



# Official Irish Albums Chart

**Rules for Chart Eligibility for the IRMA Official  
Charts**

## **Albums**

Adopted by the Board of IRMA on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018

# **Rules for Irish Chart Eligibility**

## **September 2018**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The following Chart Rules exist to determine eligibility for entry into the Irish Recorded Music Association CLG (IRMA) Official Charts. The aim of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the Charts and to ensure that they are an accurate reflection of the popularity of each recording by reference to genuine transactions.

The Rules apply not only to members of IRMA but equally to all record producers and/or distributors of recordings. They set out the conditions on which a record will be eligible for inclusion in the Charts.

It should be noted that record producers and distributors remain free to package and market their products in any way they choose. However, releases which do not comply with the Chart Rules will not be eligible to be included in the IRMA Official Chart.

The Chart Rules are issued by the Official Charts UK Company (OCC) and IRMA. OCC is responsible for interpreting and applying the Chart Rules on a day-to-day basis under the supervision of IRMA. OCC may, at its discretion, refer any matter concerning the interpretation of the Chart Rules with respect to one or more recordings to the Council of Inquiry set up by IRMA for a decision. A record producer or distributor that wishes to dispute a decision made by OCC may also apply to the Council of Inquiry of IRMA for a decision. The decision of the Council of Inquiry will be final.

## 1.0 Genuine Sales

### 1.1

All sales information used to compile the Chart must be recorded as a result of a genuine transaction by a genuine consumer.

No record producer, distributor, retailer, artist or other party should act or encourage others to act in any way designed to distort, or which has the effect of distorting the Chart by achieving a higher or lower Chart position for a record than it would otherwise achieve.

Actions which will be considered a breach of these rules include:

- a) promoting the sale of any album by supplying a retailer with records by another artist free of charge or upon terms more favourable than would be the case but for that promotion;
- b) purchasing albums or causing albums to be purchased or streamed other than as a genuine consumer transaction;
- c) multiple transactions of albums on behalf of other persons,
- d) interference with the operation of transaction recording machines or other equipment or computer software used to compile the Charts or collect or collate its information or in any other way being a party to the submission of false or inaccurate data to the Chart compiler (currently Kantar Milward Brown);
- e) offering money or other benefits to a chart reporting retailer or service contingent upon an album entering any of the Charts or attaining a minimum chart position;
- f) procuring the sale and/or consumption of an album in conjunction with a non-related gift or valuable gift (where "valuable gift" means any gift which has a market value of its own however small), i.e. which gives the consumer a product, voucher or benefit or anything else which is either unrelated to the album concerned or of a value in excess of the value of the record without that gift, and where it is not an album and merchandise package as outlined in section 8.0.
- g) any other activity intended unfairly to influence Chart positions.

Where OCC has reason to believe that an album is the subject of any of the above types of activity, it will, at its discretion, either remove identifiable irregular transactions from the data used to compile the Chart, or exclude the record from the Chart with immediate effect.

OCC's nominated chart compiler will ensure the accuracy and completeness of any transaction information provided to it by a retail outlet to the extent it is possible to do so using good industry practice. Where the nominated chart compiler has reason to believe that the inclusion of transactions from a retail outlet or a number of retail outlets maybe inaccurate, misleading or incomplete and run contrary to the guidelines expected by a skilled and experienced market research firm, then the retail outlet(s) in question will be excluded to avoid potential distortion.

If an album is excluded from the Chart, OCC will inform the record producer, distributor, and IRMA in writing on the first working day after the exclusion takes effect. If unusual or irregular sales transactions cause OCC to remove data from the Charts, OCC will inform IRMA, on the first working day after the data is removed.

## 2.0 Codes of Conduct

<b>2.1</b>	
	These rules in so far as members of IRMA are concerned are additional to any rules contained in the IRMA member's agreement regarding chart rules.

