

Royal Mail

User Guide

Glossary

April 2026

This a legally binding document forming part of the Agreement between you and Royal Mail



GLOSSARY

Definitions

If you are not familiar with any of the words or phrases in this user guide, please refer to the Glossary of terms table below, which provides definitions for the various words or phrases used in each section.

Glossary of terms

1st Class	a delivery speed for all products where applicable where the aim is for the item(s) to be delivered the next working day after the day of posting providing that the latest posting time has been met*
2nd Class**	a delivery speed for all products where applicable where for sorted items the aim is for the item(s) to be delivered within 2 working days after the day of posting and for products with no sortation within 3 working days after the day of posting providing that the latest posting time has been met
Account handler	your Royal Mail representative who manages and looks after your account
Alp	auto levelling sleeved York container
Bag break mark	in a set of addresses, a mark to distinguish the point where a new bag starts
Bag labels	labels tied around the neck of a Royal Mail bag to indicate the routing and/or destination of the bag

** Second Class letters and large letters will be delivered 5 days per week on alternate weekdays (Monday to Friday).

Batch	a selection of Mailmark barcode items that meet the minimum entry volume requirement for the service being used and which are all of the same class, format, sortation and machine-readability option. A Batch is submitted to the eManifest as part of a Mailmark barcode mailing. A Batch is also commonly referred to as a consignment or mailing;
Batch ID	the unique identifier that is assigned to a Batch once it has been submitted to the eManifest
Bill payer	for Mailmark barcode mailings the Bill Payer is the Participant in a Supply Chain responsible for paying Royal Mail
Cages	rigid stackable containers (see RSC)
Cage cards	These are attached to the cages / RSCs and provide information such as the job number, service speed, product and options, the segregation codes (where applicable) and the account number. Network cage cards provide routing information.
Carrier	for Mailmark mailings the Carrier is the Participant in a Supply Chain responsible for carrying the Mailmark barcode items to Royal Mail's inward Mail Centre
Computer planning Report	the report produced when a computer sorts an address list in preparation of a mailing
Confirmed sales order	the document you create when you or your agent confirm an order using your OBA
Contract holder	the person who has a contract (agreement) with, and is invoiced by, us
Customer Collection Receipt or CCR	the document with that name which we provide for you to complete, or another form of this document which we have previously agreed with you
Customer final Labelling or cfl	the labelling of bags or trays or bundles (where permitted) for Advertising Mail, Publishing Mail, Business Mail 1st Class, Business Mail, in each case when items are sorted by the customer, with labels containing detailed routing information.
Customer Reference Number or CRN	This is the reference number given to the posting you have presented to us. The reference number should be used on all paperwork associated with that mailing / posting
Deferred	This is where you have stipulated delivery of your items to commence from a given date

Deferred delivery**	where you have chosen an Economy service, presented your posting to us within a defined period, and requested delivery to be completed within 4 working days after a date you have stipulated
Delivery address	the address on the item where you would like the item delivered
Delivery address block	includes the recipient's name, job title and company where appropriate, the geographic address including the post code. Where information has been included above the recipient's name and the line spacing is the same, this also forms part of the delivery address block
Delivery office	the local mail depot where your business or residential mail is delivered from and from where undelivered items can be collected
Delivery point Suffix or DPS	an element within the Barcode, Mailmark barcode and/or eManifest which identifies a house number/name or, where registered on PAF, the delivery point for business addresses. It is always made up of a letter and a number
Discount	the amount set out as a discount in each Rate Card
Distribution centre	a regional office which collects mailings from customers or receives mailings from neighbouring centres. This office also despatches mailings to and from mail centres for delivery in the local area covered by that mail centre
Economy**	this applies to sorted products only and defines a delivery speed for applicable products where the delivery aim is within 4 working days after posting providing that the latest posting time has been met
eManifest	this is the electronic file created via the eManifest Handling System (eMHS) for each Supply Chain per day. A Batch or Batches are submitted to the eManifest, and once confirmed the eManifest contains a record of your Mailmark barcode items which is used to provide Batch level reporting.

* Exclusions: Postcodes: PH19 – 50, ZE1, ZE2 & ZE3, HS1-5, HS6, HS7-8 & HS9, KW16, KW15, KW17, JE1 – JE4 and IM1 – IM9, IM86, IM87 & IM99.

