



**EXAMINATION GUIDELINES CONCERNING THE CLASSIFICATION OF GOODS AND  
SERVICES IN INTERNATIONAL APPLICATIONS UNDER THE MADRID SYSTEM**

June 2018

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## Introduction

This document contains guidelines for the examination undertaken by the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) of the indications of goods and services listed in applications for the international registration of a mark (international applications) filed under the Madrid System.

The guidelines were first introduced to participants in the Roundtable of the Working Group for the Legal Development of the Madrid System in June 2016. Following the meeting, Contracting Parties of the Madrid System and users' organizations were given the opportunity to send their comments on the guidelines to the International Bureau. An updated version was introduced in the Roundtable in June 2017 (2nd version).

The same procedure was then repeated after the Roundtable meeting in June 2017. This is therefore the third version of the guidelines.

The Madrid System gives trademark owners the possibility to seek protection for their marks in several territories with one international registration. The Madrid System is governed by the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks (the Protocol).

To obtain an international registration, trademark owners must file an international application through the Trademark Office of the Contracting Party (Office of origin) with which they have either filed an application or obtained a registration (basic mark). Moreover, brand owners must be nationals, domiciled or have a real and effective industrial or commercial establishment in that Contracting Party (entitlement).

The Office of origin must certify the date on which it received the international application and that certain particulars appearing in that application correspond with those in the basic mark. Then, the Office of origin must transmit the international application to the International Bureau.

According to Article 3(2) of the Protocol, “[t]he applicant must indicate the goods and services in respect of which protection of the mark is claimed and also, if possible, the corresponding class or classes according to the classification established by the Nice Agreement [...]”

Moreover, according to the same Article, “[t]he indication of classes given by the applicant shall be subject to control by the International Bureau, which shall exercise the said control in association with the Office of origin.”

Finally, the Article indicates that, “[i]n the event of disagreement between the said Office and the International Bureau, the opinion of the latter shall prevail.”

The publication of these guidelines seeks to inform the Madrid System users and Offices of the practices followed by the International Bureau; support users when listing goods and services in international applications; increase the predictability of the outcome of the examination undertaken by the International Bureau; and foster greater consistency among Office practices. In general terms, this should positively impact the processing of international applications.

It should be noted that these guidelines include only the principles applied by the International Bureau and, therefore, provide only general guidance to the users of the Madrid System.

This document has three sections. The first section provides general information on the International Classification of Goods and Services (the Nice Classification) and the Madrid System. The second section deals with the classification principles applied by the International Bureau. The third section delivers practical information on the acceptable format to list indications of goods and services (e.g. punctuation, brackets).

## 1. The International Classification of Goods and Services (The Nice Classification)

The Nice Agreement (from 1957) establishes a classification of goods and services for the purposes of registering trademarks (the Nice Classification). The States that are members of the Nice Agreement shall apply the Nice Classification for that purpose.

Although only 84 States are party to the Nice Agreement, the Trademark Offices of more than 145 States and intergovernmental organizations use the Nice Classification.

The use of the Nice Classification is required for the international registration of marks effected by the International Bureau under the Madrid System.

The Nice Classification contains 45 classes – 34 for goods and 11 for services. More specifically, the Nice Classification consists of the following:

1. *Class Headings*: the Class Headings are general indications relating to the field to which, in principle, the goods or services belong;
2. *Explanatory Notes*: the Explanatory Notes explain which goods or services are meant or not meant to fall under each particular class number;
3. *The Alphabetical List*: is a list of goods and services, in alphabetical order, with an indication of the class number under which they should be grouped;
4. *General Remarks*: the general remarks explain what criteria should be applied if a term is not found in the alphabetical list and cannot be classified in accordance with the Explanatory Notes.

The Alphabetical List of the Nice Classification is not exhaustive, as it covers only some 11,000 indications under the 2018 version of its 11<sup>th</sup> edition. The value of the Nice Classification lies in the criteria it establishes for classification, in the Explanatory Notes and in the General Remarks, in case a specific good or service cannot be found in the Alphabetical List.

The Nice Classification is amended and supplemented by a Committee of Experts, consisting of representatives from the Contracting States of the Nice Agreement.

The Committee of Experts decides on changes to the Nice Classification. Such changes enter into force and are published in a new version of the Classification every year, except for changes that entail the transfer of goods or services from one class to another or the creation of new classes. These are called “amendments” and enter into force at the end of five-year revision periods. All changes and amendments are then collated into a new edition of the Classification.

## 2. Control of the list of goods and services in international applications

### *The Office of origin*

International applications are received and certified by the Office of origin, who then shall forward them to the International Bureau. The Office of origin must certify that the items appearing in the international application correspond to those in the basic mark. In particular, the Office of origin must certify that the list of goods and services that appears in the international application corresponds to or is covered by the corresponding list in the basic mark.

### *The International Bureau*

The International Bureau must examine the international application for compliance with the applicable requirements. According to Rule 9(4)(a)(xiii) of the Common Regulations, “[t]he international application shall contain or indicate [...] the names of the goods and services [...] grouped in the appropriate classes of the International Classification of Goods and Services, each group preceded by the number of the class and presented in the order of the classes of that Classification”.

Moreover, the Rule requires that the goods and services be indicated “[...] in precise terms, preferably using the words appearing in the Alphabetical List of the said Classification.”

Where the International Bureau finds that an international application does not comply with the requirements specified in Rule 9(4)(a)(xiii) of the Common Regulations (i.e. that the indication of classes is incorrect or that the terms are not precise enough) the International Bureau must follow the procedures established in Rules 12 and 13 of the Common Regulations.

## 2.1. Legal basis

### *Rule 12*

Rule 12 of the Common Regulations sets out the procedure under which the International Bureau shall determine the proper classification of the indications listed in the international application, in association with the Office of origin, where the International Bureau does not agree with the classification indicated by the applicant.