## 3.0 Albums Definitions Summary

<b>3.1</b>	
	The playing time of an album shall be in excess of <b>25 minutes</b> An album shall have more than four songs.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Playing Time</b> refers to the amount of recorded material irrespective of content.</li> <li>2. A <b>Track</b> is a continuous piece of recorded material.</li> <li>3. <b>Compilation Album Chart</b> Includes original soundtracks unless all tracks feature the same artist or cast, multi orchestral recordings, and "1 artist per side" albums (if not new)</li> <li>4. <b>Artist Album Chart</b> includes single artist compilations, original cast recordings, original cast performance soundtracks where all performances (inclusive of opening and end credits) are performed by the cast and single orchestra recordings</li> <li>5. <b>The Irish Artist Chart</b> shall consist of artists with Irish passports, or if a band, orchestra or ensemble then 50% of the band orchestra or ensemble shall hold Irish passports.</li> <li>6. For Chart purposes "on demand streams" are those streams delivered by an "on demand service", namely a service which offers: (a) only a la carte streams (those which have been actively selected by the user); or (b) a mixture of a la carte streams and also streams which have been played from curated playlists, where the user has access to what is considered by OCC / IRMA to be a reasonable number of skips. For removal of doubt, services which provide access to streams solely via curated / non-interactive playlists will not be deemed to be "on demand" services.</li> <li>7. Video streams are not eligible for the album charts.</li> </ol>

## 4.0 Combining of Sales

<b>4.1</b>	<b>Combining Formats for Album Chart</b>
	Unlimited album formats may be combined for chart placing providing they adhere to all chart rules
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Alternative Album Formats (Deluxe, Re-Issues)</b>
	<p>Sales of alternative versions of an album where the alternative version features additional audio and / or audio visual material to the standard album version, will be combined provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ The alternative format contains 100% of the audio tracks as featured on the standard version</li> <li>□ The additional material on the alternative format has not been previously available for purchase in its entirety as a separate product</li> </ul> <p>If the additional tracks are released as a separate product, sales of an album cannot be combined with those of the original format. This is applicable even if the album contains mixes/live/extended versions of songs on the original format.</p>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Alternative Album Formats featuring less than 100% of material on Standard Album</b>
	Alternative formats not featuring 100% of the audio tracks from the standard version of the album may be combined providing it meets 80% crossover with standard album format. (See Appendix 1 Figure 1).

<b>4.4</b>	<b>Remix and Live Albums</b>
	Sales of remix or live albums will not be combined with sales of the original studio version.
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Standalone DVD Albums</b>
	An album may be released on a DVD format and its sales combined with other format variants, provided there is a chart eligible CD of the same album on general release bearing the same title as the DVD format.
	In order for the DVD album to be combined 80% of tracks on one of the available CD formats should appear on the DVD format. (See Appendix 1 Figure 1).
<b>4.6</b>	<b>Import Albums</b>
	When they contain at least 80% of the tracks on the standard domestic format, imports are considered to be alternatives to the standard Irish versions and their sales are added accordingly. If an import differs in content or packaging from an Irish release, it counts as a separate format. (See Appendix 1, Figure 1)
	An imported record is eligible for a chart position in its own right if there is no equivalent Irish release.
<b>4.7</b>	<b>Multi Format Packages &amp; Box Sets</b>
	Multiple pack albums or Box Sets featuring <b>different</b> album titles are eligible for the chart in their own right. They will not be combined with the sales of one of their constituent items.
	Multiple format albums or Box Sets featuring <b>different</b> formats of the <b>same</b> album (including physical formats packaged with a code or alternative mechanic offering a digital copy of album) are eligible to be combined with standard version of the same album. Multi format albums or Box Sets constitute a single sale.
<b>4.8</b>	<b>Simultaneous Availability from Distributors</b>
	When the same record (or combinable variant) is available on Irish release from two different parties, sales will not be combined except at the request of both parties.
<b>4.9</b>	<b>Catalogue Numbers and Barcodes</b>
	All physical formats should carry a unique catalogue number, and a unique barcode should relate to the catalogue number. This is applicable even when identical recordings are issued in different packaging, including colour variations of CD's, vinyl and DMD's.
	All physical formats of an album release should be reported to the Chart Compiler.
	<b>Note:</b> Physical products without a barcode will not have their sales tracked for chart purposes.
<b>4.10</b>	<b>ISRCs and Digital Barcodes</b>
	All digital album bundles must carry a unique barcode and ISRC codes for individual tracks (including music videos).
	All digital formats of an album release should be reported to the Chart Compiler.
	<b>Note:</b> Digital tracks without an ISRC or digital albums without a barcode will not have their sales tracked for chart purposes.