** Second Class, Economy and Economy Deferred letters and large letters will be delivered 5 days per week on alternate weekdays (Monday to Friday).

eManifest Confirmation Receipt or eCR	if you are set up for automatic sales order generation, the eManifest Confirmation Receipt (eCR) is generated automatically once the eManifest is confirmed. The eManifest Confirmation Receipt (eCR) must be presented instead of a confirmed sales order with the last collection on each handover date. It provides evidence that the eManifest has been created and confirmed.
eManifest Handling System or EMHS	the web based interface which enables the creation of the eManifest and is used for all actions relating to the eManifest (such as submitting Batches)
eManifest ID	the unique identifier that is assigned to an eManifest once that eManifest has been created.
Enhanced line Listing	specifically for postings / mailings which are sorted and are of mixed weights or where the items cross one or more weight bands. The information includes the selections the items are destined for, the actual and assumed weights within each selection and the number of bags, trays or bundles per selection, and is expressed as "enhanced"
Final bag label	a bag label which carries detailed information which must be applied to bags
Final tray label	a tray label which carries detailed information which must be applied to trays
Format	a description of whether a mail item is a letter, large letter
Goods fulfilment Item	<p>A large letter which comprises of or contains anything (including but not limited to printed material) which has an intrinsic or resale value (whether or not it has been paid for by the addressee or other recipient), such as:</p> <p>goods and articles sent in fulfilment of an order or request made to the sender, seller, supplier or publisher;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gifts and unsolicited goods; • collectibles; and • spares and replacement parts.
Handover	This is the point at which we collect and / or accept a posting or number of postings from you

Hold and release Arrangements	the arrangement under which we may ask you, without obligation, for your agreement for us to collect elements of your mailing early
International business mail large letters country sort high volume	for items that are larger than a letter sent overseas from the UK either as a solus international mailing or as part of an Advertising Mail, Publishing Mail or Business Mail 1st Class or Business Mail posting. Items are required to be presented in alphabetical order by country
International business mail letters country sort high volume	for letters being sent overseas from the UK either as a solus international mailing or as part of an Advertising Mail, Publishing Mail or Business Mail posting. Items are required to be presented in alphabetical order by country
Inward postcode	the second half of the postcode used to sort mail for final delivery
Item or items	letters, large letters, automated large letters which we agree to handle and deliver under the terms of our agreement with you
Large letter (Low Sort)	an item which is no larger than 245mm x 13mm x 345mm, no smaller than 162mm x 1mm x 229mm and no heavier than 750gms and no lighter than 10gms
Letter (low sort)	An item which is no larger than 240mm x 165mm x 5mm and no smaller than 140mm x 90mm x 0.25mm.
Licence barcode	A barcode that is a required part of the design specification for Machine Readable Advanced items (when posted on account). A licence barcode encodes information including the licence number and details of the service used.

Line listing	a mandatory requirement for sorted mailings / postings, this details the selections you are mailing to and the number of items and the number of bags, trays or bundles, going to each selection. Depending on the weights of the items in the mailing you will present either a standard line listing or an enhanced line listing
Low sort	products which are sorted to c. 86 selections. This sorting option is for machine-readable or manual options within of Advertising Mail, Publishing Mail, Subscription Mail, Business Mail 1st Class and Business Mail
Mail originator	for Mailmark barcode mailings the Mail Originator is the Participant in a Supply Chain on whose behalf the Mailmark barcode items are produced and delivered
Mail producer	for Mailmark barcode mailings the Mail Producer is the Participant in a Supply Chain responsible for producing (including printing and enclosing) the Mailmark barcode items
Mailer defined Information (mdi)	any optional additional single line of type faced text (letters, numerals, punctuation , ideograms or symbols) which has been placed immediately above the recipient's name for machine-readable postings
Mailing	this is the element of a single posting which is handed over to us. A number of mailings which are all clearly identified on the same set of documentation (line listing, planning report) may make up a posting
Mailing standards Levy	the voluntary mailing standards levy set by the Advertising Standards Board of Finance (ASBOF), which is charged and collected by postal operators on behalf of ASBOF to help finance the self-regulatory system administered by the Advertising Standards Authority. The levy equates to 0.2% of the price charged for each direct mailing item and is payable by you in addition to the prices quoted in our rate cards
Mailmark barcode	a barcode which is either a Royal Mail 2D data matrix barcode or a Royal Mail 4-state barcode which contains encoded data and offers Batch level reporting
Mailmark Management System or MMS	this is the IT system that manages the allocation of Participant and Supply Chain IDs and provides Participants with access to Royal Mail Mailmark barcode reporting.
Mailmark option	an option for making letters and large letters machine-readable, involving the addition of a Mailmark barcode to each item to make that item uniquely identifiable. The Mailmark option provides Batch level reporting