Under Rule 12, the International Bureau shall notify its classification proposal to the Office of origin, stating the amounts of the fees due as a result of such proposal, if any. Within two months from the date of that notification, if no communication has been received from the Office of origin, the International Bureau shall reiterate its proposal in a new communication.

While the applicant is informed of all the communications sent to the Office of origin, the applicant cannot send an opinion directly to the International Bureau. The International Bureau will disregard any communication sent directly by the applicant.

The Office of origin shall communicate to the International Bureau an opinion on the International Bureau's classification proposal within three months from the date on which such proposal was notified to that Office. The Office of origin may, at the request of the applicant, ask for the removal from the international application of the indications that are the subject of the International Bureau's classification proposal.

Taking into account the opinion of the Office of origin, the International Bureau may withdraw, confirm or modify its classification proposal and shall notify the Office of origin and inform the applicant accordingly.

The amounts of the fees due as a result of the International Bureau's classification proposal, if any, shall be paid within three months from the date of the notification in which the International Bureau confirms or modifies such proposal. Where the Office of origin has not communicated an opinion to the International Bureau, those amounts shall be paid within four months from the date of the notification of the original International Bureau's proposal.

Where the fees paid are insufficient, the International Bureau shall consider the application abandoned and refund any fees paid to the party that made the payment, deducting 50 per cent of the applicable basic fee.

Where the fees paid are sufficient and there are no further irregularities, the International Bureau shall record the mark in the International Register with the classification that the International Bureau considers to be correct.

### *Rule 13*

Rule 13 of the Common Regulations sets out the procedure to clarify any term or expression that is listed in the international application and that the International Bureau considers to be (i) too vague for the purposes of classification; (ii) incomprehensible; or, (iii) linguistically incorrect.

Under Rule 13, the International Bureau shall notify the Office of origin and may suggest either a substitute term or expression or the deletion of the term or expression in question.

As with the previous rule, while the applicant is informed of all the communications sent to the Office of origin, the applicant cannot send an opinion directly to the International Bureau. The International Bureau will disregard any communication sent directly by the applicant.

The Office of origin shall communicate a proposal to the International Bureau within three months from the date of the communication.

Where the proposal made by the Office of origin is acceptable, the International Bureau shall record the mark taking into account this proposal.

Where a proposal is not acceptable or such proposal has not been made, the International Bureau shall either (a) record the mark with the questioned term or expression and with an indication that the International Bureau considers such term or expression to be too vague for its classification, incomprehensible or linguistically incorrect; or, (b) delete such term or expression, where no indication of class has been given.

Example of a notice sent by the International Bureau under Rules 12 and 13 of the Common Regulations

**NOTICE CONCERNING AN INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION**

**ATTENTION:**

The irregularity(ies) indicated in this notice is (are) to be remedied by the Office of origin.

The response to this notice should be received by the International Bureau no later than **11 June 2017**. Please, indicate the WIPO Reference number **1234567890** in all your communications with the International Bureau.

Re.: International application based on registration N° **402418**  
for the mark **ROMARIN**  
in the name of **ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE**

Date of receipt of the international application by the Office of origin: 25  
January 2017  
by the International Bureau: 16 February 2017

Our ref. : EN-I/1234567890/JS  
Office ref. : MM201604860R  
Applicant ref.: ER/YR/9201500203/SMS  
Examiner: John Smith  
Telephone N°: +412222222  
E-mail: madrid.infoline@wipo.int

We acknowledge receipt of the above-mentioned international application.

The examination of this application has revealed the irregularities which are listed hereafter:

**IRREGULARITY(IES) CONCERNING THE CLASSIFICATION OF GOODS AND SERVICES: TO BE REMEDIED BY THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN (Rule 12).**

1. The International Bureau considers that the goods and/or services listed in the international application are not grouped in the appropriate classes of the International Classification of Goods and Services (Rule 9(4)(a)(xiii)). The International Bureau proposes therefore to transfer the following terms:

"cellular phone accessory charms" from class 9 to class 26, by analogy with NCL 260133 "charms, other than for jewellery, key rings or key chains".

- please, kindly refer to our MGS - Madrid Goods and Services Manager at <http://www.wipo.int/mgs>.

The proposed grouping may entail the payment of further fees (see attached accounting statement).

An opinion on this proposal may be communicated to the International Bureau. Any such opinion must be communicated **THROUGH THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN within three months from the date of the present notification, that is, by 11 June 2017.**

Failing this, the mark will be registered **with the classification and grouping proposed by the International Bureau**. However, if this proposal entails the payment of further fees and such fees are not paid within four months from the date of the present notification, the international application will be considered **abandoned**.

*Applicants are strongly encouraged to check the existence and classification of terms appropriate to their needs in the Madrid Goods & Services Manager at <http://www.wipo.int/mgs>.*

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IRREGULARITY(IES) CONCERNING THE INDICATION OF GOODS AND SERVICES: TO BE REMEDIED BY THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN

2. The International Bureau considers that the following term(s) of the list of goods and/or services is/are too vague for the purposes of classification (Rule 13):

- 1) "eyeshades" (class 9)
- 2) "fixtures for measuring integrated circuits" (class 9)

The International Bureau suggests therefore the following:

- 1) "antiglare visors" (class 9) or "visors for helmets" (NCL 090047)
- 2) "apparatus for measuring integrated circuits" (class 9)

YOUR ANSWER MUST NOT BE SENT DIRECTLY TO WIPO BUT THROUGH YOUR NATIONAL OFFICE.

A proposal as to different term(s) may be communicated to the International Bureau. Any such proposal must be communicated **THROUGH THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN, within three months** from the date of the present notification, **that is, by 11 June 2017**. If no proposal acceptable to the International Bureau is made within this period, the International Bureau will include in the international registration the term(s), as appearing in the international application, with an indication to the effect that, in the opinion of the International Bureau, the specified term(s) is/are too vague for the purposes of classification.

