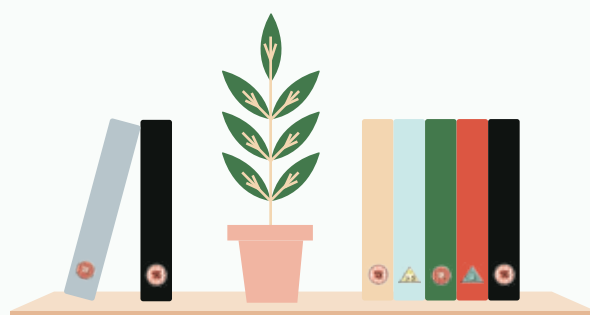
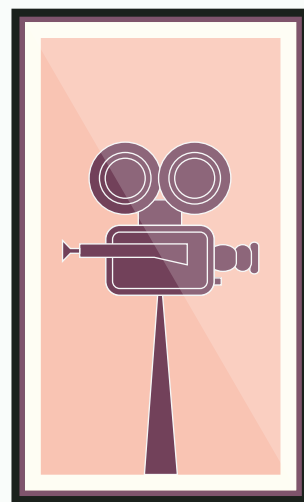


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Age Ratings You Trust

British Board of Film Classification

Annual Report and Accounts 2016



British Board of Film Classification Annual Report and Accounts

1 January 2016 – 31 December 2016

**Presented to Parliament
pursuant to Section 6(2)
of the Video
Recordings
Act 1984**

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President's introduction



*Patrick Swaffer
- President*

I would like to open the Annual Report and Accounts 2016 on the theme of consumer viewing habits, both at home and in the cinema. In his report, our new Chief Executive, David Austin, discusses the importance of the BBFC providing a trusted guide to families in the online space. This role is crucial as more viewing takes place on platforms such as Netflix and Amazon Video.

The BBFC is keeping pace with technological and societal developments and is providing innovative new classification services to help the public make informed viewing choices. Equally, we continue to seek to deliver the best possible service to the public and industry through our well-established statutory classification of film and video.

2016 saw a continued high level of classifications for cinema release. Throughout the year, the BBFC classified 1,075 films for theatrical distribution – nearly double the number classified in 2009 and the highest number since 1957. We are a nation of film enthusiasts with an appetite for a wide range of cinema experiences, and this is reflected

in the diversity of choice offered to British cinemagoers.

The home video market in 2016 saw a continuation of the migration online where digital formats claimed a 58% market share (including sales and rentals), overtaking DVD and Blu-ray for the first time. This trend is reflected in the number of packaged media works submitted to the BBFC for classification which continued its ten-year decline. Although the decline in works submitted for classification did not match the 16.9% decline in sales of DVDs and Blu-ray discs, the BBFC classified 1.9% fewer packaged media submissions than in 2015 and it anticipates that demand for statutory classifications for packaged titles will continue its current downward trajectory.

In contrast, demand for the BBFC's non-statutory classification services increased exponentially. Take-up of our Watch & Rate service for content distributed online, for example, increased 85% in the number of minutes classified compared to 2015. Perhaps the most telling indicator of the rate of growth in online content is that in 2016, Netflix submitted more titles to the BBFC for classification

than any other distributor. This is a remarkable shift and is an indication of the value placed on a BBFC classification by a service that wishes to place family-friendly viewing front and centre of its offering.

Setting standards through partnerships

Our best practice, voluntary partnership with the Mobile Network Operators is now in its fourth year. The BBFC is responsible for setting the standards for automatic filters applied across all mobile networks in the UK. These exclude all content that the BBFC would classify as suitable for adults only. These filters can be disabled by adult mobile customers through the straightforward process of proof of age.

To ensure that the BBFC is accountable under this partnership, the BBFC provides a free appeals service that is available to anyone who is concerned that a website has been over- or under-blocked. The success of the BBFC's filtering standards is demonstrated by the fact that in 2016, we received just nine adjudication requests, a significant drop from 2015 when we received 36 requests in relation to 49 websites.

This reflects both an improvement in filtering and the fact that the Mobile Operators themselves are adept at dealing with the more straightforward cases.

