

User Guide for

Subscription Mail

April 2026

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



Introduction

Dear customer,

Thank you for considering Royal Mail Subscription Mail.
We have compiled this product guide to help you get started.

We define Subscription Mail as a service for editorial titles such as newsletters, journals and magazines (including customer and membership magazines but excluding brochures, catalogues, directories and exhibition guides).

If you are not sure at this stage whether your mailing fits the definition you can contact us on 020 7371 6957, or by email at helpline@royalmailtechnical.com.

Other queries can be sent to publishing@royalmail.com.

Your Subscription Mail options at a glance:

Options	Choices
Minimum Volumes per Posting	1,000
Delivery Speed	1st Class 2nd Class
Format	Large Letter
Sorting	Low Sort ¹ Mailmark Low Sort ¹ Manual
Containers	Bags Trays Segregated bundles
Thickness	0-13mm 0-25mm

Entry Criteria

All items, to qualify for Subscription Mail must comply with the following:

- Subscription is available as a Low Sort product only.
- Magazine Subscription Mail posted using Royal Mail Mailmark must meet the specifications and requirements of Royal Mail Mailmark⁵;
- It must be a title (newsletter, journal or magazine) and meet the Subscription Mail qualifying criteria set out below.
- Customers should include on the confirmed Sales Order:
 - the periodical code that is issued upon registration if your title qualifies for Subscription Mail
 - the title
 - the number of Direct and Residue items
 - the item weight
- Customers should reference the Title name in the “Campaign Name” field of the Mailmark eManifest each time they submit a Magazine Subscription Mail Posting;
- Be sent on a regular basis and a minimum of twice a year.
- Contain at least 1,000 large letters. You may send less than 1,000 items in any single mailing, but you will be charged for 1,000 items at the standard rate for Subscription Mail and no further discount will be applicable. If you do send less than 1,000 items in any single mailing, you must still enter 1,000 items (not the actual number of items) for that mailing via your on-line business account (OBA²). Failure to do so may mean that a £25.00 administration charge is levied against your account.
- Subscription mail postings that include items for addresses overseas can be combined with International Business Mail Large Letters Country Sort High Volume or International Business Parcels Zero Sort High Volume and the combined total must be a minimum of 1,000³. To understand which product should be used, please refer to the International User Guides. Please note; the format definition for overseas postings may differ from the domestic format.
- Be correctly presented as Low Sort.
- Be applied for only by publishers or agents contracted to publish a title.
- Any goods and articles that are sent with titles may only be allowed if RMG agrees they are not sent in fulfilment of an order or request made to sender, seller, supplier or publisher.
- Consolidation of postings from different customers or of different publications is not allowed with Subscription Mail.
- Each mailing pack can only contain one title, unless we agree otherwise. An additional title can be included for promotional purposes, and a mixed weight Subscription Mail service is available.

Please note, RM Signed For cannot be added to this service.

Subscription Mail title qualifying criteria

Before you can use Subscription Mail, we will need to verify that what you intend sending is “a title”:

- A title is a newsletter, journal or magazine (including customer or membership magazines).
- The front cover of each title must clearly show its title and at least one of the dates of issue, the month, the season or the issue number.
- At least 30% of the title must be editorial content:
 - Editorial content does not include advertising material or data, or any information relating to a product or service, such as pricing information or product descriptions, which relate to either the publisher of the magazine, the owner of the magazine or a third party.
 - The front and back covers are not included in calculating editorial content.
 - Eligible titles do not include catalogues, brochures, directories or exhibition guides. These items may not be posted as a Subscription Mail product on their own.

You can include an item which is not a title in the same wrapper with a title if:

- a) we have agreed that you can include those items with a title;
- b) the items with the title are not goods and articles sent in fulfilment of an order or request made to the sender, seller, supplier or publisher;
- c) the items are not prohibited or restricted materials;
- d) the combined weight of all extra items you have included in the same wrapper as the title is not heavier than the weight of the title they are being sent with (the weight of the title does not include the weight of any media, products or loose inserts on or in the title)

You can include cover mounts in the same wrapper as the title if:

- a) we agree that you can include them with the title;
- b) the cover mounts are not goods and articles sent in fulfilment of an order or request made to the sender, seller, supplier or publisher;
- c) you fix them securely to the title (preferably inside an appropriate polywrap or substitute cover) and you present them in the same way for our other delivery products.

