# BBC STUDIOS

# BBC STUDIOS DISTRIBUTION QAR CHECKLIST
## MAY 2021
• • • • •

## QUALITY ASSESSMENT REVIEW (QAR) FOR BBC STUDIOS HAS TO BE ASSESSED BY A FEW CATEGORIES:

- Technical Quality
- Audio Quality
- Content and Branding
- Paperwork

## CHECKS TO DO BEFORE THE START OF THE QAR

File names for underlined master files, paperwork and split audio stems are essential. It is important that each version of each deliverable carries the correct UID ( / including version number) and other essential information outlined in this document.

It is essential for QAR vendors and BBC Studios to receive the **Video Captions List** for each version of each file. Video Captions Lists have to be submitted to the QAR vendor by production prior the QAR procedure takes place.

**Video Captions List** has to be submitted to BBC Studios Programme Operations Coordinator by production after the file has successfully passed the QAR.



**Video Captions List**
- To be sent to a QAR vendor
- To be sent to BBCSD
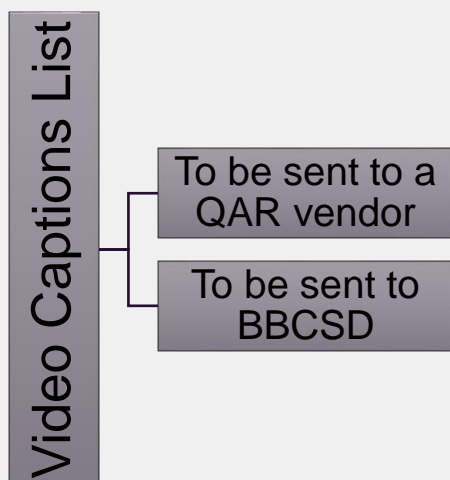
Co-producers' versions should also be QAR'ed and have a Video Captions List reflecting correct timecodes.

Please always check against the latest version of Content Delivery Book (available online as well as a PDF on request): **https://www.bbcstudios.com/media/3654/contentdeliverybook.pdf**

Please avoid sending pre-TX content using WeTransfer (and other open links without passwords).

If a programme falls under Premium Content controls – additional security measures will apply and you will be informed about it.

Only fully QAR'ed files can be ingested into BBCSD inventory.

# BBC STUDIOS

## TECHNICAL CHECKS DURING THE QAR

The programme must be judged against the ITU 5 point grading scale. Grade 3 is a borderline pass and must be referred to BBC Studios Programme Operations for approval. Contacts below and in the Content Delivery Book.

PASS …………………. Grade 5 - Imperceptible impairment
PASS …………………. Grade 4 - Perceptible but not annoying impairment
REFER TO BBCSD……. Grade 3 - Slightly annoying impairment
FAIL …………………. Grade 2 - Annoying impairment
FAIL …………………. Grade 1 - Very annoying impairment

## QAR CHECKLIST

| |
|---|
| Spot check of Final Mix - 5 point check |
| EBU R128 compliant |
| Check text safe areas |
| Check the title is the correct |
| Clock has the correct UID number (with confirmation from BBC Studios) |
| Clock has programme title |
| Clock has episode title |
| Clock has no episode number (not an instant fail but advised to be avoided) |
| Clock has version (currently all files should state dual purpose) |
| Textless Elements - refer to **Video Captions List** |
| Opening title is supplied clean, including the opening BBC blocks section |
| Textless elements are all present |
| Textless elements are in order |
| Textless elements durations are long enough |
| No calls to action |
| Branding - **please check with BBCSD Programme Operations and Production** |
| Check next times/previously on's have been removed and placed at the end of the programme within the elements section (unless agreed otherwise with BBCSD's approval) |
| Check Audio is tagged correctly in QuickTime |
| Do not sign off partial M&E without prior approval |
| Check M&E is clean of all dialogue |
| Check M&E has all effects fully filled |
| Check all VO is removed from the MMN |
| Check continuous off screen dialogue used in a narration style is removed from the MMN |
| Credits - rolling - check the quality of the credits. When in doubt, do a card! |
| Check for obvious spelling errors |
| If production sign off issues, it still needs to be approved by BBC Studios Programme Operations Coordinator |