Seven of these requests asked the BBFC to consider whether the site had been wrongly classified as suitable only for those aged eighteen or over. The BBFC found that none of the seven sites should be restricted to adults. The reconsideration requests considered included one from a charity that operated a website that used strong sex references to communicate important sexual health messages to young gay men. The BBFC determined that the public benefit in reaching this audience justified lifting the restrictions on those under eighteen accessing the site. The ability to consider mitigating factors such as educational messages is a key aspect of the appeals process. In accordance with our commitment to transparency, we published all 2016 appeal decisions on the BBFC's website.

In 2016 the BBFC reached a new milestone when it classified its first virtual reality title. **ABE VR**, a horror short film, tells the story of a vengeful robot from the perspective of its victim. The work received a 15 classification for bloody violence and threat. Further virtual reality classifications have followed and the BBFC looks forward to continuing to provide consumers with content advice for linear titles released in VR.

Developing our education programme

The BBFC considers that educating parents and children on classifications and ensuring an appropriate viewing experience, including keeping safe online, is a crucial part of our work. Much of this was carried out in 2016 by the BBFC's Education Team. I am constantly impressed by the reach of the BBFC's education programme which extends across all the nations and regions of the UK. In addition to extensive online resources, in 2016 BBFC staff delivered 151 teaching sessions to over 9,000 people across the UK.

As part of our commitment to the Government's UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) work, in 2016 the BBFC committed to reviewing its education programme to identify opportunities for delivering advice on making safe viewing decisions online and supporting resilience strategies to empower children who are exposed to distressing content. The BBFC will begin to deliver its revised education programme at the start of the 2017/18 academic year.

Ensuring that the BBFC reflects public opinion

In addition to its 'front-line' education work, in 2016 the BBFC commissioned research into the way families make viewing decisions in the cinema and at home. The research will also analyse the role that BBFC classifications and content advice play in this decision-making process.

2017 will see the BBFC begin its fifth Classification Guidelines review. Every four to five years, the BBFC carries out a major consultation exercise during which we speak to 10,000 members of the public to seek their views on key classification issues such as discriminatory language and behaviour, violence and bad language. This extensive research project determines our classification standards for the following four to five years. The consultation process will take several months and the research findings will be published alongside our revised Classification Guidelines in 2019.

The importance of this public consultation cannot be overemphasised. It is our public mandate for all our classification decisions and ensures that our classifications accurately reflect the British public's views on age-appropriate content.

Hails and farewells

I should like to welcome to the Consultative Council Councillor Faye Abbott of the LGA Culture, Tourism and Sport Board and Ian Rice of the Video Standards Council. Jane Glastonbury, Head of Film Policy at

the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, joins the Council as an observer.

I would like to thank Justine Roberts, CBE, Founder and CEO of Mumsnet and Gransnet, who stepped down from the Consultative Council in February 2016. We are appreciative of her contribution since joining the Council in October 2011.

I am also delighted to congratulate David Austin on his appointment as Chief Executive. David has a distinguished history at the BBFC and I look forward to working with him in his new role.



Alison Hastings - Vice President



Gerard Lemos - Vice President

Chief Executive's report

I am delighted to present the first BBFC Annual Report since my appointment as Chief Executive in March 2016. This Report gives me the opportunity to set out my vision for the BBFC for 2017 and beyond. During 2016 I began focussing on the BBFC's development in three areas:

- providing a trusted voice for consumers, particularly parents, wherever they view content. I strongly believe in our duty to help families have a safe and enjoyable viewing experience irrespective of which platform they are using;
- improving how we communicate with parents in particular to ensure they are able to access our classifications and content advice in the best possible way;
- providing a first-rate service to those whose content we classify. Above all, this means investing in new systems to reduce turnaround times and keep costs low.

I am grateful to my predecessor, David Cooke, who began much of this work. I am also grateful to him for gathering together such a talented group of men and women who are dedicated to serving the public, using classification to protect children and vulnerable adults and provide consumers with all the information they need to make informed viewing choices.

A trusted guide across viewing platforms

The BBFC was established in 1912 in response to a revolutionary technical and creative innovation: cinema. Its remit expanded significantly in 1984 with the creation and growth of the video industry, another technological advance. Now the BBFC's challenge is to help families make the right viewing decisions for them as they consume ever-greater content online. The BBFC will continue to respond and adapt to innovation in the audio-visual industry, most notably with the seismic growth in online viewing.

