scotland) – to be used with the appropriate Y* code indicating the subject:

- YQZ “Educational: study & revision guides”

For A/AS Level study guides, use the new Qualifier 4KLR, in conjunction with the appropriate Subject Category from the Adult sections (ie other than Section Y).

Example 4.3.1

ACCA Practice and Revision Kit

A broad ranging revision kit for ACCA exams. Only the appropriate study & revision guide Category is required; the general subject area of Accounting is implicit in the KFC prefix

Assign: KFCX Accounting: study & revision guides

Example 4.3.2

CIMA C2 Financial Accounting Fundamentals: Revision Kit

A revision aid for a specific paper; the specific area should also be indicated

Assign: KFCF Financial accounting
KFCX Accounting: study & revision guides

Example 4.3.3

MCQs for the MRCP

A revision aid consisting of multiple choice questions from previous papers of the MRCP exam.

Assign: MRGD Medical revision aids: MRCP
Example 4.3.4

Let’s Revise GCSE French

As this is for GCSE, Categories from Section Y must be used. To be fully classified, this requires indications of the subject, the language involved, the educational level and the fact that it is a revision aid.

Assign: YQF  Educational: Foreign languages
        YQZ  Educational: study & revision guides
        2ADF  French
        4KHT  For National Curriculum Key Stage 4 & GCSE

Example 4.3.5

A Level Physics: Study & Revision Guide

As this is for A Level, a combination of adult Category and single Qualifier is required.

Assign: PH  Physics
        4KLR  A/AS Level study & revision guides
4.4a History

Whereas BIC1.1 had multiple “pre-assembled” History Categories, indicating both the geographical area and the time period, BIC2 has two separate sequences, one for the region (HBJ*) and one for the period (HBL*), which must be used in combination in order to represent the information previously held in a single Category. BIC2 also features a list of specific key historical topics and events at HBT* and a list of major wars and campaigns under HBW* Military History.

As a result, the classification of any history text is likely to require multiple HB* codes. To support consistency, the following priority rules should be observed:

a) for all Ancient History (up to c500 CE), enter HBLA or HBLA1 as the first code (most bookshops and publishers would regard ancient history as a distinct section, while later history is divided primarily by region rather than by date);
b) if there is a HBW* or HBT* category which precisely and succinctly describes the book enter that first (or second in the case of Ancient History);
c) next enter the HBJ* (region) code or HBG in the case of World History;
d) then enter the HBL* (time period) code (except for Ancient History – see (a) above);
e) then add any HBT*or HBW* values that are peripheral or supplementary to the scope of the book;
f) finally, add Geographical and Time Period Qualifiers for consistency and greater precision.

To put it another way: as a rule, history books of a specific place and time should have an HBJ* code first followed by HBL*. However, these may be preceded by a specific HBT* or HBW* code where relevant; while HBLA* codes take precedence over all HB* codes.

Note it is not usually necessary to use an HB* code in conjunction with “History of [specific subject]” Categories, such as PDX “History of science”, or AC* “History of Art / Art & Design Styles” (see below).

Example 4.4.1

England under the Tudors

A history of England during the reigns of the Tudor monarchs, 1485 to 1603.

Assign:  
HBJD1  British & Irish history  
HBLH  Early modern history: c 1450/1500 to c 1700  
1DBKE  England  
3JB  c 1500 to c 1600

Example 4.4.2

Fields of Fury: the American Civil War

Here a specific military history category is available and takes precedence.

Assign:  
HBWJ  American Civil War  
HBJK  History of the Americas  
HBLL  Modern history: c 1700 to c 1900  
1KBB  USA  
3JH  c 1800 to c 1900
Example 4.4.3

A Social History of Europe during the Napoleonic Wars

Social history is the key aspect here, with the Napoleonic Wars a supplementary.

Assign:  HBTB  Social & cultural history
         HBJD  European history
         HBLL  Modern history: c 1700 to c 1900
         HBWH  Napoleonic Wars
         1D    Europe
         3JH   c 1800 to c 1900

Example 4.4.4

Rome at the Height of Empire

Ancient History takes precedence.

Assign:  HBLA  Ancient History
         HBJD  European history
         1QDAR Ancient Rome

Example 4.4.5

Chronicle of the 20th Century

An illustrated account of 20th century events across the world.

Assign:  HBG    General & world history
         HBLW   20th century history: c 1900 to c 2000
         3JJ    20th century

4.4b History of Art

Similarly, when using an AC* Category to indicate a period or style of art, together with a Category from AF* or AG* (to indicate the form, eg oil painting, or treatment, eg botanical art), enter the AC* Category first.