## 5.0 Exclusions

<b>5.1</b>	<b>Exclusion By Request</b>
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	An Irish rights owner/licensee may request OCC to exclude an album from the Charts where the record is not generally available from the owner's normal distributor (for example - deleted titles, or pre-release sales caused by distribution leaks).
	OCC may at its absolute discretion exclude an album from the Chart in such circumstances. An album that otherwise meets all eligibility criteria will not be excluded from the charts.
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Promotional Products</b>
	Any promotional (free to consumer) physical product or digital product will not be eligible for inclusion in the chart.

## 6.0 Competitions, Vouchers and Retailer Promotions

<b>6.1</b>	<b>Competitions / Vouchers</b>
	Competition inserts or entry may <b>not</b> be included in any physical or digital album release. (also see 6.3 retail promotions)
	A competition featured on or within the packaging of any album release, including but not limited to the 'enhanced section', microsite or any other chart eligible software application or program will render the format ineligible for inclusion in the charts.
	A release incorporating an exclusive voucher giving discounts on other goods or services, or exclusive access to such goods and services-are considered free gifts and are ineligible for inclusion in the chart.
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Data Capture Incentives</b>
	Standard generic company/record label data capture mechanics that offer a small incentive in exchange for consumer details do not make a product ineligible for the chart.
<b>6.3</b>	<b>Retailer Promotions</b>
	Any incentive in the form of a retailer sponsored free gift or discount, to purchase one or more chart eligible albums, will not disqualify sales of records from contributing to the Chart position provided that the records, and the gifts or discount offered, comply with all other chart eligibility rules. If a retailer promotion does not conform to this, sales of the record concerned will be excluded from the chart.
	Retailer promotions on albums are not limited to the free gifts as described in para 10. Allowable album content / Packaging / Permitted free gifts, provided that OCC receives written confirmation from the retailer that it is sponsoring the promotion.
	If a retailer is running a competition it may not be dependent on the purchase of specific albums. Consumers must be provided a simple, prominent "no purchase necessary" option to enter the competition and in the case of online competitions access to entry must be made available via a direct hyperlink a maximum of one click through from the promotional page (cut and paste links are not permitted)
	Consumers should not be automatically entered into a competition upon purchase.

<b>6.4</b>	<b>Retailer Instore Personal Appearances</b>
	Where a retailer hosts an instore appearance by an artist, and requires attendees to purchase an album product from their store or chain to gain entrance, such sales will be chart eligible provided that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The personal appearance takes place within a chart reporting outlet;</li> <li>• The product is related to the appearing artist;</li> <li>• Purchase is restricted to one album;</li> </ul>

- The hosting retailer has informed OCC and/or the Chart Compiler of the instore event(s)
- The product complies with all other chart eligibility rules;

Any requirement to make a purchase of a specific product from a specific store /chain in order to gain entry to an artist instore appearance is at the sole discretion of the hosting retailer.

## 7.0 Pre Order Incentives

<b>7.0</b>	<b>Pre Order Incentives</b>
	No competition incentive may be offered on a digital and/or physical pre order except that Retailers may conduct pre order incentives on products providing they comply with all other chart rules
	Where a physical album is available for pre-order access to a pre-release stream or timed out download of all or some of the album tracks will be chart eligible.
	A free permanent download of an album given to consumer as a pre order incentive will render the physical album ineligible for the chart.
	Streaming pre-orders known as “pre-saves” are permitted provided there is no automatic streaming of a pre-saved track.
<b>7.1</b>	<b>Instant Gratification Incentives</b>
	An Instant Grat mechanic run during an album pre-order will not disqualify the album pre-orders from contributing to the Chart position
	Any track provided as an Instant Grat will not be eligible for the IRMA Official Singles Chart, but will not disqualify a standalone sale of the same recording, subject to IRMA Singles Chart Rule 7.0