Since 2008, the BBFC has worked in partnership with those who provide online content to bring trusted and clearly understood classifications to that content. The BBFC's response to widespread calls from industry, the public and Parliament to ensure that original content produced for online



*David Austin -
Chief Executive*

distribution also comes to market with trusted content advice has so far been a great success. I will ensure that the BBFC continues to work closely and deeply with online film and video platforms to help families have a safe viewing experience, whether it be with a platform that is aiming to provide a family-friendly viewing experience or one that is seeking to provide content purely for adults and wishes to discourage children from venturing there.

I am therefore committed to continuing to work with online content providers to find innovative solutions to the challenge of providing content advice online. An example of innovation in this area is YouRateIt, an international tool developed by the BBFC and partners in the Netherlands, Italy and Ireland. YouRateIt enables video-sharing platforms to source classifications from 'the crowd', making the classification of huge volumes of user-generated content feasible. The tool was piloted by the Italian website 16mm.it with encouraging results: 81% of all videos available on the site received a classification during the pilot period. In December, we, alongside our Dutch partner, NICAM, and our Italian partner, Mediaset,

presented the findings of the pilot to the European Commission and other stakeholders in Brussels. We will publish the findings in full later on in 2017. With the support of the Commission, the BBFC and NICAM plan to build on the success of the pilot and work with other video-sharing platforms to carry out further testing.

Communicating with the public

All of the BBFC's classification standards and individual decisions are the product of regular large-scale public consultation. The public – including parents with small children, regular film viewers and teenagers as well as a representative cross-section of British society – tell us what they find acceptable or unacceptable at the different age categories.

But this is only part of the story.

Over the years, the BBFC has worked to ensure that the British public has the most comprehensive information available on which to base a viewing decision. Our critically-acclaimed websites and our free app contain unrivalled information, aimed mainly at parents of young children. Those parents that use services such as BBFCinsight say that they find it very helpful indeed.

However, some parents are unaware of some of our services. Research we commissioned in 2016 suggests that parents of young children do not always find the means of communicating with the BBFC to be as strong or flexible as they might like.

In 2017, we will therefore be looking at how we engage with the public we serve. We will be asking a number of questions. What do parents need most of all from the BBFC? Are we providing it in the best possible way? Are we sufficiently accessible across social media? Do we have a genuine dialogue with the public? Is this in real time? We will consider carefully the results of this survey and adjust how we engage with the public accordingly.

Providing a first-rate service to industry

The BBFC exists to serve the public, but it is industry that pays for this service. I am clear, therefore, that the BBFC owes a duty to industry to provide the best possible service.

During my first few months as Chief Executive, I visited the heads of all our major industry customers. They all told me that they value the service the BBFC provides, as well as its independence. They also made clear to me that although turnaround times have never been faster and our fees in real terms have never been lower, they would nevertheless like our service to be even faster and more inexpensive.

I am convinced that the BBFC can meet this challenge without compromising one iota of the service we provide to the public.

Shortly after my appointment, I commissioned work into the BBFC's classification systems and workflows, led by an internal, cross-disciplinary team. This involved speaking to our customers to find out their priorities. I have now received the recommendations of the team that carried out this work. I agree with them all and in 2017 we will begin a major project, lasting up to two years, to create new systems and services that will reduce turnaround times by

30% (sometimes higher) and enable us to keep any cost increases to below inflation.

The requirement to invest in our IT infrastructure has been factored into our 2015 and 2016 budgets to ensure the necessary finances are available to embark on this ambitious project. Over 2017 and 2018 we will be reinvesting in the BBFC's systems and workflow infrastructure. Consequently, we will be able to provide an even more cost-effective service, including to those operating in a self-regulatory landscape, as well as to communicate more effectively with the public.

Part of improving our service to industry involves getting rid of instances of dual regulation. I was therefore delighted to sign an agreement in March 2016 with the Cinema Advertising Association (CAA) to end the dual regulation of advertisements shown in UK cinemas. Under this agreement, the BBFC has sub-contracted its classification responsibilities to the CAA who will assess and classify all cinema advertisements. The BBFC retains its classification role in relation to trailers, public information films, campaigning films and all other theatrical works. This important de-regulatory initiative ensures that industry is not exposed to unnecessary red tape while maintaining safeguards for the public.

The regulation of online adult content

In view of our child protection focus, an important issue for the BBFC in 2016 has been the Government's proposals for the regulation of online pornography.