*Applicants are strongly encouraged to check the existence and classification of terms appropriate to their needs in the Madrid Goods & services Manager at <http://www.wipo.int/mgs>.*



**Annex to the irregularity notice concerning the international application based on the national application or the national registration No 402418**

Our ref.: EN-I/1234567890/JS  
 Office ref. : MM201604860R  
 Applicant ref.: ER/YR/9201500203/SMS

	Swiss Francs
Basic fee where any reproduction of the mark is in color (Protocol application):	903.00
Individual fee (international application): CN	249.00
Individual fee per additional class (international application): CN	125.00
Individual fee (international application): EM	912.00
Individual fee (international application): US	301.00
Individual fee per additional class (international application): US	301.00
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Total due:	2,791.00

## 2.2. General principles for the control of the indications of goods and services listed in an international application

The International Bureau controls that the indications of goods and services listed in an international application are classified in accordance with the edition and version of the Nice Classification in force on the date on which the international application was received by the Office of origin, as certified, or the date on which the international application was received by the International Bureau when the said application was received by the International Bureau after the two-month time limit referred to in Article 3(4) of the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks.

The Nice Classification consists of a List of Classes with Explanatory Notes and an Alphabetical List of Goods and Services. If a product or service is not in the Alphabetical List and cannot be classified with the aid of the List of Classes and the Explanatory Notes, the General Remarks established by the Committee of Experts of the Nice Union set forth the criteria that should be applied:

### Classification of goods

- (a) “A finished product is in principle classified according to its function or purpose. If the function or purpose of a finished product is not mentioned in any Class Heading, the finished product is classified by analogy with other comparable finished products, indicated in the Alphabetical List. If none is found, other subsidiary criteria, such as that of the material of which the product is made or its mode of operation, are applied.”

For instance, “leather jackets” are classified in Class 25 because their function or purpose is as an article of clothing. The fact that they are made of leather does not mean they can also be classified in Class 18.

Moreover, “clothing of leather”, which would encompass leather jackets, is classified in the Alphabetical List of the Nice Classification in Class 25.

In principle, the material of which goods are made is a subsidiary consideration that should be taken into account only if the goods cannot be classified by their function or purpose.

A “figurine” is an example of a good in finished form that cannot be classified by its function or purpose. A figurine is a “statuette, especially one of a human form”<sup>1</sup>, that may be used, for instance, for artistic, ornamental or religious purposes. As a result, figurines are classified according to the material of which they are made.

- (b) “A finished product which is a multipurpose composite object (e.g., clocks incorporating radios) may be classified in all classes that correspond to any of its functions or intended purposes. If those functions or purposes are not mentioned in any Class Heading, other criteria, indicated under (a), above, are to be applied.”

Goods can have more than one function or purpose and in these cases the International Bureau will accept them in any of the classes that correspond to their functions or purposes.

For example “clock radios” can be accepted in Classes 9 and/or 14 because they function as “radios” (Cl. 9) or as “clocks” (Cl. 14).

A more commonly used expression would be “radio alarm clocks”, which indeed is acceptable in both Class 9 and 14 and is defined as a “combined radio and alarm clock, which can be set so that the radio switches on automatically at a chosen time”<sup>2</sup>.

- (c) “Raw materials, unworked or semi-worked, are in principle classified according to the material of which they consist.”

<sup>1</sup> “figurine, n.” Oxford living Dictionaries. 2016, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/figurine> (accessed May 26, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> “radio alarm clock, n.” Oxford living Dictionaries. 2016. Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/radio-alarm-clock> (accessed May 26, 2016).

Raw materials, whether unprocessed or semi-processed, do not have, per se, a function or a purpose. Accordingly, raw materials are classified according to the type of material of which they consist.

Certain finished products can be confused with raw materials. For instance, “cooking salt”, which is grouped in Class 30 because it is intended to be used for seasoning food, shall not be confused with “raw salt”, which is grouped in Class 1.

- (d) “Goods intended to form part of another product are in principle classified in the same class as that product only in cases where the same type of goods cannot normally be used for another purpose. In all other cases, the criterion indicated under (a), above, applies.”

For example, “brushes for vacuum cleaners” are classified in Class 7 together with the vacuum cleaners rather than in Class 21, with the majority of “brushes”.

- (e) “When a product, whether finished or not, is classified according to the material of which it is made, and it is made of different materials, the product is in principle classified according to the material which predominates.”

Accordingly, “milk beverages, milk predominating” are classified in Class 29; however, “coffee beverages with milk” are classified in Class 30 because milk is only added but it is not predominant.

- (f) “Cases adapted to the product they are intended to contain are in principle classified in the same class as the product”.

For instance, “cases for smartphones” and “bags adapted for laptops” are classified in Class 9 because “smartphones” and “laptops” are classified in that class and the cases and bags have been adapted to hold these products.

Similarly, while “bags for sport” is classified in Class 18, “bags for tennis racquets” would be classified in Class 28 because “tennis racquets” belong to that particular class.

#### Classification of services

- (a) “Services are in principle classified according to the branches of activities specified in the headings of the service classes and in their Explanatory Notes or, if not specified, by analogy with other comparable services indicated in the Alphabetical List.”

For example, banking and financial planning are classified in Class 36 because they are services relating to financial affairs.

- (b) “Rental services are in principle classified in the same classes as the services provided by means of the rented objects (e.g., Rental of telephones, covered by Cl. 38). Leasing services are analogous to rental services and therefore should be classified in the same way. However, hire- or lease-purchase financing is classified in Cl. 36 as a financial service.”
- (c) “Services that provide advice, information or consultation are in principle classified in the same classes as the services that correspond to the subject matter of the advice, information or consultation, e.g., transportation consultancy (Cl. 39), business management consultancy (Cl. 35), financial consultancy (Cl. 36), beauty consultancy (Cl. 44). The rendering of the advice, information or consultancy by electronic means (e.g., telephone, computer) does not affect the classification of these services.”
- (d) “Services rendered in the framework of franchising are in principle classified in the same class as the particular services provided by the franchisor (e.g., business advice relating to franchising (Cl. 35), financing services relating to franchising (Cl. 36), legal services relating to franchising (Cl. 45).”