## 8.0 Album & Merchandise Packages

<b>8.0</b>	<b>Album &amp; Merchandise Packages</b>
	Record producers and distributors are free to package album formats with gifts provided that the gift is not worth more than 10% of the sale price of the album without the gift and the gift is a “permitted gift” as outlined in paragraph 10
	<b>8.1 Boxed Packages</b> Albums sold as part of a boxed package, together with added value items, will be chart eligible provided the boxed package complies with the Chart Rules <i>and</i> has been approved by OCC in accordance with the <b>Approval Process set out in Appendix 2.</b>
	Added value items must be packaged with the album and must be clearly related to the artist or artist brand. In the case of non-artist albums merchandise may be label or brand related.
	The album and merchandise package must carry a unique barcode to that of the standard (or any other) version of the album.
	Tickets for live events and access ‘experiences’ e.g. meet and greet are not eligible to be packaged within Album & Merchandise packages
	<b>8.2 Curated Packages</b> Albums sold as part of a non-boxed package curated by a retailer will be chart eligible provided the package complies with the Chart Rules <i>and</i> has been approved by OCC in accordance with the <b>Approval Process set out in Appendix 2.</b>

Added value items available for inclusion in the curated package must also be available for purchase separately via the same store.

Retailer promotions permitted under Rule 6.3 are excluded from this Rule 8.2

### 8.3 Album & Ticket Packages (Bundles)

Albums bundled with the sale of tickets for live events will be chart eligible where the following circumstances are met, subject at all times to the Approval Process set out in Appendix 2 and these Chart Rules:

- (a) The same artist (s) is / are performing at that live event
- (b) Each album and ticket is also available to buy individually and this is stated in simple and prominent terms in the promotion and at the point of purchase; and
- (c) The Bundle has a higher sale price than the price of the standalone ticket.

Album sales that are “baked in” to a ticket sale (i.e. automatically add an album to a ticket offer), and which do not provide simple and prominent instructions and means by which the consumer can opt out of the purchase of an album, are not chart eligible.

Access to a ticket pre-sale will be allowed with an album pre-order provided the album pre-order makes it clear, in simple and prominent terms that the album pre-order does not guarantee a ticket to the consumer.

Pre-sale ticket allocation may not be dependent upon the pre-order of an album. A customer not wishing to pre-order an album must be given a simple, prominent and equal “no purchase necessary” opportunity to access the ticket pre-sale.

## 9.0 Album Streams

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The Official Artist Albums Chart is based on the sum of the following elements:

- Physical album DUS
- Digital album DUS
- Streaming album DUS

**Note:** DUS means Defined Universe Sales i.e. sales and streams figures from all chart reporting retailers.

### 9.1 Album Stream Methodology

The 2 album tracks attracting most streams are neutralised to the level of the average of the next 10 highest streamed tracks associated with the album (or all tracks where album has < 12 tracks).

When establishing the revised streams for neutralised tracks from an album, the average streams applied to neutralised tracks will be based on streams of all ISRCs linked to the 10 single products used in the calculation. (See Appendix 1 Figure 3).

After the methodology above is applied, the streams of the top 12 tracks (or all tracks where an album < 12 tracks) making up the album are aggregated together and converted to create the “Streaming album DUS”, using a conversion rate of 1,000 streams = 1 album sale.

A new album DUS is created from adding together the physical album DUS, digital album DUS and the streaming album DUS. (See Appendix 1 Figure 3).

### 9.2 Qualifying Tracks

In all cases, qualifying tracks will be those from any registered album format track listing. In the event where a release has both standard and deluxe versions, the track listings will be aggregated and de-duplicated to create the qualifying track listing. Where a track(s) from an album have registered zero streams, those tracks will not be