You can give us supplements (not including catalogues, directories, brochures, product cards and loose inserts) which are either available to buy or sent out in their own right and which are not classed as separate titles, if:

- d) the supplement is related to the title and is to be delivered to the same list of addresses as the title;
- e) the supplement carries, on its front cover, the title of that title and the date, month or season it applies to;
- f) we agree to the supplements being included with the title;
- g) the supplement is published by the same publisher as the title; and
- i) you give us the supplement for us to deliver separately from the title it relates to, or to include as an insert. If the supplement is posted as a separate Publishing Mail posting from the title it relates to, you must make sure that the posting meets the terms of the agreement. You must also include on each confirmed Sales Order the periodical code of the title the supplement relates to

You can send packs of product information cards as a Subscription Mail posting separately from titles and supplements if:

- j) we agree to this before you post the item;
- k) the title the packs of information cards relate to is the title you have told us about;
- l) the title and issue number of the title the packs of information cards relate to is shown on the wrapper
- m) You must make sure that items which are not titles and are not otherwise allowed to be included in a Subscription Mail posting are not included in a Subscription Mail posting.
- n) You must give us a copy of each title at least seven working days before a first posting. We will confirm whether it meets the terms of this agreement.
- o) If we ask you, you must give us a copy of the title at any time during this agreement to make sure it continues to meet the terms of the agreement.
- p) You must make Subscription Mail postings of each title regularly and in line with a regular pattern of posting.
- q) If we agree, you can enclose an extra title in the same wrapper with another title for the purposes of promoting that title only.
- r) If we agree, you can make postings of a title covered by this agreement more often than we have agreed previously if:
- s) you give us at least seven working days' notice, in writing, of the date on which you want to make an extra posting; and

- t) the extra posting meets the terms of this agreement.
- v) You must give us at least one working day's notice, in writing, if a Subscription Mail posting has changed significantly in size or weight, or you are posting a significantly different number of titles than usual.

Subscription Mail contract number

A Subscription Mail contract number⁴ is different to your Royal Mail account number and is a unique six-digit number which is generated upon approval of your application for a Subscription Mail contract. Any publishing services specific to this account have the service code added to the end of the number.

Contract numbers are arranged on an individual basis, i.e. one contract number per posted title:

- it is possible for you to have different contract numbers for different parts of your organisation, in order to help you with your internal procedures.
- invoices are always sent directly to the individual contract number holder.
- contract numbers can be held by a third party providing the publisher provides us with a letter of authorisation stating that they are happy for that third party to hold the contract number.

Notifications procedure

Please consult with the relevant member of your Royal Mail account team if:

- you need to make any changes to your set posting times, as you must give us adequate notice.
- at any time if the size, weight or quantity of the posting changes, you must give at least one day's notice.
- the posting location or contract holder changes.

Subsidiary postings

If titles are sent on dates that differ from those specified under your Subscription Mail contract, e.g. when mailing titles to new subscribers, you will need to give us at least seven working days' notice, and the terms and conditions of your Subscription Mail contract with us must be complied with.

Back issues

You can send back issues using Subscription Mail, provided that there are sufficient items

to meet entry requirements.

Sorted items and volume requirements

Volumes are per class, per day and per site

Product Option	Format	Heading
Low Sort	Large Letter	minimum 1,000

Delivery speed choices

- 1st Class: we aim to deliver on the next working day after the day of posting*
- 2nd Class: we aim to deliver within three working days after the day of posting**

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

Format and weight

Product Option	Format	Weight
Low Sort	letter (up to 240mm x 165mm x5mm) large letter (up to 345mm x 245mm x 13mm)	max 100g max 750g
Low Sort Manual	letter (up to 240mm x 165mm x5mm) large letter (up to 353mm x 250mm x 25mm)	max 100g max 750g

Machine-Readable Requirements:

Low Sort with Royal Mail Mailmark® - this option is for Large Letters up to 13mm thick and offers batch level reporting. This requires a Mailmark barcode to be applied to each item. There are fewer design and presentation constraints with the Mailmark barcode. The Mailmark barcode is unique to the mailpiece and contains data (e.g. sender, recipient postcode, mailpiece characteristics) encoded within it. There are two types of Mailmark barcode:

1. a 2D data matrix Mailmark barcode
2. a 4-state Mailmark barcode

you will find full details of minimum sizes and the Mailmark barcode specification in the Royal Mail Mailmark Barcode Machine-readable Letters and Large Letters User Guide⁵.

Additional information on all products and specifications are available at;
www.royalmailtechnical.com Helpline: **020 7371 6957**

Footnotes;

1. Low Sort - products which are sorted to only 86 selections. All Subscription Mail products are Low Sort.
2. Online Business Account (OBA) - If you do not have a Royal Mail Account, and are interested in getting one set up, please contact us on **03457 950 950**.
3. For details on International products, please refer to;
www.royalmail.com/internationalbusinessmail or www.royalmail.com/internationalbusinessparcels
4. Subscription Mail contract number - before you can use Subscription Mail, we need to verify that the title qualifies as a newsletter, journal or magazine. Please fill out an periodical code application form:
<https://www.royalmail.com/business/mail/publishing-mail/apply>
5. Royal Mail Mailmark Barcode Machine-readable Letters and Large Letters User Guide can be found on www.royalmailtechnical.com