The International Bureau will consider an expression listed in an international application to be too vague for the purposes of classification where such expression does not provide an indication of the branch of activity in which the service is provided. Accordingly, the International Bureau would consider “providing a website” to be too vague because the nature of the service and, most importantly, the branch of activity would be unclear. The branch of activity should in principle be indicated at the beginning of the service specification.

For example, the International Bureau will not accept the indication “providing a website featuring business information” in Class 35 as this service indicates the means by which the service is provided. On the contrary, the International Bureau will accept the indication “providing business information via a website” in Class 35. Likewise, the International Bureau will accept the indication “providing financial information via a website” in Class 36, but will not accept “providing a website featuring financial information”.

Furthermore, the International Bureau would accept expressions such as “providing access to a website” in Class 38, understood as being a telecommunications service, or “hosting a website” in Class 42, understood as being a technological service.

### 2.3. Class headings

The Class Headings indicate, in general terms, the fields to which in principle the goods and services under a particular class belong.

The Committee of Experts of the Nice Union decides on changes to the Class Headings.

The Class Headings comprise a number of “general indications” of goods or services which are delimited by semicolons.

For example, the heading for Class 12 reads as follows:

*“Vehicles; apparatus for locomotion by land, air or water”*

The heading for Class 12 thus comprises two general indications: “vehicles” and “apparatus for locomotion by land, air or water”.

### Examination policy

The International Bureau considers that Class Headings or their general indications are comprehensible, linguistically correct and sufficiently precise and that their use constitutes a proper specification of goods and services for the purposes of classification.

Therefore, the International Bureau accepts Class Headings when listed as indications of goods and services in international applications. Class Headings may be listed in their entirety or partially with only some of the general indications.

Consequently, the International Bureau will not raise an irregularity when the general indications or the entire Class Headings as provided for in the Nice Classification are listed in an international application.

The International Bureau’s policy of accepting Class Headings may differ from the practice that is followed by some national or regional Offices. Some of those Offices do not accept Class Headings and may require that the holder of the international registration further specify the goods or services for which it seeks protection.

Moreover, the interpretation of which goods and services are covered under a Class Heading may differ among those Contracting Parties that accept partial or total use of Nice Class Headings.

Once a mark is registered by the International Bureau, changes to a particular Class Heading will not have an impact on international registrations that list an older version of that Class Heading (i.e., changes would not be applied retroactively to international registrations).

## 2.4. Indications that can be classified in more than one class

Certain indications for a product or a service may be classified in more than one class.

For example, “deodorants” could be either classified in Class 3 (which includes “deodorants for human beings or for animals”) or in Class 5 (which includes “deodorants, other than for human beings or for animals”).

### Examination policy

According to the Common Regulations, the International Bureau shall require that the goods and services listed in an international application be comprehensible, linguistically correct and sufficiently precise for their correct classification.

#### Goods

According to the General Remarks of the Nice Classification, finished products are classified according to their purpose or function, as specified in the corresponding Nice Class Heading and Explanatory Notes. Where the purpose or function of a given finished product is not mentioned in any Class Heading, the product may be classified according to other criteria, like its material or mode of operation.

A particular finished product may thus be classified in more than one class, depending on the way in which that product is qualified.

For the purposes of classification, the International Bureau will take into account the class number indicated in the international application, which provides the context within which the product is to be considered. Where an indication has sufficient meaning in the context of a class, it can be grouped under that class without further specification.

As a consequence, the following classification principles shall apply:

#### 1. Purpose:

When a particular product may be classified in more than one class according to its intended purpose and any of the applicable classes has been indicated, the International Bureau will accept this indication.

For example:

“Deodorising apparatus” would be accepted in

- Class 11, which includes “deodorising apparatus, not for personal use”
- Class 21, which includes “deodorising apparatus for personal use”

“Sea water” would be accepted in

- Class 5, which includes “sea water for medicinal bathing”
- Class 30, which includes “sea water for cooking”

#### 2. Material:

When a particular product may be classified in more than one class according to the material of which it is made and any of the applicable classes has been indicated, the International Bureau will accept this indication.

For example:

“Figurines” would be accepted in

- Class 6, which includes “figurines [statuettes] of common metal”
- Class 14, which includes “figurines [statuettes] of precious metal”

- Class 16, which includes “figurines [statuettes] of papier mâché”
- Class 19, which includes “figurines [statuettes] of stone, concrete or marble”
- Class 20, which includes “figurines [statuettes] of wood, wax, plaster or plastic”
- Class 21, which includes “figurines [statuettes] of porcelain, ceramic, earthenware or glass”

“Gift bags” would be accepted in

- Class 16, which includes “gift bags made of paper”
- Class 22, which includes “gift bags made of textile/fabric”

### 3. Function:

When a particular product may be classified in more than one class according to its function and any of the applicable classes has been indicated, the International Bureau will accept this indication.

For example:

“Robots” would be accepted in

- Class 7, which includes “industrial robots”
- Class 10, which includes “surgical robots”
- Class 28, which includes “toy robots”

“Contraceptives” would be accepted in

- Class 5, which includes “chemical contraceptives”
- Class 10, which includes “contraceptives, non-chemical”

### 4. Mode of operation:

When a particular product may be classified in more than one class according to its mode of operation and any of the applicable classes has been indicated, the International Bureau will accept this indication.

For example:

“Door openers” would be accepted in

- Class 6, which includes “door openers, non-electric”
- Class 7, which includes “door openers, electric” or “pneumatic” or “hydraulic”

### 5. Nature:

When a particular product may be classified in more than one class according to the fact that it is unprocessed, semi-processed, processed or preserved, and any of the applicable classes have been indicated, the International Bureau will accept this indication.

For example:

“Berries” would be accepted in

- Class 29, which includes “processed berries”
- Class 31, which includes “fresh berries”

“Acrylic resins” would be accepted in

- Class 1, which includes “unprocessed acrylic resins”
- Class 17, which includes “semi-processed acrylic resins”

## 6. Mixed criteria:

However, when a particular product may be classified in more than one class according to more than one of the five criteria mentioned above, but only one of the applicable classes has been indicated, the International Bureau will NOT accept the indication, and will raise an irregularity requesting further specification.