## BBCSD PROGRAMME OPERATIONS CONTACTS

Andrew Willis Andrew.Willis@bbc.com
Kate Hudson Kate.Hudson@bbc.com
Lara Amos Lara.Amos@bbc.com
Indre Simanynaite Indre.Simanynaite@bbc.com
Aysegul Williams Aysegul.Williams@bbc.com

If you have any questions or unsure on whether the file will be accepted please discuss with Programme Operations Coordinator at BBC Studios before delivering files for ingest. Some issues may require further approval, may affect other distribution needs that you may not be aware of or/and can be signed off by BBC Studios Programme Operations Coordinator as it won't affect localisation.

If you are unsure about guidelines, suspect a fail or see/hear something out of the ordinary please discuss it with the relevant Programme Operations Coordinator.

QAR reports and other supporting documentation (examples of fails if requested) should be uploaded via Dropbox or Box. This will be set up by BBCSD Programme Operations Coordinator for each title.

## VIDEO CAPTIONS LISTS AND TEXTLESS SECTIONS

BBCSD identified that missing textless elements are a common fail point at QAR and a frequent reason for client rejections.

Production is responsible for sending a timecoded list of all texted elements within the programmes and where this corresponding shot is in the textless elements when the programme delivers for QAR.

This will be with immediate effect. A template can be found here:
**https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/yn7i0icu308m9rrn9wxxb/Captions-Lists_Example_BBCSD.xlsx?dl=0&rlkey=ii235ebgcgqalet8qmx4cl7rx**

QAR vendors will be asked to use this list and introduce cross checking this list with the review of the file.

This will support creating semi textless masters for global deals, as required by Netflix, Amazon, HBO Max etc. It will also reduce cost in productions and other vendors fixing programmes either in the QAR process or post-delivery.

Video Captions Lists were introduced into the Content Delivery Book in July 2020 and is being enforced for every programme moving forwards.

Video Captions Lists should include all branding elements. Please note, that a clean element is expected where a branding element is placed as an embedded logo at the opening or closing shot (where it appears over picture), such as BBC blocks, BBC Earth logo and other.

GFX, words, numbers and other symbols must be noted on the Video Captions Lists.

Where there are no captions apart from opening and end credits – the document has to be submitted with stating 'no captions'.

Opening and end credits – listed with in and out TCs, not each card.

Video Captions List is required for every version and every file that BBC Studios Distributions has rights to; including some co-producers' and access to BBC UK TX versions.

It is very important that you note the start and end time of the textless elements on the QAR report. This is so BBC Studios can ascertain the total duration of the material on the tape. For example if the run time of a programme is 59:02 and there are two minutes of textless element, this will take the total run time over the hour mark.

Please check textless elements thoroughly.

•        Each instance of text (including graphics) must have a textless element

- Textless elements must appear in the order they appear in the body of the programme
- Textless elements must be supplied cut to cut to enable easy insertion of the clean section
- Make sure each textless element is lengthy enough, not too short in frames

## FIX PATCHES

If content requires fixes (technical or/and editorial) the whole file should be fixed and re-QAR'ed until it passes QAR and is ready for ingest.

Fix patches will be required if there are TX critical orders.

If a fix patch is required, we will ask for a short ProRes file corresponding with technical specifications outlined in the latest Content Delivery Book and how the programme was originally commissioned. It will have to have 2s *handles* either side, be of an appropriate length and uploaded via Dropbox or Box so we can service TX critical orders immediately until the full master file is fixed, re-QAR'ed and re-ingested.

