



BIC Metadata Excellence Award (MEA)

Publisher Check List

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August 2024 Version 1.2

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Publisher Check List

At regular intervals throughout the year but especially before submitting an application for accreditation under the BIC MEA Accreditation Scheme, BIC recommends that applying organisations consider / check the following list of MEA scheme reminders.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of every metadata element requirement for achieving accreditation, rather a list of the very basic requirements of the scheme, that if not fulfilled will either mean an organisation is not eligible to apply or will fail its accreditation application at the first hurdle.

- 1) Is your organisation a BIC member? If the answer is “No”, for application deadlines from January 2025 onwards, you will need to pay an Application Fee before BIC will consider your application or renewal. For more information regarding this we recommend non-member organisations wishing to apply/renew read our [Accreditation Charges Policy](#) in full in plenty of time ahead of any deadline. Fully paid-up BIC members will be able to continue to apply for accreditation/renewal for free after January 2025 and thereafter as part of their member benefits.
- 2) If your organisation is not UK-based and/or actively selling to the UK market it is not eligible for accreditation.
- 3) If your organisation has not published at least 10 products, it is not yet eligible for accreditation.
- 4) If your organisation is not submitting metadata to at least one UK data aggregator it is not eligible for accreditation.
- 5) If your organisation is not sending metadata (complete or otherwise) for its whole product range (including e-books, audio books, digital-audio books, Print on Demand / Virtual stock ISBNs) to the BIC approved accreditation assessor (currently Nielsen Book) it is not eligible for accreditation.
- 6) The use of the *Thema* subject classification scheme is compulsory for all levels of accreditation under the BIC MEA scheme. If your organisation is not applying *Thema* to its full range of products it is not eligible for accreditation.
- 7) The use of ONIX 3.0 is compulsory for the Gold level of accreditation.
- 8) If your organisation does not use ISBNs and/or GTINs, it is not eligible for accreditation.
- 9) If your organisation is not sending a complete BIC Basic metadata set (as a minimum) for at least 60% of new titles, at least 16 weeks before publication date for all formats except digital audio (for digital audio books the timeliness is at least 3 weeks before publication date) your organisation will fail accreditation.
- 10) If you are not sending monthly updates as a minimum (assuming metadata/transactional changes have occurred) to at least one UK data aggregator and the BIC approved assessor (these may be the same organisation since the BIC approved assessor is Nielsen Book who is also a UK data aggregator) your organisation is not eligible for accreditation. The only exception to this is publishers using a web portal only. Ideally delta files should be sent more frequently than monthly where changes have occurred.
- 11) BIC recommends that publishers perform their own regular quality checks on all metadata elements in order to ensure accuracy and timeliness of information. This should include checks to

ensure that incorrect or contradictory information is not being inadvertently provided either in-house or by your organisation's global offices / houses, or by your 3rd party distributor (if applicable).

- 12)** It is incumbent upon the applying publisher to always ensure that all imprint hierarchy and distribution details are correct at the BIC approved assessor. It is also the applying publisher's sole responsibility to ensure any changes (e.g. where a new imprint / publisher has been acquired / divested, or distributor has changed etc.) are proactively reported accurately and in a timely manner to the assessor. Failure to do so is likely to adversely affect the final accreditation result.
- 13)** It is the publisher's responsibility to ensure the naming convention for both publisher name and imprint name is always consistent in the metadata record. Inconsistency of naming convention in this area will be noted by the assessor and could adversely affect the publisher's accreditation result.
- 14)** Electronic delivery of all metadata using ONIX controlled vocabulary is compulsory for all levels of the accreditation scheme. Electronic delivery means via ONIX for Books, web portals, or structured electronic file. Whichever method is used it is a requirement of the scheme, that ALL submissions be made using the ONIX for Books code list structure and vocabulary. Note that this includes data delivered via a tabular (CSV, Tab-separated, or spreadsheet) file. If your organisation cannot supply metadata in this way, it is not eligible for accreditation.
- 15)** With regards to retailer exclusive ISBNs, it is the sole responsibility of the applying publisher to ensure that such items are either excluded from data aggregator/assessor feeds or are clearly and accurately shown in the metadata to be retailer exclusive, AND with which retailer they are associated. If neither of these steps are done proactively by the publisher, the ISBNs will be included in the accreditation measures and will affect the final result accordingly.
- 16)** BIC has introduced a number of quality control (QC) checks to the refreshed MEA scheme. These will need to be accurate a minimum of 16 weeks before publication date. BIC will announce the minimum % criteria after launch of the revised scheme then start measuring in earnest 6 months later. Publishers are advised to address the QC requirements ASAP, i.e. not wait for this announcement. This is due to the collection of data being on a cumulative basis. More information can be found on the MEA Accreditation Scheme page on the BIC website.
- 17)** If there are any adverse/extenuating circumstances that may affect your organisation's accreditation result, it is the sole responsibility of the applying publisher to proactively submit its case to BIC regarding this in advance of the accreditation deadline, so that due consideration may be given during the accreditation process. These deadlines are always published on the MEA scheme page of the BIC website. BIC reserves the right to dismiss such information during its accreditation process. Such information received after the deadline will not be considered.
- 18)** Does BIC have accurate contact information for the person(s) responsible for metadata supply / accreditation results? If not, we won't be able to contact you about your organisation's application / renewal, or results.
- 19)** Does the BIC assessor have an accurate email address for the purposes of distributing your organisation's monthly progress reports for the MEA scheme? It is the applying organisation's responsibility to ensure that the assessor has accurate contact information regarding this.