Example 4.4.6

Italian Renaissance Sculpture

An introduction to Italian sculpture of the Renaissance.

Assign:  ACND  Renaissance art
         AFKB  Sculpture
         1DST  Italy
4.5 Biography, Autobiography, Diaries & Memoirs

Note that BIC2 distinguishes between biographies and autobiographies for the first time, and also introduces categories for special kinds of biographical works: BM “Memoirs” and BJ “Diaries, letters & journals”. See notes in the hierarchical listing for definitions and advice on usage.

With all biographies (in the broadest sense, including autobiographies), you should use the specific category best suited to the person who is the subject of the book, eg a golfer is classified under BGS “Biography: sport”. There is also a standing instruction when using BG* codes to assign also a more specific subject code where possible, eg WSJG “Golf”.

Historically, users have often found it difficult to decide which should be the primary BIC Category: the biography code or the specific subject code. The simplest solution and the approved BIC2 convention, slightly refined in this Release 2, is that if it is appropriate to assign a BG* code – that is, if the book is the account of a complete life, or a life so far, or a substantial period of a life – then the **BG* code should be entered first**.

If the book is restricted to a short period of time, eg a politician’s time in office or a period of particular intensity or interest, then it is not a biography and should be classed by subject – although it may qualify for the addition of BM or BJ. See the following examples.

**Example 4.5.1**

David Beckham: My Son

A biography of footballer David Beckham by his father.

Assign:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BGS</td>
<td>Biography: sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSJA</td>
<td>Football (Soccer, Association football)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example 4.5.2**

Only a Game? The Diary of a Professional Footballer

By contrast, Eamon Dunphy’s diary of his 1973-4 season at Millwall is not a fully-fledged biography. Note the addition of BJ.

Assign:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WSJA</td>
<td>Football (Soccer, Association football)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJ</td>
<td>Diaries, letters &amp; journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1DBKESL</td>
<td>London, Greater London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3JJPL</td>
<td>c 1970 to c 1980</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For critical biographies of writers, it is appropriate to add a code from DS “Literature: history & criticism” to indicate the area of activity of the subject of the book (see Example 4.6.4). However, for literary memoirs, even though these are strictly speaking (auto)biographies of writers, it is inappropriate and unhelpful to add DS* codes. BM “Memoirs” effectively stands as the specific subject; BGLA “Autobiography: literary” may be used if the period covered is sufficiently extensive.
Example 4.5.3

Angela’s Ashes

An evocative memoir of an Irish childhood.

Assign:  
BM  Memoirs  
1DBR  Ireland

Example 4.5.4

The Cabinet Years 1985-92

A memoir of his time in office by a former Cabinet minister.

Assign:  
JPQ  Central Government  
BM  Memoirs  
HBJD1  British & Irish history  
HBLW3  Postwar 20th century history, from c 1945 to c 2000  
1DBK  United Kingdom, Great Britain  
3JJPN  c 1980 to c 1990

For biographies of royalty, it is recommended that the BGR* codes are reserved for royalty of the 20th century onwards. For those living earlier, BGH “Biography: historical, political & military” is preferred.

Note that, in BIC2, “True Stories” is now listed in Section B, rather than in Section F “Fiction”. This means it is generally redundant to add a “biography” Category alongside a “True Stories” Category, as might previously have been thought necessary in some cases.

As ever, take care to distinguish between BTC “True Crime” and “Criminology” (JKV & following). “True Crime” is akin to crime fiction in its narrative style, subject matter and intended readership, but describes (or is based on) real events; “Criminology” is the academic and scientific study of crime, criminal behaviour and law enforcement.

It is permissible to use Qualifiers with “True Stories” if pertinent.

Example 4.5.5

10 Rillington Place

A gripping account of the Christie murders.

Assign:  
BTC  True Crime  
1DBKESL  London  
3JJPG  c 1945 to c 1960
4.6 Literature, Literary Criticism & Language Qualifiers

The Language Qualifiers are designed to indicate the language a book is about, not the language it is written in. Their most obvious use is with categories from Section C Language, for dictionaries, linguistics texts and language learning material, etc.

In Section D, the codes beginning DC*, DD*, DN* and DQ* are used for actual works of non-fiction literature (just as F* codes are used for fiction, for the actual novels). The codes in DS “Literature: history & criticism” however, are used for works of literary criticism: for books about literature as distinct from books of literature.