As a global distributor we are unable to accept *only* patches, as a permanent solution, without a full re-delivery of master files (including audio and corresponding paperwork). Each edit on each file triggers a new QAR. As a global distributor (in comparison with a single channel) we work with many vendors, clients and channels worldwide who rely on our internal systems and expect to work from the final master file (including audio and supporting documentation). Please also note, that not all broadcasters, channels, platforms and clients have suitable editing facilities and cannot insert relevant patches/fix files themselves therefore will require a fully fixed and QAR'ed file to broadcast.

There is no way to monitor or let individuals know that final assets hosted on all BBCSD systems need further amendment/additional tweaking or suggest variations without updating all video and supporting assets and running them through another QAR after the fix. This is the only way to ensure correct and fixed files without errors reach clients including many supporting vendors that we rely on, such as localisation.

## FILE NAMES – VIDEO FILES

Video files delivering to QAR and ingest vendors need to be delivered to BBC Studios Distribution naming convention as outlined below. These file names are read by QAR operators and won't be rejected automatically. We work with many external vendors who deal with thousands of files each day so it is important to clearly outline file information to prevent delays and ingest errors.

- Please do not refer to production order (RX) on any paperwork or master assets
- Please refrain from putting episode numbers on deliverables to avoid issues if running order changes occur – instead use episodic titles
- TX order may sometimes change once assets have been delivered
- NO ZIP folders when uploading assets on Dropbox/Box
- All assets should have the correct UID number (including a version number). Failure to do so may affect contributor and music royalty payments

File names can include other info, such as UHD HDR, P-LED, P-LESS, co-producer version, duration etc. However, please be mindful of character count.

UID_SeriesTitle_SeasonNumber_EpisodeTitle_Version_Frame Rate_AspectRatio

Please ensure there are no spaces in the filename, using an underscore where a space is required.

Any files received with the incorrect UID should be rejected.

Likewise, the UID in the file name must correspond with the UID on the clock.

E.g. The UID for Fawlty Towers: Series 2 EP3 is: LLCJ061Y/01

The series title is Fawlty Towers, the season number is 2, and the episode title is Waldorf Salad.

Fawlty Towers is available as a dual purpose master, so DP must be included as the version.

Therefore, the file name should be as follows:

Example:
LLCJ061Y01_FawltyTowers_S2_WaldorfSalad_DP_25p_169

## FILE NAMES - PAPERWORK

Example:

LLCJ061Y01_FawltyTowers_S2_WaldorfSalad_DP_25p_169_QAR

UID_SeriesTitle_SeasonNumber_EpisodeTitle_Version_Frame Rate_AspectRatio_Asset Type

Asset Type: QAR report, Captions List, EDL (Edit Decision List), PPS (Post Production Script), PasC, MCS, Latin etc etc.

All forms should have the correct UID number. Failure to do so may affect contributor and music royalty payments. Please refrain from putting episode numbers on paperwork to avoid issues if running order changes occur – instead use episodic titles.

## FILE NAMES - AUDIO STEMS

Example:

LLCJ061Y01_FawltyTowers_S2_WaldorfSalad_DP_25p_169_StereoEffects_R

UID_SeriesTitle_SeasonNumber_EpisodeTitle_Version_FrameRate_AspectRatio_BWAV

BWAV_FinalMix_L
BWAV_FinalMix_R
BWAV_ME_L
BWAV_ME_R
BWAV_Stereo_Dialogue_L
BWAV_Stereo_Dialogue_R
BWAV_Stereo_Music_L
BWAV_Stereo_Music_R
BWAV_Stereo_Effects_L
BWAV_Stereo_Effects_R
BWAV Optionals (Where applicable)
…

## CLOCK INFORMATION

Clocks must carry the correct BBC Studios UID/commissioned ID. Files that do not have the correct UID/commissioning ID should be rejected and must be fixed at production's cost. In addition, clocks must carry: series title, number, episode title and that the file is dual purpose.

UID
Series Title
Series Number
Episode Title (if applicable)
Dual Purpose

## DURING QAR

Please refer to materials list issued to production, Content Delivery Book and discuss specific co-producers' requirements with the relevant Programme Operations Coordinator at BBCSD.