	utilised in calculating the average stream count for the neutralised tracks.
	Where an album is flagged as a Live release, only live versions of tracks from the project will be included in the streaming factor calculation
<b>9.3</b>	<b>Multiple Albums</b>
	Where a track is credited to more than one artist – streams of that track will count equally towards each artist's studio albums.
	Where a track appears on more than one album by an artist, streams of this track will be attributed equally to each studio album and a maximum of one greatest hits album (the hits title with the highest DUS for that given week, or other hits title nominated in advance by label).
<b>9.4</b>	<b>Album Availability</b>
	Streaming will only be factored into an album DUS where at least seven tracks (inclusive of singles) from an album are available to stream. This threshold will apply to the longest track listing available. Where an album's fullest track listing comprises 5 or 6 tracks, 100% of tracks must receive >0 streams.
<b>9.5</b>	<b>Streaming Only Albums</b>
	Newly released studio artist albums available in an audio streaming only format will be chart eligible.
	For a streaming album to qualify as newly released it may not feature repertoire previously available on albums by the artist (unless they are newly released alternative versions of previously available tracks).
	Greatest hits/anthologies/live albums and generally compilations of previously released material will not be chart eligible if available for streaming only
	Where possible, OCC / The Chart Compiler to be notified ahead of release that a streaming only album is to be made available to consumers.
	Where possible album title and track ISRC's to be registered with the Chart Compiler pre-release. Retrospective notification of a streaming only album release must take place within the first week of availability
	Linking different streaming only versions of albums together will be subject to the existing eligibility guidelines for alternative formats
	A maximum of two streaming only album variants will be eligible to be combined for one chart position (excluding clean / explicit versions of a release).
	Streaming only album to be identified and presented to consumers by streaming services as an album – streaming only bundles labelled as a playlist would not qualify as a streaming only album release.
	OCC will factor in the existence of traditional album features such as, an album title covering the collection of tracks and unique artwork, in determining the eligibility of a streaming only album.

## 10. Allowable Album Content

**Alternative versions of albums that are to be combined with the standard version of the album that don't have 100% of track listing will be subject to 80% crossover rule. (See Section 4.0 and Appendix 1 for further information)**

<b>Total Playing Time</b>	Unlimited
<b>Audio Content</b>	Unlimited

<b>Video Content</b>	Unlimited
<b>Memory Capacity (Standard DMD only)</b>	Maximum of 512MB
<b>Packaging</b>	Packaging for an album release must have no value in its own right and no other use other than to contain the recording.
	If the packaging of an album adds value to the item, and could be sold in its own right, and does not qualify for exemption under the clauses below it is considered to be a free gift and the album is therefore ineligible for the Chart.
	<b>Flyers</b> promoting merchandise or other product may be included within the packaging provided that access to this merchandise is not available exclusively through purchase of the record. Flyers must be contained within the format packaging.
	Please consult OCC if you are unsure of the eligibility of a product's packaging
<b>Permitted Free Gifts</b>	A <b>"gift"</b> is defined as any item which has a market value of its own, however small. Records sold with free gifts are ineligible for the chart. Therefore no other item may be included other than those outlined below:
	One <b>"poster"</b> . Can be printed on both sides. There is no size specification but after folding it must be contained within the packaging.
	<b>"Cards"</b> Card(s) must be contained within the format packaging and be 2 sided with no folds. Card(s) maybe printed on both sides. Maximum card size is dictated by the dimensions of the packaging they are to be contained within.
	<b>"Booklets"</b> must be contained within the format packaging
	<b>"Stickers"</b> , to fit within the packaging without folds
<b>Deluxe Edition (CD/DVD Sets)</b>	
	A DVD may be packed with a CD or enhanced CD format
	A DVD must be directly related to the artist/brand in question and not previously available for purchase in its entirety as a separate product.
	A DVD may be shrink wrapped to a CD format or contained within standard CD/DVD packaging.
	<b>In order to be combined with a standard CD format a CD/DVD set must feature 80% of the tracks featured on the standard CD format. (See Appendix 1, Figure 1)</b>
	All CD/DVD sets must carry a unique catalogue number and barcode.
<b>Deluxe DMD Formats</b>	
	Maximum memory capacity for a Deluxe DMD is 5GB
	A Deluxe DMD may be combined with a Standard CD providing 80% of the tracks featured on the Standard CD format appear on the Deluxe DMD format. (See Appendix 1, Figure 1)

Added value multimedia content must be directly related to the artist/brand in question and not previously available for purchase in its entirety as a separate product.

All Deluxe DMDs must carry a unique catalogue number and barcode.