In March 2016, the Government launched a public consultation on its proposal to challenge the normalisation of children's unfettered access to pornographic content online by ensuring that such content is put behind effective age verification barriers irrespective of whether the content is hosted in the UK or abroad. The consultation included the statistic that around 1.4 million children in the UK see pornography online each month. Given the scale of this problem and its commitment to child

protection, the BBFC supported the Government's proposal to bring forward legislation.

The Digital Economy Bill was introduced in the House of Commons in July 2016. Part Three of the Bill sets out the Government's proposal to create a new civil offence so that it would be illegal to make pornography available online on a commercial basis without ensuring that such content is not normally accessible by children. The proposal also requires adult providers to ensure that content is compliant in the UK.

Given the importance of this child protection initiative and the BBFC's unique expertise in regulating pornographic content, in October 2016 I exchanged letters of understanding with the Minister for Internet Safety and Security, Baroness Shields (now the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Internet Crime and Harms) agreeing, in principle, to extend the BBFC's statutory regulatory role to online pornographic content.

If, as expected, the BBFC is designated as the Age Verification Regulator, the BBFC will be responsible for checking that online providers comply with the law. It will also be responsible for identifying services that enable and facilitate non-compliant providers and contacting them to request that they withdraw services.

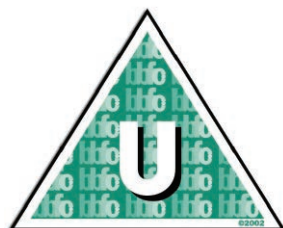
If it is designated as the regulator, the BBFC will take a proportionate response to its proposed new regulatory role and will focus on those sites that are most frequently accessed by British children. We will engage with the adult industry to ensure that adult content providers understand the new law.

I am under no illusions; regulating content online presents huge challenges and the Government's proposals are not a panacea. However, the problem of children accessing pornography cannot be ignored and I am pleased that the BBFC will contribute its expertise and experience to protecting children online.

Accountability

The BBFC is accountable to both the public and Parliament. It takes this accountability seriously. This Annual Report is a key part of its fulfilment of this requirement. The Report provides a review of the activities and classification decisions of the BBFC over 2016 as well as information about our financial position as required by law. Our Annual Reports are available on our website and placed in the libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

The BBFC makes providing the public, especially parents, with detailed and accessible information about the works it classifies an essential element of its function and accountability. BBFCinsight is published for all films on our website and our free mobile and tablet app, and for films classified U, PG or 12A only, on our website for children. BBFCinsight empowers parents, families and individuals to make informed choices about what they watch both at home and in the cinema.



Helping viewers make informed decisions

The BBFC website provides information about all films, videos and websites classified by the BBFC. Information about films classified at U, PG and 12A may also be found on the BBFC's website for children (cbbfc.co.uk).

All BBFC film classifications come with BBFCinsight, a summary sentence and a longer explanation about why a film received a particular classification. BBFCinsight also provides detail about a film that parents have told us they like to be aware of, including examples of mild bad language or themes which may upset some children, such as divorce or bereavement. Parents may find short BBFCinsight on DVD and Blu-ray packaging and on the theatrical BBFC black card shown before a film at the cinema. We publish more detailed BBFCinsight on the BBFC website and the BBFC iPhone and Android apps. BBFCinsight is available for every film and video game classified since Autumn 2007. In 2016 the BBFC promoted BBFCinsight through a short advert shown in cinemas during June, July and August. The advert is also available on the BBFC and CBBFC websites.

In 2013 the BBFC Classification Guidelines Review found that 75% of the British public understand that a film rated 12A is generally suitable for children aged 12 and over, but a younger child may see the film if accompanied by an adult. The BBFC continued to promote the 12A certificate in 2016 in its bi-weekly podcast episodes and regular Twitter Q & A sessions as well as through its email newsletters.

The BBFC took part in Safer Internet Day in 2016, launching a new service that provides child-friendly BBFCinsight for children and families on the CBBFC website. This service explains, in a child-friendly way, the key classification issues in a film and why it received the classification it did, without descriptions that may be unsuitable for younger children.

It enables children and parents to check the classification issues in a film together, before they decide whether it is suitable for them or the whole family.