Language Qualifiers should not be used with DC*, DD*, DN* or DQ* codes to indicate the language in which the work is written.

Example 4.6.1

The collected poems of Pablo Neruda

This is a collection of poems written in Spanish by the Chilean poet, translated into English. Although it is appropriate as part of the bibliographic record to indicate the language of the original and the language of translation, it is not part of the BIC classification process. The book is not about Spanish or Chile.

Assign: DCF Poetry by individual poets

However, Language Qualifiers should be used with DS* codes wherever possible to indicate the language of the literature being studied.

With DS* codes, you may also use Geographical Qualifiers when this is pertinent, i.e. when this is not implicit in the Language Qualifier or when this is the specific focus of the book.

Example 4.6.2

Post-colonial Peruvian Poetry – a Critical Assessment

This literary criticism concentrates on Peruvian poets writing in Spanish. The country is not implicit in the Language Qualifier, and the work has a specific regional focus, so a Geographical Qualifier should be used.

Assign: DSC Literary studies: poetry & poets
DSBH5 Literary studies: post-colonial literature
2ADS Spanish
1KLSR Peru

Example 4.6.3

The Spanish novel since Cervantes

A wide-ranging history of fiction from Spain. There is no need to add a Geographical Qualifier; it is implicit in the Language Qualifier.

Assign: DSK Literary studies: fiction, novelists & prose writers
2ADS Spanish
Do not use 2ABM “American English” with DS* for studies of American writers – and similarly do not use 2ABU “Australian English”, 2ADPB “Brazilian Portuguese” or 2ADSL “Latin American Spanish” in this way either. These Language Qualifiers are used primarily with E* (ie 2ABM and 2ABU) and C* codes, or with WTK “Language phrasebooks”.

Instead, use Geographical Qualifiers to indicate the area concerned:

- 2AB and 1KBB* for studies of American literature in English
- 2AB and 1MBF for studies of Australian literature in English
- 2ADP and 1KLSB for studies of Brazilian literature in Portuguese
- 2ADS and 1KL* for studies of Latin American literature in Spanish

For British writers, it may occasionally be appropriate to add Geographical Qualifiers to indicate Welsh or Scottish writers, where this is known or thought to be significant. Do not add 1DBKE to indicate English in this context. Also, it is not appropriate to add Geographical Qualifiers for regions or counties of Britain unless this is the specific focus of the book (eg a history of Norfolk poetry).

**Example 4.6.4**

*Philip Larkin: A Writer’s Life*

A critical biography of the poet, but primarily a biography.

Assign:  
BGL Biography: literary  
DSC Literary studies: poetry & poets  
DSBH Literary studies: from c 1900  
2AB English

For “critical editions” (ie an entire literary text plus extensive critical introduction/notes), use the appropriate DC*, DD*, DN* or DQ* code first followed by a DS* code to indicate the literary criticism aspect.

**Example 4.6.5**

*Poems of Coleridge (Selected and Arranged With an Introduction and Notes)*

The primary Category for this critical edition of Coleridge’s poetry should indicate that it contains the actual poems.

Assign:  
DCF Poetry by individual poets  
DSC Literary studies: poetry & poets  
DSBF Literary studies: c 1800 to c 1900  
2AB English

Note that in BIC2, screenplays, television scripts and radio scripts are removed from the literary texts section and located under their respective medium in AP “Film, TV and Radio”.

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4.7 Gay & Lesbian Interest

In BIC2, the previous CXG* codes for “Literature of special Gay & Lesbian interest” have been deleted and replaced by values in the new Reading Level & Special Interest Qualifiers listing.

These 5S* Qualifiers can therefore be used with D* and F* codes as before to indicate literature of specific Gay or Lesbian interest, but can also be used with any other Category to indicate that the book is specifically intended to be of interest to Gay or Lesbian readers, whether it be an art book, a travel guide, or whatever.

Note the distinction between these 5S* Qualifiers and the JFSK* Categories for Gay & Lesbian studies. The JFSK* Categories should be used for serious or academic works looking at the socio-cultural, sociological or political aspects of homosexuality. The 5S* Qualifiers, by contrast, can be used for books of any kind on any subject that are of specific interest to Gay & Lesbian readers.

It is redundant to use 5S* Qualifiers with JFSK* Categories.

Example 4.7.1

Berlin Scene: Gay Guide to Berlin

A travel guide to Berlin specifically for Gay men.

Assign: WTH Travel & holiday guides
1DFG Germany
5SG Of specific Gay interest

Example 4.7.2

Best Lesbian Erotica

An anthology of erotic Lesbian fiction.