### Deluxe Vinyl Formats

A Vinyl or LP release may contain a CD copy of same album

A Vinyl or LP release may contain a code (or alternative mechanic) giving access to a digital copy of the same album

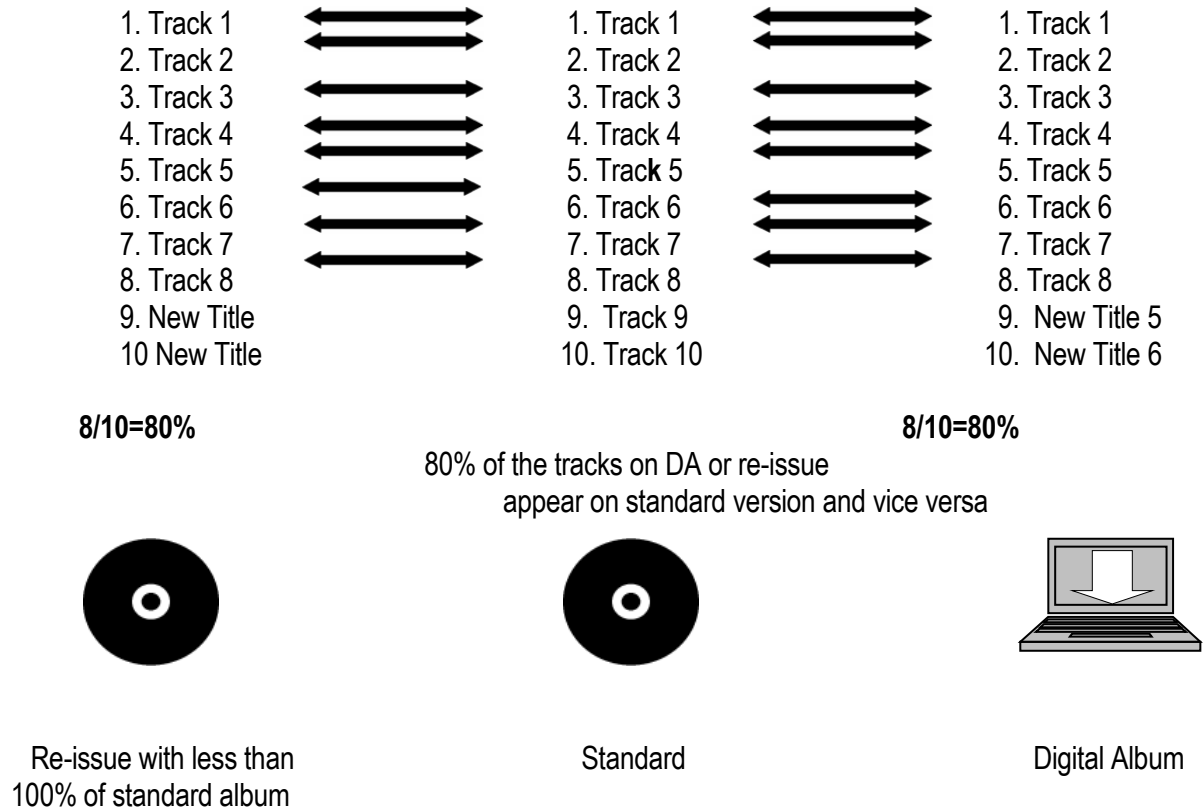
**Please note that the following are NOT eligible.**

Any element not mentioned above and which has not been specifically approved by the OCC prior to release