For example:

“Pipes” by itself cannot be accepted because it can fall under seven different classes, either according to their material (e.g. steel pipes) or purpose (e.g. water-pipes) or function (e.g. tobacco pipes):

- Class 6: “pipes of metal”, “steel pipes”, “drain pipes of metal”, “gutter pipes of metal”, “water-pipes of metal”, “pipes of metal for central heating installations”
- Class 7: “cutting blow pipes”, “soldering blow pipes”, “automotive exhaust pipes”
- Class 11: “water-pipes for sanitary installations”, “boiler pipes for heating installations”
- Class 15: “wind pipes for organs”, “music pitch pipes”
- Class 17: “canvas hose pipes”, “non-metallic flexible pipes”
- Class 19: “drain pipes, not of metal”, “rigid pipes, not of metal”, “gutter pipes, not of metal”, “water-pipes, not of metal”
- Class 34: “tobacco pipes”

“Doors” by itself cannot be accepted because it can fall under five different classes, either according to their material (e.g. doors of metal) or purpose (e.g. doors for furniture):

- Class 6: “doors of metal”
- Class 11: “shower doors”
- Class 12: “doors for vehicles”
- Class 19: “non-metal doors”
- Class 20: “doors for furniture”

## Services

According to the General Remarks of the Nice Classification, services are, in principle, grouped under a given class according to their branches of activities, as specified in the corresponding Class Heading and in its Explanatory Notes.

As with finished products, a particular service may be classified in more than one class, depending on the way in which that service is qualified. In such cases, the International Bureau will follow a practice similar to that followed for finished products, *mutatis mutandis*.

Accordingly, the International Bureau would accept indications of services, where the indication has sufficient meaning in the context of a given class, which allows it to be grouped under that class without further specification.

The following are examples of indications of services that the International Bureau would accept in more than one class without further specification.

“Accommodation bureau services” would be accepted in

- Class 36, which includes “accommodation bureau services [apartments]”
- Class 43, which includes “accommodation bureau services [hotels, boarding houses]”

“Booking of seats” would be accepted in

- Class 39, which includes “booking of seats for travel”
- Class 41, which includes “booking of seats for shows”

“Vermin exterminating” would be accepted in

- Class 37, which includes “vermin exterminating, other than for agriculture, aquaculture, horticulture and forestry”
- Class 44, which includes “vermin exterminating for agriculture, aquaculture, horticulture and forestry”

“Layout services” would be accepted in

- Class 35, which includes “layout services for advertising purposes”
- Class 41, which includes “layout services, other than for advertising purposes”

“Organization of exhibitions” would be accepted in

- Class 35, which includes “organization of exhibitions for commercial or advertising purposes”
- Class 41, which includes “organization of exhibitions for cultural or educational purposes”

“Publication” would be accepted in

- Class 35, which includes “publication of publicity texts”
- Class 41, which includes “publication of books” and “publication of texts, other than publicity texts”

“Organization of fashion shows” would be accepted in

- Class 35, which includes “organization of fashion shows for promotional purposes”
- Class 41, which includes “organization of fashion shows for entertainment purposes”

## General terms

A general term is a term that appears in the Alphabetical List of the Nice Classification in relation to a particular class (known as its “natural class”) and in connection with other classes, depending on the way in which such term is qualified. General terms are indicated in the Alphabetical List with an asterisk.

Some examples of general terms are acids, in Class 1; abrasives, Class 3; anchors, Class 6; alarms, Class 9; bags, Class 18; urns, Class 21; felt, Class 24; mats, Class 27; construction, Class 37; writing of texts, Class 41; and, rental of transportable buildings, Class 43.

Examiners shall raise an irregularity where a general term has been listed in an international application under a class other than its “natural class”, without any further qualification. In this particular case, the applicant would be required to further specify the product or service for which protection is sought, so it can be properly classified.

For example, while the International Bureau would accept “clothing” in Class 25, it would not accept it in Class 9. In this particular case, the applicant would be required to further qualify the term, for instance, “clothing for protection against fire”.

As another example, while the International Bureau would accept “brokerage” in Class 36, it would not accept it in Class 39. In this case, the applicant could, for instance, specify the service as “freight brokerage”.

## 2.5. Use of certain expressions in the list of goods and services

### 2.5.1. Use of “in particular”, “namely”, “i.e.” and similar expressions

Applicants frequently include certain expressions in the list of goods and services to further specify, (for example “in particular”, “especially”, “including”) or to restrict (for example “namely”, “i.e.”) the list of goods and services. The International Bureau accepts these expressions when they are followed by the names of specific goods or services.



For example:

- Class 9: Computer software, in particular computer game software
- Class 12: Cars, namely, sports cars

The International Bureau also accepts expressions that may be included at the end of the list of goods and services to further specify or to narrow the list of goods and services.

For example:

- Class 44: Landscaped gardening; garden design and maintenance; lawn mowing services; all the aforementioned services relating to public parks and gardens.

#### 2.5.2. Use of “and the like” or “etc.”

“And the like” or “etc.” are sometimes used by applicants, with a view to extending the protection to goods or services of a similar nature as the ones already indicated in a class, though without specifying them.

The International Bureau does not accept the use of the above-mentioned expressions which lack accuracy and do not allow for a clear identification of the goods and services for which protection is sought.

#### 2.5.3. Claims for “all goods” or “all other services” in a given class

The International Bureau does not accept the use of expressions such as “all goods in class X”, “all services in this class”, “all other goods in this class”. According to Rule 9(4)(xiii) of the Common Regulations, applicants must indicate “the names of the goods and services for which the international registration of the mark is sought”.