Assign: FP Erotic fiction
DQ Anthologies (non-poetry)
5SL Of specific Lesbian interest

Example 4.7.3

Beyond the Closet: Gay and Lesbian life since Stonewall

An assessment of the visibility and acceptance of Gay and Lesbian communities and lifestyles in the USA since the Stonewall riots of 1969.

Assign: JFSK Gay & Lesbian studies
HBTB Social & cultural history
1KBB USA
4.8 Society, Culture & Sociology

The previous JB “Sociology, Social Sciences” section has been broken up and significantly restructured in BIC2 to reflect the fact that Sociology is a relatively narrow academic speciality and that many books on society, culture and social issues are of broader appeal, and should not be classified with Categories explicitly listed under Sociology.

To this end, topics such as “Cultural Studies”, “Media Studies” and “Controversial Knowledge” are brought in to a new broad JF “Society & Culture: General” sub-section, while Sociology & Anthropology are listed separately at JH. JH* and JF* codes may be used together to indicate a sociological approach to a topic listed under JF*.

Example 4.8.1

All Shook Up: A Flash of the Fifties

An illustrated look at everyday life and popular culture in 1950s Britain and US.

Assign: JFCA Popular culture
        HBTB Social & cultural history
        1DBK United Kingdom, Great Britain
        1KBB USA
        3JJPG c 1945 to c 1960

Example 4.8.2

After Subculture: Critical Studies in Contemporary Youth Culture

A sociological examination of youth culture & customs: a JH Category is required.

Assign: JFCA Popular culture
        JFSP2 Age groups: adolescents
        JHBT Sociology: customs & traditions
4.9 Maps & Atlases

In BIC1.1, most maps and atlases, except travel maps and road maps/atlases, were classified under RGT “Maps, charts & atlases”. That Category has now been deleted and these items are now distributed widely as follows:

- World atlases, world maps and globes: use GBG* “Geographical Reference” codes
- Specialist maps (eg geological, mining): use RGS “Geographical maps (specialist)” but class first by subject
- Historical maps and atlases: use HBTP1 “Historical maps & atlases” (though with individual maps, eg old OS maps, enter WQH “Local History” first)
- All other folded maps (including current Ordnance Survey): use WTR* “Travel maps & atlases” codes. OS maps should also carry WSZC “Walking, hiking, trekking”

All cartographic material should have Geographical Qualifiers where possible (NB not required for world atlases, world maps and globes).

Example 4.9.1

The Times Atlas of the World
Assign: GBGM World atlases / world maps

Example 4.9.2

British Geological Survey Coal Resources Map of Britain
Assign: RBGL Economic geology
          RGS Geographical maps (specialist)

Example 4.9.3

AA Road Atlas Britain 1:200,000
Assign: WTRD Road atlases
          1DBK United Kingdom, Great Britain

Example 4.9.4

OS Landranger 128: Derby & Burton upon Trent
Assign: WTRM Travel maps
          WSCZ Walking, hiking, trekking
          1DBKEMD Derbyshire

Example 4.9.5

1885 Ordnance Survey map of Lincoln (Old OS Maps series)
Assign: WQH Local history
          HBTP1 Historical maps & atlases
          1DBKEAL Lincolnshire
          3JH c 1800 to c 1900
4.10 Digital Photography & Digital Lifestyle

Note that all books on digital cameras and photography should be classified under UDP “Digital photography: consumer/user guides” as its primary Category. It may also be appropriate to add AJG “Photographic equipment & techniques” or other AJ* codes. Previously such items have been classified variously under photography (Section A) or graphics software (Section U); the aim is to ensure all such material is classified consistently.

Example 4.10.1

*How to Take Great Photos with Your Digital Camera*

A general user guide to digital photography, but with emphasis on the creative aspects.

Assign:  
- UDP Digital photography: consumer/user guides
- AJG Photographic equipment & techniques

Example 4.10.2

*Adobe Photoshop CS2 for Photographers: A Guide for Macintosh and PC*

A technical guide to photo editing software for specialists and technically-minded consumers.

Assign:  
- UDP Digital photography: consumer/user guides
- UGP Photo & image editing

Note that all computer books aimed at the “technical consumer”, ie rather than at the IT professional or Computer Science student, should be classified with Categories from the UD sub-section.

Example 4.10.3

*Absolute Beginner’s Guide to iPod and iTunes*

A user guide to downloading music.