To promote this new service, the BBFC ran a competition challenging

children to use words and/or pictures to show what information they would like to know before they watch a film in the cinema or at home. A video for Safer Internet Day 2016 is available on the CBBFC and BBFC websites.



15 **ROCKY HANDSOME**
(2016)

Duration: 119 mins (approx)
Release date: 25 March, 2016

strong bloody violence, threat, injury detail, drug use



insight

May contain plot details or spoilers

Cut versions

One or more versions of this title have been cut. Cuts are detailed for each respective version.

Letters from the public



The BBFC generally receives a relatively small number of complaints about its classification decisions, and this continued to be the case in 2016. Public feedback is important to the BBFC and it responds to every email and letter, providing the rationale for its decision and addressing any specific points raised by the correspondent. It provides an immediate response to BBFC decisions and helps shape the research and large-scale public consultations carried out at each review of the BBFC Classification Guidelines.

The film **Deadpool** generated the largest amount of public feedback in 2016, with 51 complaints. The BBFC classified **Deadpool** at 15 for strong, bloody violence, strong language and sex references. Some viewers were concerned about the level of violence in the film. Though the violence is strong and frequently bloody, this often occurs during fast-paced action sequences with little focus on detail. There is also a comic tone to the violence, and the film's fantastical setting further distances it from reality. The Classification Guidelines state that at 15, violence may be strong but should not dwell on the infliction of pain or injury.

The BBFC also received complaints about sex references and strong language in **Deadpool**. At 15, there may be strong verbal references to sexual behaviour, but the strongest references are unlikely to be acceptable unless justified by context. Though strong sex references do occur throughout the

film, most of these are in the form of comic verbal quips or innuendo. **Deadpool** contains frequent use of strong language ('f**k', 'motherf**ker'). However, there is no upper limit on the number of uses of strong language at 15. The sex references and language are therefore acceptable at the classification.

The BBFC received 30 complaints about **Suicide Squad**, which it classified at 15. Most of the feedback was from children under the age of fifteen, or their parents, who had hoped that the film would achieve a lower classification. The sustained threat and moderate violence in **Suicide Squad** were too strong to warrant a 12A.

The BBFC received 20 complaints regarding **Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children**. Some members of the public believed the film to be too scary for a 12A classification. The Classification Guidelines state that at 12A, there may be moderate physical and psychological threat and horror sequences. Although some scenes may be disturbing, the overall tone should not be. Horror sequences should not be frequent or

sustained. Scenes of horror in **Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children** involve some monster characters known as 'Hollows' which feast on eyeballs. These scenes are infrequent and the fantasy setting of the film as a whole reduces the intensity of these moments. Although children under 12 may see a 12A film with an adult, the classification does not indicate that it is suitable for them. Indeed, the classification indicates that the film contains material which may be upsetting for children under 12. The BBFC received 14 complaints about trailers for **Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children**. The BBFC classified five trailers for the film at U, two at PG and one at 12A. Some viewers considered the trailers classified at U and PG to be too strong to be shown before the films **Finding Dory** (U) and **Swallows and Amazons** (PG). The scenes of bees coming from a child's mouth were noted as being particularly disturbing. The BBFC often classifies trailers before it receives the



- 1 *Deadpool* (15)
- 2 *Sausage Party* (15)
- 3 *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* (12A)
- 4 *10 Cloverfield Lane* (12A)

corresponding feature and trailers can therefore be classified differently to the feature. Because trailers come unbidden and audiences do not choose to see them, they are classified more strictly.

Nineteen members of the public wrote to the BBFC regarding the level of violence in **Jason Bourne**, classified 12A. The film contains frequent scenes of moderate violence, in which people engage in hand-to-hand combat and use improvised weapons or firearms. Some complaints focussed on the term 'moderate violence' and argued that this did not reflect the level of detail depicted. Although there are some heavy blows, little is shown in terms of injury detail, with the focus instead placed on action.

Sausage Party, which the BBFC classified 15 for very strong language and strong sex references, attracted 19 complaints. Some of the feedback concerned the film's sex references. At 15, there may be strong verbal references to sexual behaviour, but the strongest references are unlikely to be acceptable unless justified by context. A scene in **Sausage Party** shows food products taking part in an 'orgy', during which various sexual activities are depicted, but in an unrealistic manner. Given the animated nature of the film and the comic context, this scene is acceptable at 15.