**https://www.bbcstudios.com/media/3654/contentdeliverybook.pdf**

## AUDIO CHECKS

- Dialogue
- Audio does not peak
- Phase is correct
- M+E is correct
- FX Sync is correct
- Lip sync is correct
- Track is free of distortion
- Track is free from clicks
- Track is free from drop outs
- Audio track configuration is correct
- No bleeping (swear words should be noted in the bad language list by production)
- Hiss/Crackles/Pops/Sibilance, any other distortions

## M&E

It is acceptable to include the VO/dialogue in the M&E **only** if it's used purposely and not meant to be translated. If it's not meant to be understood, then it won't be dubbed and then it can stay in the M&E.

For example, local indigenous language where no subtitles should be provided with the main intention being that other characters and the audience are not meant to understand what it is being said on screen. We would still will require split audio and clear M&E provided though (may be needed for future promos and/or marketing).

Production needs to make it clear when producing the final post production script that the dialogue is not meant to be translated. Localisation vendors and channels will have it for reference. Please also note it down on the QAR report if you noticed a similar instance.

## FACTUAL M&E

No commentary, no extra readings or voiceovers should be on the music and effects. The levels should not be dipped.

If a contributor is speaking PTC, it goes on the dialogue track and hence onto the M&E. If a

contributor is NOT speaking to camera at any point, but their dialogue is used as voice-over, it should be classed as VO and not put on the M&E.

Quality M&E is essential for localization. We are trying to avoid instances similar to this.

## DRAMA M&E

The M&E needs to be 100 per cent fully filled effects, footsteps and foley to be supplied which includes the atmospheric effects of crunching gravel, background atmos etc. No speech should be heard at all. A fully filled international M&E refers to a programme where in-vision dialogues are removed (so they can be replaced by a foreign language dub) but all the non-spoken sync FX (footfalls, clothes rustle etc) are re-created to 'fill' the gaps created by the removal of the spoken dialogues.

## MEASURMENTS (FACTUAL)

BBC Studios versions will require metric narration.

General rules:
- UK TX/access to TX version – miles + metric accepted (FYI English mile is different from a Swedish mile).
- BBCSD version – metric (the metric system has been officially adopted across the globe with a very few exceptions being the US, Liberia & Myanmar).
- When there's an American co-producer (Discovery, BBCA, PBS etc) they will want alternative VO with US imperial measurements.

Could vary by co-producer:
a) Alternative VO lines sent separately
b) Full imperial audio laid on video saying Fahrenheit instead of Celsius, for example
c) Measurement conversion should be noted down in the final post production scripts

We understand that some measurements recorded on location may not be re-recorded later (in making ofs/on location/archival footage). Please inform your BBC Studios Programme Operations Coordinator and note it down on the QAR report if you have spotted an instance of this.

## VIDEO CHECKS

- Programme is seamless (can differ if it's a co-pro version)
- Clean elements for titles, credits, captions, GFX, numbers and embedded branding elements are included at the end and are in order of appearance in the programme
- Next times/previously on are at the end and contains relevant audio
- **PSE safe (previously not a requirement for worldwide distribution. However a lot of co-producers and broadcasters are now requiring this. Please discuss this with your Programme Operations Coordinator).**
- Aspect ratio is correct throughout
- Video levels are correct throughout
- Text safe
- Blanking is correct throughout
- Luminance peaks
- Scratches / Dirt
- Visible compression
- Grading changes
- Bug safe throughout
- Ident, clocks and caption are all in safe area
- Definition/Aliasing/Flicker/Stability
- Conversion Interpolation errors

HD and UHD programmes containing archive of variable quality and domestic or low quality sources should have been discussed with BBC Studios Programme Operations Coordinator before delivery. If you feel it's excessively used contact BBCSD Programme Operations Coordinator, there may be contractual obligations in co-producers' and/or clients' agreements that may affect payment.