Assign:  
- UDM Digital music: consumer/user guides
4.11 Computer programming languages

Previous editions of BIC contained limited lists of computer programming languages in Section U “Computing & Information Technology”. However, the limitations of the BIC coding structure cannot cope with the proliferation of programming languages. Therefore in BIC2 the revised UM “Computer Programming / Software Development” sub-section concentrates on the type or purpose of programming rather than programming language itself.

UMX “Programming & scripting languages: general” is available for use with general works or where the programming type or purpose is not known. The programming language is nearly always included in the book title in any case.

Example 4.11.1

3D Game Programming with C++

Whereas this would previously have been classified with a Category indicating the programming language it is now classified with a Category indicating the type of programming.

Assign: UMKC 3D graphics: games programming

Example 4.11.2

JavaScript: the Definitive Guide

It is clear from the description and the note at UMW that this is for web developers.

Assign: UMW Web programming
4.12 Law

Whereas in previous editions of BIC Section L “Law” contained separate lists of headings specifically for English Law, for Scots Law, for EU Law and for Laws of Other Jurisdictions, BIC2, as part of a conscious effort to reduce Anglo-centric bias, has a single list of Categories at LN “Laws of Specific Jurisdictions”.

As explained in the Scope Note at LN, this single listing makes it imperative that LN* codes are used with a Geographical Qualifier indicating the country or jurisdiction to which the law applies, eg England & Wales, Scotland, California, EU etc.

For works of comparative law not applied to any particular jurisdiction, use the appropriate LN* code in conjunction with LAM “Comparative law”, without any Geographical Qualifier.

Note also the use of LR “Law: study & revision guides” as noted in 4.3 above.

Example 4.12.1

*Due Process in Nigeria's Administrative Law System: History, Current Status, and Future*

The specific jurisdiction, as well as the area of law, needs to be specified.

Assign: LND Constitutional & administrative law
1HFDN Nigeria

Example 4.12.2

*Contract Law in a Nutshell*

Geographical Qualifier must be used with English law books as well as other jurisdictions (it is not a default) as with this study guide. The convention is to add England and Wales for English law.

Assign: LNCJ Contract law
LR Law: study & revision guides
1DBKE England
1DKKW Wales

Example 4.12.3

*Comparative Criminal Justice*

The jurisdictions are either numerous, not known or not specified.

Assign: LNFB Criminal justice law
LAM Comparative law
Part 5: Worked Examples (General)

The following examples are arranged to illustrate each of the General Rules listed in Part 1 above. Some examples are worked through using the Key Decisions listed in Part 2 above; others are shown already classified to illustrate specific points.

In the following examples and exercises, the title only is provided where self-explanatory; otherwise a brief summary of the book or other relevant information is provided to explain the classification. As in Part 4, the examples are a mixture of real and imaginary works, chosen purely for their illustrative value.

Note in the following examples that where multiple values of subject categories (A-Y) and/or qualifiers are assigned to represent the full subject content of the book, they are not concatenated, ie joined together. All BIC Category and Qualifier values may be held as codes only, but they should be held either in separate fields or as separate occurrences of a repeatable field.

5.1 Rule 1: Ensure the first Category entered is the primary subject

Taking advantage of all available information about the subject and scope of the work, ensure the first BIC Category indicates the most pertinent and important subject of the work.

Example 5.1.1

*Recent Advances in Haematology*

This is a text for medical practitioners and students. From the title of the book and the accompanying information, the subject of the book is clearly haematology, a branch of medicine. Turn to Section M “Medicine” and look for an appropriate heading (or search for “haematology” in an index if available).

An appropriate heading MJF “Haematology” is found within the sequence under MJ “Clinical & internal medicine”. This context confirms the suitability of the Category.

Assign: MJF Haematology

In this case the primary Subject Category entirely defines the work. No other Category or Qualifier is required.

Example 5.1.2

*Doctors and Nurses (People Who Help Us series)*

This is a book for children, so the primary Category is not from Section M but from Section Y. It is more about the people and their work than actual medical science.

Assign: YNK Work & industry, world of work (Children’s/YA)  
YNT Science & technology (Children’s/YA)
Example 5.1.3

A Who’s Who of Western Philosophy

The main subject of the book is Western philosophy, but another subsidiary Category should be added to indicate the nature of the work.

Assign: 
- HPC History of Western philosophy
- GBCB Dictionaries of biography (Who’s Who)

Example 5.1.4

The illustrated encyclopaedia of Jazz and Blues

Sometimes a work has multiple subject content, and gives equal weight to two or more subjects. These may be from quite different areas of the Categories, such as politics and industry, or they may be closely related, as in the example.