Some members of the public complained about the film's three uses of very strong language ('c**t'). This is permitted within the Classification Guidelines at 15,

depending on the manner in which it is used, who is using the language, its frequency within the work as a whole and any special contextual justification. The comic and non-



aggressive delivery of the very strong language in **Sausage Party** means that it is acceptable at 15.

Other complaints about **Sausage Party** focussed on drug use. Drug references in the film are either unrealistic (for example, food products smoking joints) or involve non-existent drugs (for example, bath salts). As such, they are permissible at 15, where drug taking may be shown but the work as a whole must not promote or encourage drug misuse (for example, through instructional detail).

Eighteen members of the public wrote to the BBFC about the violence in **10 Cloverfield Lane** (12A). There may be moderate violence at 12A, but it should not dwell on detail. There is a scene where a character is shot; however, this takes place off screen, and no impact or detail is shown. Another scene shows

the antagonist being injured by a barrel of acid, his face visibly burnt. However, there is no significant focus on the injury detail. There are several scenes of moderate threat in the film

which create a dark tone that the BBFC recognised as being at the upper end of the 12A level. At 12A, moderate physical and psychological threat is permitted as long as horror sequences are not too frequent or sustained, and the overall tone is not disturbing.

The BBFC received ten complaints about **Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice** regarding threat, violence and the dark tone of the film. Moments of threat include characters being held at gunpoint, and some nightmarish dream sequences. The violence and tone sit within a known fantasy context consistent with both BBFC Classification Guidelines and past instalments of the Batman series at the 12A classification. There is limited detail of injury in the film and, in the few moments where injury is seen, there is no emphasis on either injuries or blood.



Media education

2016 was another busy year for our education outreach programme, with BBFC staff delivering 151 teaching sessions to more than 9,000 people across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Audiences included cinemagoers, adult learners, students, teachers, parents, home-educated pupils, hospital patients, special educational needs learners, industry professionals, local government officials and young children. Most of our presentations focused on current cinema regulation, though some groups asked specifically to hear about historical classification decisions, and our non-statutory partnerships, including our Watch & Rate service for online content, our service for classifying music videos online, and BBFC research.

The regular in-house seminars hosted at our London premises continued to be popular with schools, universities and educational tour operators. In 2016 we again increased the number of seminar dates offered, running 52 during the year. In addition, we continued to promote remote learning and hosted Skype sessions with schools, young filmmakers and university students.

Our external visits programme comprises the majority of our face-to-face outreach work, and during 2016 we delivered 91 education sessions at locations across the UK.

As in previous years, we attended the Media Live! Conference in Paris, talking to 540 Media and Film Studies students from the UK. Education events for teachers included sessions at the BFI Media Conference in London and the Association of Media Education in Scotland (AMES) Conference in Stirling.

We also led sessions at events in the Zoom Cymru International Youth Film Festival in Wales, UCL's Film Society in London, the Leeds Young Film Festival, the WORDS of Bromsgrove Literary Festival, the Discovery Film Festival in Dundee, and the Cinemagic International Film and Television Festival for Young People in Belfast. For the first time we visited a hospital school, spending a day with patients, their siblings and their

parents at the Evelina London Children's Hospital School (St Thomas' Hospital).

Our continuing collaboration with the education charity, Into Film, enjoyed another successful year: during the 2016 Into Film Festival we travelled to 17 locations in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, introducing 23 film screenings to more than 2,800 attendees from secondary and primary schools. These events also attracted over 100 home-educated learners, as well as young people with special educational needs. New workshops focussing on the horror genre were well received, as was a screening of *The Jungle Book* to a group of young patients with Into Film and the charity Medicinema.

Engaging with the next generation of filmmakers remains an important part of our education work. We continued our support of the BFI Academies, speaking to groups in Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield, Hull and Manchester, both in person and via Skype. We also hosted workshops with students of the British Youth Film Academy in Wigan, and the Barbican Centre's Young Programmers.

Work with industry professionals in 2016 saw us delivering sessions to members of the Korean Media Ratings Board, delegates from the Chinese Media Centre, and staff at Universal Pictures International UK Theatrical and Home Entertainment Behind The Curtain employee engagement programme.

