

The Ministry Exchange (MX) is a highly participatory website: it's *users* who create the content and upload it. But that raises the question: what sort of content belongs in the MX? This document offers some guidelines for answering that question.

The threshold is intentionally low for new uploads to display in the MX — but that doesn't mean there are *no* criteria. Here are four simple questions to help you evaluate whether an item is suitable for the MX:

1. Could this item be useful for Christian ministry?

This is the first and most important question to ask. The MX might look a lot like general file-sharing, but it's *file-sharing with a purpose*. So we want to make sure that every item in the MX relates somehow to Christian ministry. But of course, that's a pretty broad criterion!

For instance, if you have a flyer for your neighborhood rummage sale, that probably doesn't belong. But if you have a flyer for a rummage sale held by your church or InterVarsity chapter as a benefit, that would be perfect. More obvious things like Bible-study questions, articles about spiritual growth, or pictures of your church's elder board are certainly OK, too.

2. Is the item of acceptable quality?

The MX is not restricted to only exceptionally fantastic content — but we do want to make sure (quite frankly) that content doesn't stink. So you might ask yourself whether this item is the sort of thing someone could be pleased to hand in for a class assignment or to pass around to their circle of friends. We don't want to be super-picky, but all MX items should represent a good-faith effort by the creator to offer solid work to the community.

Preliminary drafts or sketch-quality items are OK, too, but it would be best if they indicate that they're "works in progress."

But above all, we hope potential uploaders won't be shy! We want to see what you've got.

3. Is there potentially offensive, sensitive, or controversial content included in this item?

If the answer to this question is "yes," it certainly doesn't automatically mean the item is unsuitable — but just that extra caution is required.

We want to avoid giving offense to people, when we can, so items that come even close to risking this should do so only with compelling reason. The kinds of thing we have in mind here include (but are not limited to): strong language; treatment of violence or sexual issues; and derogatory terms or descriptions of any individuals, groups, or religions.

As for controversial subjects (including theological or political material that may be under dispute), we insist that all MX items treat such issues with appropriate maturity, fairness, and wisdom.

We hope you'll ask yourself whether you'd be comfortable sharing any given item with a diverse group of people that might include your pastor, your elderly aunt, and the neighborhood kids — because that's precisely who will have access to it via the MX.

InterVarsity staff should note that it is possible for them to specify that a given upload be accessible only to other InterVarsity staff. This may be a good way to handle material that may not be suitable for a universal audience.

4. Do you, the uploader, have the legal right to publish this item?

The answer to this question must be "yes" — because it's *you* who are responsible for the intellectual-property rights of items you share. (You affirm this every time you upload an item.) If you didn't create the content of the item yourself, you must make sure either that it's in the public domain or that you have the explicit permission of the rights holder to publish their material.

That's it! When in doubt, we hope that uploaders will go ahead and submit their items. We know that moderators will use their best judgment in helping MX users fulfill these Content Guidelines.