Since both subjects, Jazz and Blues, have equal status, it would be correct to assign either of the following as the primary category. In this instance one may as well follow the sequence given in the title.

It is also useful to add an indication that this is a reference work, the text arranged under distinct entries rather than to be read through. Turn to the sequence GB “Encyclopaedias & Reference Works”. Note the instruction at GBA; despite its title, this book is not a true general encyclopaedia, but a subject-specific reference work.

Assign: 
- AVGJ Jazz
- AVGK Blues
- GBC Reference works

Example 5.1.5

Middle Ages Activity Book (Crafty Histories series)

This book is packed with activities for children rather than being a straightforward history book, so in this case the nature of the book takes precedence over the subject.

Assign: 
- YBG Interactive & activity books & packs
- YNH History & the past: general interest (Children’s/YA)
- 5AG Reading age: from c 6 years

Example 5.1.6

The Bumper Book of Puzzles for All the Family

Books expressly intended both for adults and children should be classified with corresponding Categories from the Adult Sections A-W and from Section Y. The choice of primary Category is arbitrary, as the meaning is the same.

Assign: 
- WDK Puzzles & quizzes
- YNVP Puzzle books (Children’s/YA)
Example 5.1.7

**Six Great Sherlock Holmes Stories**

The work in hand comprises classic crime short stories, so several Categories must be used to classify it fully. For works of fiction however, genre is always regarded as the dominant characteristic. Note that under FF “Crime & mystery”, a more precise Category for classic crime is available (so this example also illustrates Rule 2).

Assign:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFC</td>
<td>Classic crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYB</td>
<td>Short stories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 5.1.8

**Observer Book of Garden Birds**

This is a general interest work, not a scientific text. Refer to Section W.

Assign:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WNCB</td>
<td>Wildlife: birds &amp; birdwatching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 5.1.9

**Evolution of the Feeding Apparatus in the Avian Orders Coraciiformes and Piciformes**

A specialist work of ornithology in the Life Sciences. Refer to Section P.

Assign:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSVW6</td>
<td>Birds (ornithology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSAJ</td>
<td>Evolution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2  Rule 2: Classify titles as precisely as possible or as broadly as required

If a book is precisely on a specific topic matching a BIC Category, use that precise code only; if it is broad-ranging in its scope within a single subject area, use a single broad BIC Category rather than listing all the more specific Categories listed beneath it.

Because of the hierarchical nature of the codes, it is not necessary to use “high-level” codes in conjunction with immediately subsequent codes denoting specific subjects. With the specific Category JMTD “Sleep & dreams”, for example, there is no need to add the broader (i.e. shorter) code JM “Psychology” to indicate the wider context of the subject. The fact that the subject is an aspect of Psychology is implicit in the code.

It is entirely redundant and misleading to enter constructs such as “A and AC and ACX and ACXD and ACXD2” when all that is required is ACXD2 precisely.

Example 5.2.1

The Nursing of Elderly Patients in Psychiatric Wards

The Nursing sequence is in Section M “Medicine” beginning “MQC”. The user must turn to the entry in the hierarchical listing and browse through the sequence of codes shown. Rather than classifying this book under the broad Category MQC “Nursing”, note the following Categories which precisely describe it:

Assign:  
MQCL4  Geriatric nursing  
MQCL5  Psychiatric nursing

Example 5.2.2

Introduction to Nursing

In this case, the scope is broad and covers all of nursing. Rather then assigning all the individual level 4 sub-categories under MQC, it is useful and appropriate to assign the single broad code.

Assign:  MQC  Nursing
5.3 **Rule 3: Assign as many Categories as are required**

If the book covers several subject areas, assign relevant Categories from across the BIC scheme to indicate this, as many as are required and that space allows (see Note B below). Assign only Categories for subjects that the book is substantially about as a whole, not for subjects that are peripheral.

There are no fixed limits on the number of Categories or Qualifiers that may be applied in the BIC scheme; limitations tend to be imposed by the different systems on which users are working. The BIC scheme cannot be used to best effect if only a single value may be assigned; it is designed to allow multiple values. In practice, a limit of 4 or 5 each of Categories and Qualifiers will be sufficient to cover nearly all circumstances.

**Example 5.3.1**

**Ancient Greece in Art, Film, Fiction and Popular Culture**

A multidisciplinary study of the representation of Ancient Greece, this requires Categories from several Sections.