Examiners will raise an irregularity under Rule 13 of the Common Regulations when those expressions appear either by itself (i.e., no goods or services were listed) or along with actual names of goods or services

#### 2.5.4. Reference to other classes within the list

A clear description is essential to the proper identification and correct classification of goods and services. Indications of goods and services which are based upon a reference to what is contained in another class are not accepted by the International Bureau for the purposes of classification.

For example, the expressions, in Class 9, “computer software for services in Class 36”, or in Class 37, “installation services in relation to the goods mentioned in Class 11 above” are not accepted by the International Bureau.

Accordingly, when reference is made to other classes in the list of goods and services, the International Bureau will raise an irregularity under Rule 13 of the Common Regulations.

### 2.6. Classification of specific goods and services

The classification of certain indications of goods and services can be more challenging. The following explanations aim at providing clarifications as to their proper classification.

#### (a) Electronic games

As from January 2012 (NCL10-2012), all electronic games apparatus are classified in Class 28. Game software and programs remain in Class 9, irrespective of the nature of the game itself.

#### (b) Low alcohol beverages or wines

“Low alcohol beverages” and “low alcohol wines” fall in Class 33 irrespective of the level of alcohol they might contain. The Nice Classification does not establish the amount of alcohol that a beverage or wine should contain to be considered either alcoholic or non-alcoholic. It

simply states that all alcoholic beverages should be classified in Class 33, except for beers which belong to Class 32.

(c) Filters and filtering materials

Filters are finished products and are classified according to their function or purpose or in the same class as the products of which they are parts, e.g. “filters as parts of engines or machines” (Class 7), “filters [photography]” (Class 9), “filters for ultra violet rays for medical purposes (Class 10), “filters as parts of electric coffee machines or water supply apparatus” (Class 11), “cigarette filters” (Class 34).

Filtering materials are classified according to the material of which they are made, e.g. “filtering materials of paper” (Class 16), “filtering materials of textile” (Class 24), and “filtering materials [semi-processed foams or films of plastic]” (Class 17).

(d) Valves

Valves are finished products and are classified according to their function or purpose or in the same class as the products of which they are parts, e.g. “valves as parts of machines” (Class 7), “valves for feeding bottles” (Class 10), “valves for vehicle tyres” (Class 12), “valves as parts of musical instruments” (Class 15).

Where the above is not possible, valves are classified according to the materials from which they are made, e.g. “valves made of leather” (Class 18), “valves made of rubber or vulcanized fiber” (Class 17), “water pipe valves of plastic” (Class 20).

(e) Manufacturing of goods

The International Bureau does not accept the general expression “manufacturing of goods”.

However, the International Bureau does accept “custom manufacturing of goods for others” or “custom manufacturing of goods for others to the order of a customer” as a service in Class 40, since the custom manufacturing of goods is expressly mentioned in the Nice Explanatory Notes.

The International Bureau’s acceptance of the expression “custom manufacturing of goods for other” and the acceptance of that expression in a national or regional office may be different. Legislative or regulative requirements in those offices may require these services be specified more precisely.

(f) Association services

An association is “a group of people organized for a joint purpose”<sup>3</sup>. Some associations may provide educational services as well as advocacy and lobbying in areas of interest to their members, while other associations may have social or entertainment pursuits.

Services provided by an association to its members are, in principle, classified according to the nature of the service provided. The International Bureau shall consider qualifying wording to define the specific nature of the activities being performed.

For example:

- Class 35: “association services, namely, promotion of the commercial interests of professionals and businesses in the field of mobile software application development”
- Class 36: “association services, namely, underwriting insurance for its members”
- Class 39: “arranging of travel tours by an association for its members”

<sup>3</sup> “association, n.” Oxford living Dictionaries. 2016. Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/association> (accessed May 26, 2016).

- Class 41: “educational and entertainment services provided by an association to its members”
- Class 45: “association services being the certification of legal documents by the association for its members”

However, the International Bureau will consider the following expressions as being too vague for classification: “association services, namely promoting the interests of its members”, “services included in this class rendered by an association to its members” or “services rendered by an association to its members”. Such expressions need to be specified more precisely.

(g) Kits

The International Bureau classifies “kits” either according to their purpose (e.g. “cosmetic kits” in Class 3, “first-aid kits” in Class 5 or “craft kits for painting” in Class 16) or by their composition (e.g. “kits comprised of fabrics for making quilts” in Class 24, “dental care kits comprising toothbrushes and floss” in Class 21), the latter provided that all the goods comprised in the kit can be classified in the same class.

Accordingly, “kits” that have no stated purpose need to list the items of which the kit is composed. Examiners shall raise an irregularity under Rule 13 where the list of goods and services in an application contains the word “kit” or “kits” without either a stated purpose or a list of the goods comprised in the kit.

Moreover, the International Bureau would not accept kits that have no stated purpose and are composed of goods that can be classified in various classes. In this particular case, the applicant would have to list each good under its appropriate class. Examiners shall raise an irregularity under Rule 12 where the list of goods and services in an international application contains the word kit followed by a list of goods that can be classified in different classes.

(h) Parts and fittings (or accessories)

The International Bureau does not accept expressions such as “parts and fittings” or “parts and accessories” without further specification because these expressions, by themselves, do not adequately identify the goods to be covered.

Accordingly, applicants should further specify the goods for which the parts or fittings are intended. For example, an adequate expression would be “parts and fittings for motor vehicles” in Class 12 or “computers and parts and fittings thereof” in Class 9.

(i) Wholesale and retail store services

The International Bureau accepts the expressions “wholesale and retail store services”, “retail sale” and “wholesale” when they are listed in an international application in Class 35 without any further specification.

The International Bureau’s acceptance of the expressions “wholesale and retail store services”, “retail sale”, or “wholesale” and the acceptance of those expressions in a national or regional office may be different. Legislative or regulative requirements in those offices may require these services be specified more precisely.

## 2.7. Use of proprietary names

Some international applications include proprietary names in the list of goods and services for which registration is sought.