Pictures should be appropriately sharp, free of excessive overshoots and normally exhibit no perceptible levels of noise. Black or white crushing in the main areas of interest should be avoided and colours, especially skin tones should be natural.

## MASTER FILES MUST BE:

•        Seamless, fully edited complete programmes.
•        To the required BBC Studios duration (final duration may be up to 2 mins either side of the contracted duration but not longer or shorter without approval). This could differ depending on the commissioning guidelines.

Mixed aspect ratios are not permitted within programme.

Text/Captions (including graphics) must be within text safe area. Active picture area on 16:9 FHA masters to be 16:9 full height anamorphic, shot-protected and caption safe for 16:9FHA & title safe 16:9.

## BRANDING

Branding for BBC Studios distributed titles to be discussed with Production and BBC Studios Programme Operations Coordinator prior each QAR takes place.

Branding can vary and depends on a specific deal, territory, whether it's an independent or an in-house production and commissioning guidelines at the time. Branding may vary by linear and digital platforms and also some regions due to their rules and regulations. There will be case by case scenarios that will need to be addressed in terms of partner agreements on positioning of branding too.

All branding elements are part of the main programme duration.

Be aware of variations and common branding scenarios:

•        **Up-front branding** may not be static and should be accompanied by the appropriate audio. May impact versioning and differ for every version required.
•        **Embedded branding** (such as BBC blocks, BBC EARTH & Cbeebies logos at the beginning of each title). Where embedded branding is visible on screen, we will also require a textless shot without that branding provided at the end of the file. This is for future proofing content and further editing needs, such as creation of promos and other marketing assets.
•        Some **franchise titles** (such as Dr Who, Top Gear, Planets, Horizon) may contain specific branding and should be discussed with Programme Operations Coordinator before each QAR takes place. Branding may be embedded within content and contain audio.
•        Some **co-produced** versions may have different branding needs and should be discussed with production and the relevant Programme Operations Coordinator at BBC Studios.
•        **Specific wording**, copyright year, co-producers' logos, Albert logo are contractually agreed and production should discuss the layout of it with the commissioning entity and BBC Studios before each QAR takes place.
•        After each production **end board**, a *Distributed by BBC Studios* end board should be visible for 3 seconds. It is a mute, static end board that is black with white text on it. It is the very last image visible to a viewer and is part of the full programme duration.

Branding elements are usually discussed with production and BBC Studios at an earlier stage, before each QAR takes place. If you're ever in doubt and need access to any of the elements required, please contact BBC Studios Programme Operations Coordinator.

## RECAPS, TRAILS AND TEASERS

They should be put at the end of the masters following the textless elements. Trails should not include time specific references such as 'next week' it should instead use phrases like 'next time'. Should contain relevant audio.

## COMMON FAILS TO AVOID

- Missing textless elements
- Spelling errors/issues with end credits
- VFX errors
- No clean opening / closing
- Incorrect audio tagging
- Incorrect video line up
- Blanking errors
- Missing information on the clock
- Contains off screen dialogue within M&E
- Digital drop out
- Incorrect branding
- Flash frames
- Censor blur/beep
- Incorrect line up tones

## YEAR END (EARLY/MID-MARCH DELIVERIES)

Please note, that every February, running into early/mid-March we may see an increased number of titles and urgency. You may notice an influx of files and stricter deadlines around this time. It is important to ingest fully QAR'ed episodes by a certain date in February for the annual BBC Studios Showcase event and by a certain date in March to allow time for final deals to be fulfilled, localised and counted before the new financial year begins. Dates will vary each year.

## QAR REPORT

To be uploaded either by the QAR vendor or production on Dropbox/Box folder that is created by Programme Operations Coordinator. Please get in touch when you require access.

QAR Report triggers the ingest process and notifies Programme Operations Coordinators that the version/episode will soon become available. It is important for us to know about QAR dates to manage clients' expectations worldwide.