In response to requests from parents, teachers and students, we published BBFCinsight for several older film titles classified before we introduced BBFCinsight. We also answered queries from university and higher degree students, A-level pupils, younger learners and teachers. Subjects included classifying music videos, the 12A classification and violence in films.

We launched a new BBFC classroom poster, detailing key facts about the



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organisation's history, current role and work in the online space. We sent over 500 posters to classrooms across the UK.

We also created other new educational resources with particular appeal to secondary school students and teachers, including case studies for the BBFC website.

We updated our website for children by adding a modified long-form BBFCinsight for all new releases and several older titles. This allows children to find out about a film's classification issues, and directs adults to our main website and free mobile phone app. To promote this service, we ran a competition inviting children to write their own BBFCinsight. Most competition entries were from 7-12 year olds, the key audience for our children's website. Films chosen by children in the competition ranged from blockbusters to a Shakespeare play and encompassed recent hits and perennial favourite family films.

In our ongoing student survey we asked teenagers studying media and film about their viewing habits and recent cinema classifications, and presented the findings to internal stakeholders. The survey showed a slight decline in the frequency of students visiting the cinema although it remains high, with almost half of those surveyed saying they visit the cinema at least once a month. Many students said they watch a video at home at least once a week, and there was strong agreement with the BBFC classifications for a list of eighteen films released in 2015-2016 including *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1* (12A), *Jurassic World* (12A) and *Avengers: Age of Ultron* (12A).

Research

The BBFC carries out regular research to ensure classification decisions are in line with UK public opinion and expectations. To maintain its transparency, the BBFC publishes its research on the BBFC website.

The BBFC's core research activity is the regular review of its Classification Guidelines which is carried out every four to five years in the form of a large-scale public consultation exercise. The most recent review of the Classification Guidelines, carried out in 2013, involved more than 10,000 members of the public from

across the UK, including, for the first time, groups of teenagers.

In addition to the review of the Classification Guidelines, the BBFC carries out research into public attitudes towards specific issues, all of which is published on the BBFC website.

In 2016 the BBFC commissioned research into how families make viewing decisions both at home and in the cinema. The research aims to establish how families use BBFC

classifications, where and how they find out about the suitability of a film they want to watch and how best to provide parents and families with BBFC classifications and BBFCinsight information.

The BBFC will also begin its review of the Classification Guidelines in 2017, once again involving parents and teenagers from across the UK, as well as visitors to the BBFC website. This research and the revised BBFC Classification Guidelines will be published in 2019.



Non-statutory work: bringing trusted BBFC classifications online

In addition to its statutory work, the BBFC is committed to working in partnership with online content providers to develop innovative, self-regulatory solutions that protect children and vulnerable adults from harmful content and empower consumers (especially families) to make informed viewing decisions. Details of these initiatives that ran throughout 2016 are set out below.

Working with Video on Demand services

Our digital licences and Watch & Rate service allow parents to make the same safe, informed viewing choices when their children view works on services such as Netflix, Amazon Video, iTunes, Wuaki and others as they have traditionally done in the cinema or when buying or renting DVDs and Blu-rays. Given that major on-demand platforms are such new entrants to the home entertainment market (iTunes only launched its film service in the UK in 2008 and Netflix arrived on our shores as recently as 2012), it is remarkable that, in 2016, digital content claimed a larger share of the home video market than packaged media.

Overall, the UK video market remained resilient in 2016, growing by 2.2%. While revenues from sales of DVD and Blu-ray discs declined 16.9% to £893.6m, digital video revenue topped the billion-pound barrier for only the second year with £1.31bn. This accounted for 58% of the total video market, a 23% year-on-year growth. This includes digital video sales and rentals, as well as revenue from subscription services such as Netflix and Amazon Video, and highlights the importance of providing trusted and understood age labelling for these services.¹

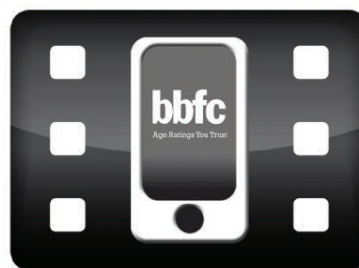
The market share enjoyed by digital platforms makes it all the more important that consumers have access to trusted content advice. However, the long-established statutory regulatory framework

that ensures the British public is protected from harmful content does not extend online. The BBFC therefore developed, with the online home entertainment industry, self-regulatory solutions that ensure the protections and advice that the public enjoys offline are also available online.