Assign:  
HBLA1 Classical history / classical civilisation  
AC History of art / art styles  
APF Films, cinema  
DSK Literary studies: fiction, novelists & prose writers  
JFCA Popular culture  
1QDAG Ancient Greece

**Example 5.3.2**

**Spot’s Pop-Up Book of Shapes**

This book is primarily an early learning picture book on shapes, but it is also significant that it features the popular character of Spot the Dog, and has pop-up elements. Although this involves a number of Categories from the YB “Picture books, activity books & early learning material” sequence, it is better in this case to list them all because this sequence covers a range of specific Categories and is not a meaningful heading in its own right (in contrast to Example 5.2.2 above).

Assign:  
YBLH Early learning: sizes, shapes & patterns  
YBCH Picture books: character books  
YBGP Pop-up & lift-the-flap books
5.4 Rule 4: Observe any usage notes and instructions linked to Categories

In the hierarchical listing, many Categories carry specific usage notes and instructions; sometimes these are listed under a Level 1 or Level 2 Category but they apply to all following sub-Categories. This is a key reason why any BIC Category should be checked in the context of the hierarchical listing before use. These usage notes and instructions carry important and useful information about using the BIC scheme and help maintain consistency.

Example 5.4.1

*The Roots of Synthetic Theology in Judaism*

Non-Christian theology is generally classed at HRLB, but note the instruction at HRL: “Prefer religion-specific codes above where available, eg for Islamic theology, use HRHT, not HRH with HRLB”.

Assign: HRJT Judaism: theology

Example 5.4.2

*New Worlds: A Collection of Science Fiction Stories from the Fifties and Sixties*

An anthology of stories from various SF writers. Note the cross-reference entry at the end of the FY “Fiction: Special Features” sequence, stating that fiction anthologies should be classified with DQ “Anthologies” plus the appropriate F* code. As ever with fiction, the genre or type is primary.

Assign: FLC Classic science fiction
       FYB Short stories
       DQ Anthologies (non-poetry)

Example 5.4.3

*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*

A text by the empiricist philosopher John Locke. Given the title, the user may be tempted to assign DNF “Literary essays”, but note the instruction here that essays on a particular subject should be classified within the subject. The “Class Here” note at HPCD1 helps the user choose the correct philosophy Category.

Assign: HPCD1 Western philosophy: Enlightenment

Note also the instruction “Do not use ... on individual books” linked to various Level 1 and Level 2 codes in the hierarchical listing. eg B, HB, P, YD, etc. Assign a more specific Category from the subsequent section.
5.5  **Rule 5: Add Qualifiers whenever appropriate**

Many of the usage notes and instructions linked to Categories in the hierarchical listing relate to the use of Qualifiers.

The Qualifiers are associated with the book as a whole and not with a specific Category, although the link between Category and Qualifier is often implicit (eg between CJ* “Language teaching & learning” Categories and Language Qualifiers).

See also examples using Qualifiers in 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.9 above.

**Example 5.5.1**

**Marrakesh: the independent traveller’s guide**

Travel guides are obvious examples of works to which Geographical Qualifiers should be applied. Turn to the Geographical Qualifiers. There is no specific entry for Marrakesh, so use “Morocco”.

Assign:  
WTH  Travel & holiday guides  
1HBM  Morocco

**Example 5.5.2**

**Teach yourself German**

Language books should always carry a Language Qualifier (except see the general instruction for Section E “English Language Teaching (ELT)”.

Assign:  
CJBT  Language self-study texts  
2ACG  German

**Example 5.5.3**

**A History of France from the Second Republic to the Franco-Prussian War**

For many history books, both Geographical and Time Period Qualifiers are appropriate. Observe the general instruction for Time Period Qualifiers to assign the fewest appropriate Qualifiers needed to indicate the bulk of the period covered.

Assign:  
HBBD  European history:  
HBLB  Modern history to 20th century: c 1700 to c 1900  
1DDF  France  
3JH  c 1800 to c 1900
Example 5.5.4

Intermediate GNVQ Art and Design

For all texts designed for a specific examination, course or educational level, always check the Educational Purpose Qualifiers and assign the most precise Qualifier.

Assign:  
AK  Industrial / commercial art & design  
4KVNN  For GNVQ Intermediate

Example 5.5.5

Britain from Churchill to Blair

This book on British post-war history is for GCSE students, and thus requires an Educational Purpose Qualifier. It is also appropriate to assign Geographic and Time Period Qualifiers.

