

Regulations for Classification and Categorizing

Introduction and Name/Title

1. a) This is the regulation concerning the censorship and classification of any artistic material that is locally produced or imported into the Maldives prior to public viewing of the same.

b) This regulation will be termed the 'Regulation for Classification and Categorising'.

2. The purpose of classification

The purpose of classifying artistic material is to inform the public regarding the appropriateness of the material for the viewing age group. This age would be indicated by a label pasted or printed visibly on the exterior of the material. (Label indicating age category in Annex)

3. Considerations of the Bureau in classification

a) The determination of the age category of an artistic production shall not be done based on the quality of the production.

b) The Bureau would not attempt to make any production suitable for any age group by omitting or editing any part of a production.

c) Despite the statements made in b), a production could be made appropriate for a certain age group by editing if the producer wished to do so. In this case, the category could thus be changed if the Bureau deems it has been edited in such a manner that makes it appropriate for viewing by that age group.

4. Parties held responsible for children

The responsibility of showing artistic material to minors, minors viewing or reading the same or granting permission for minors to have any interaction with the same shall be borne by their parents, guardians and adults who live with them.

5. Regulations concerning imported artistic material

- a) All artistic materials to be classified will be sent to National Bureau of Classification through the Maldives Custom Services.
- b) Personal movies brought by inbound tourists, when the same relates to their travels, shall be released to them. Such movies do not require issuing of stickers.

6. Guidelines for classification

All artistic material should be classified under 5 age groups which would be colour-coded.

- a) suitable for all ages; green
- b) suitable for ages 12 and above; light blue
- c) suitable for ages 15 and above; yellow
- d) suitable for ages 18 and above; red
- e) suitable for ages 21 and above; black

7. Productions that require classification

Listed below are both locally produced and imported productions that require classification;

- a) films
- b) dramas
- c) stage shows
- d) telecast programs
- e) advertisement videos
- f) books
- g) newspapers and magazines
- h) audio recordings
- i) photos
- j) photo negatives
- k) photo slides
- l) any printed material that is distributed to the public
- m) computer console games

8. Listed below are items or parts that should be removed from any material that is either imported or used in the Maldives.

- a) Scenes or photographs of any alleged depiction of a Prophet or a Caliph of the Khulafaa-ur-Raashidhoon, if shown on an artistic production.

- b) Items in the nature of documents, audio containing writings presented with pictures or stories, and CD's which have been produced to bring down a legal government or with the intention of destroying the safety and peace of the Maldives.
- c) scenes or photos containing sex organs
- d) Photos, stories or audio material definitely depicting sexual acts.
- e) Photos, stories or audio material showing sexual acts.
- f) Scenes and photos of objects made in the semblance of sex organs and for the purpose of engaging in sexual acts.
- g) Scenes, photos or audio depicting acts of desire or lust.

9. Considerations to be made in classifying artistic productions

Listed below are factors to be taken into account by the Bureau before determining the classification of media productions for various age groups.

- a) the age group that the theme of the production is suitable for
- b) the suitability of the production for an age group vis-à-vis the scale of violence in the production
- c) the suitability of the production for an age group vis-à-vis the extent of sexual violence in the production
- d) the suitability of the production for an age group vis-à-vis the scale of physical violence in the production
- e) the suitability of the production for an age group vis-à-vis the amount of blood shown in the production
- f) the suitability of the production for an age group vis-à-vis the level of exposure in the production
- g) the suitability of the production for an age group vis-à-vis the violation of children's rights
- h) the suitability of the production for an age group vis-à-vis the discrimination and prejudiced depiction of any person/people based on race, colour, or religion
- i) the suitability of the production for an age group vis-à-vis if there is approval and/ or encouragement of any activity that is illegal by the law of the country, and the extent to which it is included
- j) the suitability of the production for an age group vis-à-vis the depiction of religious aspects, and the Islamic views and ideals of our society

- k) the suitability of the production for an age group vis-à-vis the negative effect on national character identity

10. Activities that are not permitted

- a) It is illegal to distribute to the public any artistic production that can not be classified by the Bureau
- b) It is illegal to produce, possess, or import any movies that depict in their entirety the sexual act or movies whose narrative depict the same or movies that are related to the sexual act or lust.
- c) It is illegal to produce in the Maldives, use or import into the Maldives any artistic productions that are made for the purpose of spreading religion outside the tenets of Islam believed in the Maldives.

