

How to broadcast on the Manchester DAB radio multiplex – Important Notes and Information

Contracting for carriage with Manchester DAB

At any one time about 25 radio stations (programme services) will broadcast from our transmitters across the Manchester area. Whenever capacity to carry programme services becomes available new programme services can be considered to join the multiplex. To this end we maintain a waiting list.

To ensure fair treatment there is a standard application process. Each application will be assessed against five 'thresholds' (these are explained below). To promote competitive entry, applications will not be assessed purely on economic grounds. Manchester DAB acknowledges its duty to trade in a way calculated to ensure fair and effective competition and so this is where the 'thresholds' become important.

The process to join Manchester DAB as a programme service covers three stages:

Stage 1: Prospective applicants should complete an expression of interest/application form setting out the extent to which their service meets certain 'thresholds'.

Stage 2: Programme service applications will be sifted by Manchester DAB, according to the extent to which an applicant meets (or exceeds) the 'thresholds' before being added to our waiting list.

Stage 3: When capacity becomes available, we will assess the most appropriate new service to join the bouquet of services currently carried.

The programme service 'thresholds' explained

Manchester DAB will assess each carriage request by the extent to which they meet or exceed certain criteria. We have called these criteria 'programme service thresholds.' By working to a framework (whereby each prospective programme service can be assessed) we can develop a system that is fair, in a market that is also competitive.

To make this framework transparent we have set out these programme service thresholds below. Selection will be based on which programme services, in the view of Manchester DAB, display the strongest characteristics set against the five programme service thresholds.

The five thresholds are:

1. The localness of origin, or otherwise, of the programme service to our Manchester coverage area
2. The extent to which the service provider has calculated how their service will appeal to listeners in the Manchester area
3. Whether the proposed service is part of a wider group of stations already on our multiplex
4. An assessment of how the proposed service will compliment or extend the range of services carried on the Manchester DAB multiplex
5. The extent to which the proposed service is likely to attract the necessary funding or other financial support needed to commence broadcasting and carry-on broadcasting, ensuring the service can meet its contractual obligations

Applicants are strongly encouraged to bear these thresholds in mind, when submitting their expression of interest/application form. The application form can be downloaded from our website.