## Examination policy

The International Bureau will accept the use of any proprietary names when it identifies the product for which registration is sought in a manner that is sufficiently clear for its proper classification in accordance with the Nice Classification. Where the proprietary name is not sufficiently clear the International Bureau will consider the term irregular under Rule 13 as too vague for the purposes of classification.

### 3. Formatting the list of goods and services

#### 3.1. Punctuation

The appropriate use of punctuation marks in the list of the goods and services for which the applicant seeks protection is very important, as it facilitates their understanding, classification and subsequent translation.

In particular, semicolons have historically been used by most national offices to clearly distinguish between different categories of goods and services within a class. The use of commas alone cannot enable this distinction.

Accordingly, the MM2 form instructs applicants to use semicolons to clearly specify the indications of goods and services:

*Please make consistent use of a semicolon (;) to clearly specify the goods and services indications in your list, e.g.:*

*09 Scientific, optical and electronic apparatus and instruments; screens for photoengraving; computers.*

*35 Advertising; compilation of statistics; commercial information agencies.*

Moreover, full stops should be used exclusively at the end of the list under a particular class to indicate that the list is complete for that given class.

#### Punctuation examples

The use of semicolons, as instructed above, facilitates the correct interpretation of the goods and services listed in an international application.

Any misuse of a comma or a semicolon is likely to lead to a misinterpretation of the goods and services listed in the international application, both at the examination and translation stages, as shown in the following examples:

##### Class 1

- *Class 1: Vitamins; proteins for use in the manufacture of food supplements.*

In the list, as it appears above, “*vitamins*” are not related to “*for use in the manufacture of food supplements*”; therefore, vitamins should be reclassified in Class 5.

Alternatively, the indication could have been worded as follows:

- *Class 1: Vitamins, proteins for use in the manufacture of food supplements.*

In this list, as it appears above, “*vitamins*” are related to “*for use in the manufacture of food supplements*”; therefore, the goods are correctly classified in Class 1.

##### Class 41

- *Class 41: Publication of books; magazines.*

In the list, as it appears above, “*magazines*” are not related to “*publication*” services; therefore, magazines should be reclassified in Class 16.

Alternatively, the indication could have been worded as follows:

- *Class 41: Publication of books, magazines.*

In this list, as it appears above, “*magazines*” are related to “*publication*” services; therefore, the services are correctly classified in Class 41.

Similarly, appropriate use of commas and semicolons should be made when expressing a limitation or providing further specification; for instance:

Class 12

- *Class 12: Tires for automobiles, motorcycles and bicycles.*

In the list, as it appears above, three types of tires for vehicles are included in the list.

Alternatively, the indication could have been worded as follows:

- *Class 12: Tires for automobiles; motorcycles and bicycles.*

In this list, as it appears above, only one type of tire (*tires for automobiles*) is included in the list as well as two different vehicles (*motorcycles and bicycles*).

Class 20

- *Class 20: Tables, chairs, furniture frames; all aforementioned goods of wood.*

In the list, as it appears above, the limitation would refer to all the listed goods.

Alternatively, the limitation could have been worded as follows:

- *Class 20: Tables; chairs, furniture frames, all aforementioned goods of wood.*

In this list, as it appears above, the limitation is in relation to chairs and furniture frames only.

Class 25

- *Class 25: Silk shirts, trousers and dresses.*

In the list, as it appears above, all *shirts*, *trousers* and *dresses* listed are made of silk.

Alternatively, the indication could have been worded as follows:

- *Class 25: Silk shirts; trousers and dresses.*

In this list, as it appears above, only the *shirts* are restricted to being made of silk. The remaining two clothing items, namely, *trousers* and *dresses*, are indicated without restrictions.

### **Examination policy**

Examiners shall not, ex officio, amend the list of goods and services in international applications, as certified and transmitted by the Office of origin, by adding or changing punctuation marks.

The general principles of examination apply.

Examiners shall not raise an irregularity regarding the list of goods and services where all indications are sufficiently clear for the purpose of classification and are classified under the appropriate class number of the Nice Classification.

Examiners shall raise an irregularity under Rule 13 of the Common Regulations where, following examination, it appears that an indication listed in the international application is not sufficiently clear for the purpose of classification.

Finally, examiners shall raise an irregularity under Rule 12 of the Common Regulations where, following examination, it appears that an indication listed in the international application has been grouped under the incorrect class number of the Nice Classification.

The Office of origin may reply to an irregularity notice by correcting the punctuation in the list of goods and services of the international application. For instance, in the examples above concerning “vitamins” in Class 1 and “magazines” in Class 41, the Office of origin could indicate that the semicolon should be replaced by a comma.

### 3.2. Use of capital letters and special characters

The use of capital letters in a list of goods and services should be restricted to the first letter of the first good or service at the beginning of each new class listed, as well as to acronyms, abbreviations, proper nouns and place names. Consequently, any list of goods and services presented to the International Bureau and consisting of only uppercase indications will be reformatted during the examination stage to feature lowercase characters, with uppercase letters used only as detailed above.

### 3.3. Duplicate indications of goods and services

Some international applications list terms or expressions for goods or services more than once under a given class. While this might be an error made by the applicant and overlooked by the Office of origin, it may also be a deliberate decision.

## Examination policy

Under the current legal framework, the International Bureau is required to control the proper classification of the indications of goods and services listed in an international application. The International Bureau cannot question nor interpret the intent of the applicant.

Accordingly, when an indication for a good or service is listed in an international application under the proper class more than once, examiners shall neither raise an irregularity nor, *ex officio*, amend the list of goods and services in that application, as certified and transmitted by the Office of origin, by removing the identical instance or instances.

### 3.4. Names of goods and services in singular or plural form

Goods are most often found in their plural form in international applications. For example, “computers” is used instead of “computer”. Conversely, collective or uncountable goods will be listed using their singular form, as is the case, for instance, for the use of the term “bread” rather than “breads”.

With respect to services, both plural and singular forms may be found in international applications, depending upon the nature and the common expression of listed services, e.g. repair services, telecommunications, cafeterias, office functions, public relations, on the one hand, and accountancy, advertising, transport, on the other.