Assign:  
YQH  Educational: History  
1DBK  United Kingdom, Great Britain  
3JJP  Post-war period, 1945 to c 2000  
4KHT  For National Curriculum Key Stage 4 & GCSE

Example 5.5.6

100 Ideas for Festive Entertaining

This book features ideas for parties, recipes, and decorations at Christmas, and as such the appropriate Holidays & Seasonal Interest Qualifier should be assigned.

Assign:  
WJX  Parties, etiquette & entertaining  
WBR  Cooking for parties  
5HC  Christmas
Part 6: Entry and Display of BIC Codes on Systems

The BIC scheme is implemented on a range of systems and bibliographic record formats over which it has no control. The BIC Category and Qualifier values may be held in a variety of field structures so long as two principles are adhered to:

1) the beginning and end of each code value (Category or Qualifier) must be clearly demarcated, i.e., they can be held as a string in a single field so long as there are delimiters between each value;

2) the Qualifiers are associated with the record as a whole, and should/need not be explicitly linked to a specific Category.

Clearly, if several Category codes were simply strung together it would be impossible to tell where one ended and the next began. Further, because some Category codes end with numbers and all Qualifier codes begin with a number, you cannot rely on the presence of a number, e.g., 1, to indicate the start of a Qualifier code, e.g., a Geographical Qualifier such as 1HBW. Thus a single string HRCC1HBW is ambiguous – it could mean Category HRCC plus Qualifier 1HBW or Category HRCC1 plus Category HBW.

The use of delimiters such as / or ; is required where values are held in a single field. Alternatively, Subjects and Qualifiers may be held in separate fields. Any of the following arrangements are fine:

```
BIC:   DSC/DSBH5/2ADS/1KLSR

SUBJECTS: DSC;DSBH5
QUALIFIERS: 2ADS;1KLSR

SUBJECT(1): DSC
SUBJECT(2): DSBH5
QUALIFIER(1): 2ADS
QUALIFIER(2): 1KLSR
Etc
```

The above configurations also illustrate principle 2, that Qualifiers need not and should not be appended to specific Categories.
Part 7: Use of BIC Categories and Qualifiers in ONIX

In all releases of ONIX up to and including ONIX 2.1, there are specific elements for BIC values in PR.13 Subject. PR13.3 is for “BIC Main Subject Category”, and additional BIC Categories and Qualifiers may be added through the “Additional Subject Composite”.

Note that in the phrase “BIC Main Subject Category”, the word "main" should be taken to mean "primary", "most important", or "most pertinent" – rather than "broad". It should be taken to refer to a specific code, rather than to a whole section of BIC such as M = Medicine.

In other words: if you could use only one BIC code to describe the subject of the book, what would it be? (ie apply Rule 1).

ONIX providers should provide here as complete (ie as long) and precise a BIC code as is appropriate. For example, a book on the Quakers should have a BIC Main Subject Category of "HRCC97" and not simply H to indicate Humanities, or HR for Religion.

In ONIX 3.0, the “BIC Main Subject Category” is removed to promote a more even-handed approach to the use of subject classification schemes. You now need to specify you are sending a BIC Subject Category (value 12 from List 27) or a BIC Qualifier (values 13 to 17), and also specify the Version number. Optionally, you can use the “Main Subject Flag” to indicate the primary subject code. Thus, the BIC data for Example 5.5.6 above, namely 100 Ideas for Festive Entertaining, classed as

WJX Parties, etiquette & entertaining
WBR Cooking for parties
5HC Christmas

Would be sent in an ONIX 3.0 record as follows:

```xml
<Subject>
  <MainSubject/>
  <SubjectSchemeIdentifier>12</SubjectSchemeIdentifier>
  <SubjectSchemeVersion>2</SubjectSchemeVersion>
  <SubjectCode>WJX</SubjectCode>
  <SubjectHeadingText>Parties, etiquette & entertaining</SubjectHeadingText>
</Subject>

<Subject>
  <SubjectSchemeIdentifier>12</SubjectSchemeIdentifier>
  <SubjectSchemeVersion>2</SubjectSchemeVersion>
  <SubjectCode>WBR</SubjectCode>
  <SubjectHeadingText>Cooking for parties</SubjectHeadingText>
</Subject>

<Subject>
  <MainSubject/>
  <SubjectSchemeIdentifier>17</SubjectSchemeIdentifier>
  <SubjectSchemeVersion>2</SubjectSchemeVersion>
  <SubjectCode>5HC</SubjectCode>
  <SubjectHeadingText>Christmas</SubjectHeadingText>
</Subject>
```