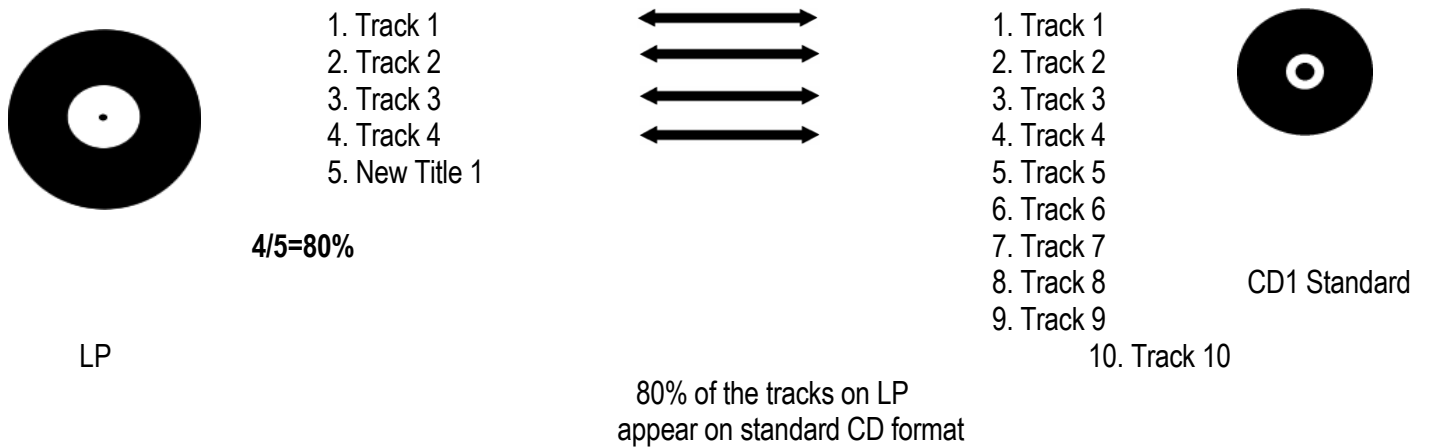
# Appendix 1

This appendix forms part of the Chart Rules and is included to provide clarification of Section 4.0 Combining of Sales

**Figure 1 – 80% Crossover Rule**



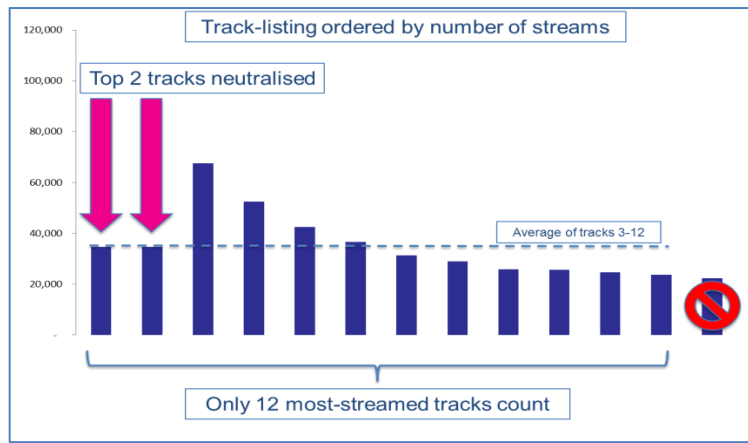
**Figure 2 – LP 80% Rule**



**Additional Notes**

When calculating 100% and 80% rules the following are to be excluded from calculations: Alternative tracks (including remixed, extended, live or demo versions of featured tracks), Videos, EPKs and Interviews.

Figure 3 – Album Streaming Methodology



## Appendix 2

### Official Chart Approval Process for Promotional Campaigns

Albums subject to promotional campaigns (including but not limited to Album and Merchandise Packages or Album and Ticket Bundles) (“**Promotions**”) must be pre-approved by OCC in accordance with the following approval process to ensure chart eligibility:

1. OCC must be notified by the label / retailer a minimum of 2 full working days before the Promotion is due to go live. This notice will be on a strictly confidential basis.
2. Label / retailer must provide the following “**Materials**” to OCC for approval a minimum of 1 full working day before the Promotion is due to go live:
  - screengrabs of **all** presentations of the Promotion; and
  - links to all websites / platforms offering the Promotion.

Label / retailer must inform OCC of any changes made to the Materials after they have been provided.

OCC is not responsible for opening links to the Promotion across different devices. It is the sole responsibility of the label / retailer to make OCC aware of any difference in presentation of the Promotion across platforms / devices and to include screen grabs of all the different presentations in the Materials. Presentations not identified to OCC are unapproved and potentially chart ineligible.

3. Approval has not been granted for a Promotion until OCC has informed the label / retailer in writing (email to suffice) that the Promotion is formally approved.
4. Any changes to the Promotion required by OCC must flow through to all presentations of the Promotion across all platforms / devices, where applicable.
5. Where a Promotion is reviewed by OCC after it has gone live, and adjustment(s) are required prior to approval being given, the album may only become chart eligible from the point that formal approval has been given. Any transactions made before this may be chart ineligible.
6. OCC’s verdict on chart eligibility or ineligibility is final.