As a consequence, while it is generally recommended to refer to countable goods and services in the plural form when applying for the registration of a trademark, examiners shall not flag an irregularity for an inconsistent use of singular or plural form in a list of goods and services, nor alter such a list to adopt a consistent use of the singular or plural form.

### 3.5. Use of the definite article

The use of the definite article “the” to precede an indication of goods or services is not necessary and should therefore be avoided.

### 3.6. Use of abbreviations or acronyms

An abbreviation is a “shortened form of a word or phrase”<sup>4</sup> (e.g. apps for applications).

An acronym is an “abbreviation formed from the initial letters of other words”<sup>5</sup> (e.g. SUV for sport utility vehicle). Some abbreviations and acronyms are frequently used in the indication of goods and services and are commonly known to the public, such as “CD-ROM”, “DVD”, “TV sets”, etc., or to a specific industry or field of specialty, such as “DNA chips”, “PVC films”, “AC-DC converters”, etc. Sometimes, abbreviations and acronyms are also used as nouns and, therefore, found in plural form (e.g. DVDs, CDs).

## Examination policy

An abbreviation or acronym, used in a list of goods and services, is acceptable where it enables the accurate and unequivocal identification of the good or service concerned for the purpose of classification.

If an abbreviation or acronym is not known by the public, it should be presented to the International Bureau in its developed form, followed by the abbreviation or acronym in upper case and square brackets, e.g. “automated teller machines [ATM]”. Such presentation would allow their correct classification and translation.

The following indication available in the Nice Classification includes an acronym preceded by its developed form:

*“Global Positioning System [GPS] apparatus” (NCL - Class 9)*

Abbreviations and acronyms are also acceptable on their own if they are widely known, easily understandable and unequivocal for the purpose of classification. Examples of this are “software for GPS navigation systems” or “rental of GPS equipment for navigational purposes”.

In the examination of lists of goods and services under Rules 12 and 13 of the Common Regulations, the examiner would need to determine whether any abbreviation or acronym used would be acceptable. The examiner cannot change any abbreviation or acronym ex officio, since this would risk modifying the intended scope. If the examiner cannot clearly understand or identify any abbreviation or acronym used in the list of goods and services, the examiner may only raise this issue in an irregularity notice under Rule 13.

### 3.7. Use of brackets

#### Round brackets

Round brackets were originally used in the printed/paper editions of the Nice Classification in order to cross-reference indications of goods or services in the Alphabetical List. For instance “Adhesives for dentures”, listed under the letter “A”, was cross-referenced as “Dentures (Adhesives for –)”, under the letter “D”; “Cooking salt”, listed under “C”, was cross-referenced as “Salt (Cooking –)”, under “S”.

Round brackets were also used to list expressions that began with a term under which the product or service could not be listed because it was considered to be too general. In those cases, the most important part was used to list the expression, followed by the rest of the expression between round brackets. For example, “Apparatus for measuring the thickness of skins” was not listed under the letter “A”; instead, it was listed under the letter “S” as “Skins (Apparatus for measuring the thickness of –)”.

<sup>4</sup> “abbreviation, n.” Oxford living Dictionaries. 2016. Oxford University Press.  
<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/abbreviation> (accessed April 20, 2016).

<sup>5</sup> “acronym, n.” Oxford living Dictionaries. 2016. Oxford University Press.  
<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/acronym> (accessed April 20, 2016).

“Compositions for the manufacture of technical ceramics” was listed, under the letter “C” but as “Ceramics (Compositions for the manufacture of technical –)”.

In some cases, the most important part could be considered to be in the middle of the expression, such as “Cooking (Preparations for stimulating –) for industrial purposes” or “Patches (Adhesive rubber –) for repairing inner tubes.”

Round brackets made it easier to find indications in the Alphabetical List when the Nice Classification was published in printed format.

As of January 2013, the Nice Classification is published exclusively online. Search functionalities available in the online publication made the use of round brackets unnecessary and the Committee of Experts of the Nice Union decided to remove them all from the Alphabetical List.

Round brackets are also used in the English version of the Alphabetical List to denote the corresponding American expression of the term that precedes them. For example, “trousers / pants (Am.)” or “freight brokerage [forwarding (Am.)]”.

#### Square brackets

Square brackets are used in the Alphabetical List of the Nice Classification to include expressions that are meant to define more precisely a term that precedes them. For instance, “blinkers [signalling lights]” (Class 9) or “blinkers [harness]” (Class 18); “holiday camp services [entertainment]” (Class 41) or “holiday camp services [lodging]” (Class 43).

The Committee of Experts of the Nice Union has approved the addition of typical national or regional products to the Alphabetical List, followed if necessary by a definition or explanation of the product in square brackets. For instance, “huqin [Chinese violins]” NCL 150081, “randsels [Japanese school satchels]” NCL 180127 or “kimchi [fermented vegetable dish]” NCL 290162.

To the same extent, the International Bureau also accepts the use of typical national or regional products in square brackets provided that they are preceded by a definition or explanation of the product in English, French or Spanish. For instance, “rice crackers [senbei]” in Class 30.

#### Examination policy

The use of round and square brackets is acceptable when listing the goods and services in international applications. Examiners shall not alter the list of goods and services in an international application, as certified and transmitted by the Office of origin, by adding, changing or removing round or square brackets or by reordering the terms in an expression.

The general principles of examination apply.

Examiners shall not raise an irregularity concerning indications of goods and services that contain either round or square brackets where those indications are sufficiently clear for the purposes of classification and are classified in the appropriate class number of the Nice Classification.

Examiners shall raise an irregularity under Rule 13 of the Common Regulations where, following examination, it appears that an indication that contains either round or square brackets is not sufficiently clear for the purpose of classification.

Finally, examiners shall raise an irregularity under Rule 12 of the Common Regulations where, following examination, it appears that an indication that contains either round or square brackets has been grouped under the incorrect class number of the Nice Classification.

[End of Guidelines]