11. Presenting locally produced material for classification

The Bureau would take a period of 4 to 10 days at most to classify and categorise any material that is presented for classification.

12. Complaints and dissatisfaction regarding classifications

The producers could make a request to the Bureau for reconsideration if they are dissatisfied with the classification assigned to a production. Following such a request, the matter would be looked into, with the involvement of the producers themselves. In such an instance, it might take longer than the period of 4 to 10 days stated in Number 11 to classify the material.

13. The Bureau will not charge a fee for the classification of productions. But if any costs are incurred owing to anything the Bureau has to undertake in addition to the routine procedure in classification, the producer is obliged to take responsibility for the additional expenses.

14. Suitable for all ages

- a) story or message; would not include any material that might evoke fear or concern

- b) acts of violence; would not contain any amount of violence. Would also not contain anything that is likely to frighten or worry children under 12 years of age
- c) sexual acts; would not contain anything sexual
- d) harshness of language; would not contain harsh language or language that is unsuitable for children under 12 years of age
- e) drug abuse; would not contain any scenes that depict drug abuse
- f) nudity; would not contain any nudity
- g) religion; would not include information about Islam that is unsuitable for children under 12 years of age

15. Ages 12 and above

- a) story or message; would not include any material that might evoke fear or concern in children between 12 and 15 years old.
- b) acts of violence; would include slightly violent instances that would not evoke fear or concern in children between 12 and 15 years old
- c) sexual acts; would not contain anything sexual
- d) harshness of language; harsh language would not be frequent, and would not contain words that are inappropriate for children between 12 and 15 years of age
- e) drug abuse; would only contain drug abuse in productions specifically targeting the age group
- f) nudity; would not include nudity
- g) religion; would not include information about Islam that is unsuitable for children under 15 years of age

16. suitable for ages 15 and above

- a) story or message; would not contain any material that might frighten or worry viewers between the ages of 15 and 18 years.
- b) acts of violence; would include some violent instances that would not evoke fear or concern in viewers between 15 and 18 years old
- c) sexual acts; would not include anything sexual
- d) harshness of language; would contain some harsh language, but not words that are inappropriate for viewers between 15 and 18 years of age

- e) drug abuse; would only contain scenes depicting drug abuse in those productions intended to warn 15 to 18 year olds about the dangers and perils of drug abuse
- f) nudity; would not include nudity
- g) religion; would not include information about Islam that is unsuitable for children under 18 years of age

17. Suitable for ages 18 and above

- a) story or message; would include some instances that might evoke fear or concern
- b) acts of violence; would include violence that is deemed appropriate for people over 18 years of age. These scenes might evoke fear.
- c) sexual acts; would include sexual scenes that are appropriate for people over 18 years of age, but would not include any graphic scenes of sexual activity
- d) harshness of language; would contain harsh language and any sexual activity might be referred to with sexual connotations
- e) drug abuse; would include scenes depicting drug abuse, but would not include any material that encourages drug abuse or portrays it in a positive light
- f) nudity; would include scenes where the naked person is not in full view, for instance veiled by a shower curtain. No scenes of nudity would be included.
- g) religion; information regarding Islam would be included to the extent that is permissible in the Maldives

18. Professional Use Only

- a) story or message; would include scenes that might evoke fear or concern
- b) acts of violence; would include violence
- c) sexual acts; would include sexual scenes but not graphic scenes showing sexual activity
- d) harshness of language; would include harsh language and some offensive words
- e) drug abuse; would include scenes depicting drug abuse, but would not include any material that encourages drug abuse or portrays it in a positive light
- f) nudity; would include nudity and show sexual organs for educational, intellectual, historical and artistic purposes

g) religion; information regarding Islam would be included to the extent that is permissible in the Maldives

19. Definitions

a) artistic productions; this refers to various types of films, advertisements, dramas, plays, dances, and stage shows

b) classification; this refers to the process of allocating suitable age groups for various creations based on the mentality of different ages, and the themes addressed in the productions.

c) categorising; this refers to the 5 age groups identified by the National Bureau of Classification. These categories are utilised to allocate productions with age groups that they are suitable for.