MDEC	the Manual Data Entry Centre
One piece mailer	a mail item comprising a single sheet of paper which has been folded and glued and may contain an insert. These items can be machine-readable providing that the design requirements are met
Online business OBA	a specific online business account giving you access to our secure online system through which you can order the products on account
Outward postcode	also known as a postcode district, the first part of a postcode (usually 2–4 digits) before the space. It is used to specify the town or district to which the letter is to be sent for further sorting
Paf®	Postcode Address File, Royal Mail's file of all correct postal addresses in the UK
Participant	for Mailmark barcode mailings, a Participant is each of the Mail Originator, Mail Producer, Carrier and Bill Payer Legal entity, which together make up the Supply Chain
Participant ID	for Mailmark barcode mailings this is the unique identity number assigned to a Participant. Only one Participant ID is permitted per [Legal entity].
Periodical	a magazine, newsletter or journal which meets the conditions set out in the Publishing Mail chapter of this user guide
Postcode	an alphanumeric code allocated by us to identify location of an address or group of addresses and made up of an outward postcode and an inward postcode
Postcode district	the geographical area indicated by the outward postcode
Postcode sector	made up of the postcode District and first number of the Inward postcode

Postcoded	an address with a full and accurate postcode at least down to the postcode sector
Posting	a consignment of your items prepared in line with the terms and conditions of our agreement with you
PPA	Professional Publishers Association
PPI or printed postage impression	a pre-printed alternative to the traditional postage stamp or franking to indicate that postage has been (or will be) paid
Primary frames	a type of equipment which is used for the first stage when manually sorting mail items
Products	the products covered by this user guide, which are listed at the beginning of the introduction to this user guide
Profile price	a pricing offer for Publishing Mail based on a minimum of 3,000 items being sent predominantly to a specified selection of city centres
Prohibited Packaging	<p>A large letter which comprises of or contains anything (including but not limited to printed material) which has an intrinsic or resale value (whether or not it has been paid for by the addressee or other recipient), such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goods and articles sent in fulfilment of an order or request made to the sender, seller, supplier or publisher; • padded envelopes; • cardboard; and <p>any other stiff or inflexible packaging that cannot easily be manually folded.</p>
QA	quality assurance
Rate cards	our standard charges for each product
Residue selection	<p>areas defined by a postcode which receives mail unable to be sorted into Direct selections. This may happen because there are</p> <p>not enough items to satisfy the minimum Direct selection requirement, or because it has not been adequately postcoded, or because the customer has chosen to sort in this way. Mail in a Residue selection has to be sorted by staff at a mail centre</p>
Response licence	a licence (for which there is a fee) which allows you to provide your customers the opportunity to respond to you by post at no cost to themselves

Response services	the options available for customers who have chosen to pay for their clients' responses either by providing an address to write to or printing envelopes or labels to a certain specification
Royal mail Accepting office	a regional distribution centre, where Royal Mail checks and processes the bags or trays of pre-sorted mail, before dispatching them to mail centres and delivery offices
Royal mail Selection files	a set of data files, defining the Direct and Residue selections by postcode for the Low Sort selections for our machine-readable products. They are used to sort mail for Advertising Mail, Publishing Mail, Business Mail 1st Class and Business Mail, usually in conjunction with a software program. The selection files also give bag label and geographic sequencing information and are updated approximately every 12-18 months
RSC's	rigid stackable containers (see cages)
Secondary frames	a type of equipment which is used for the second stage when manually sorting mail items
Selection break	the dividing point between two selection areas; the means of indicating where a break should occur
Selection code	see standard selection code
Software program	also referred to as sortation software, this is used in conjunction with the Royal Mail Selection Files to enable computer sortation. Programs can be written in-house or purchased from software suppliers
Standard line listing	a mandatory requirement for all sorted mailings / postings, this details the selections you are mailing to and the number of items and the number of bags, trays or bundles, going to each. Depending on the weights of the items in the mailing you will present this as a 'Standard' line listing
Selection File code	a unique numeric code for each Direct (five digits) or Residue or Low Sort (three digits) selection, used to sequence addresses, identify selection breaks and match items to mailing bag labels
Straight line pricing	a pricing system used by Advertising Mail, Publishing Mail, Business Mail 1st Class or Business Mail for determining prices of items over 250g according to weight of items being posted

Supply chain	a Supply Chain is formed of all four Participants (Mail Originator, Mail Producer, Carrier and Bill Payer) and is required for each Mailmark barcode mailing relating to those specific Participants
Supply Chain ID or SCID	this is the unique identifier assigned to each Supply Chain
Trays	these are hard plastic rectangular containers which are used by customers to contain selections of mail when preparing and presenting postings of letters or large letters up to 13mm thick
Tray labels	labels inserted into the tray label slot to indicate the routing and/or destination of the tray
Unique item id	this is the unique identifier assigned to each Mailmark barcode item (uploaded and submitted to the eManifest in Batches). The Unique Item ID must remain unique for 90 days before it can be used again within the same Supply Chain ID (SCID)
VRD or volume related discount	volume related discounts in addition to any sortation or machine-readable discounts you are entitled to. These discounts are calculated on a daily basis, per site, per account, per product, per format and per class of mailing
Working days	Monday to Saturday inclusive, excluding public holidays

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