Since 2008, the BBFC has allowed digital audio-visual services to license the use of home entertainment classifications on their platforms. By the end of 2016, 25 video-on-demand brands were licensed to use BBFC age classifications and symbols. During 2016, the BBFC continued to work with these services to ensure that they were properly assigning age classifications to the correct titles. In addition, the BBFC offered advice as to how our age classifications can be linked to parental controls, and how any unrated titles should be displayed and labelled.

As well as licensing our existing classifications, the BBFC has offered voluntary classification and labelling services for online works since 2011 when it introduced its online-only classification service, Watch & Rate. Watch & Rate allows distributors and content owners to access BBFC classification services at a lower cost than statutory classification under the Video Recordings Act. We classify works with the same rigour and against the same Classification Guidelines as for our statutory classification work.

As the popularity of video on demand has grown, so too has the demand for our Watch & Rate classification service and, in 2016, the BBFC received over 3,257 submissions for an online-only classification, including all original content produced by Netflix and Amazon. This represents a 79% increase from the 1,822² works viewed in 2015, and an 85% increase in minutes classified.



Mobile content

During 2016, on a best practice, voluntary basis, the BBFC continued to regulate commercial and internet content delivered via the mobile networks of EE, O2, Three and Vodafone. The BBFC's Classification Guidelines for film and video form the basis of the Classification Framework, which defines content that is unsuitable for customers under the age of 18. In addition, the BBFC maintains an additional Classification Framework specifically for EE network customers who wish to set filter levels to 'Strict'. This Framework outlines content that is unsuitable for children under the age of 12 and is based on our Classification Guidelines for PG. To ensure that the system is accountable and transparent, the BBFC offers a free appeals procedure that is open to all.

In 2016, the BBFC received nine requests to consider whether a site had been appropriately classified as suitable for adults only. These came from website owners, members of the public and the Mobile Network Operators themselves. Seven requests for adjudication related to sites that were restricted to adults only. These included sites such as an information resource for Czech children rescued from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia prior to World War Two; a health and lifestyle website run by a gay men's health charity; and an online community that allowed the customisation of avatars. In all seven cases, we found no content that we determined to be suitable for adults only.

¹ *The Jungle Book* (PG)

¹ <http://www.eraltd.org/news-events/press-releases/2017/entertainment-sales-reached-63bn-in-2016>

² 2015 Annual Report statistics page <http://www.bbfc.co.uk/about-bbfc/annual-reports>

Non-statutory work: bringing trusted BBFC classifications online

In two cases, we were asked to consider whether websites contained content that should be restricted to those aged 18 or over. One was a blog containing numerous image galleries, some of which contained explicit pornographic images and GIFs; the second was an online dictionary of words and phrases that contained very strong language and sex references. The BBFC considered the content on both websites to be unsuitable for children according to the Classification Framework.

The BBFC also considered the nine websites under the EE's new 'Strict' Classification Framework. We considered six unsuitable for children under the age of 12. Such material included a software development resource, due to the sight of blood during violence in some of the videos, and the online avatar community, due to moderate sex references and brief horror imagery.

The BBFC is committed to carrying out its regulatory functions in an open and transparent way. It therefore

published four quarterly reports during 2016, detailing these appeals and the outcome of each. These reports are available on the BBFC website. We also published four EE 'Strict' Quarterly Reports.

Music videos

Another area of the BBFC's work to provide guidance for content online involves the classification of certain online music videos. In 2016, both independent and major UK record labels continued to submit online music videos likely to receive a 12 classification or higher to the BBFC.

During the year, the BBFC classified 74 online music videos: one at U; four at PG; 29 at 12; 38 at 15; and two at 18. More detail on these videos is available in each of the classification category sections of this report.

26% fewer music videos were rated in 2016 than in 2015. Although it is difficult to draw firm conclusions based on the sample size, it is likely that this decline is largely accounted for by a lighter release schedule for

UK repertoire in 2016. It may also reflect the fact that major records labels became more familiar with BBFC Classification Guidelines and therefore submitted fewer videos that achieved a U and PG classification and were therefore outside the scope of the scheme.

However, the BBFC notes that in 2016 it received only 11 videos for classification from independent record labels. It will work with the music industry to ensure that all labels remain committed to submitting video works so that consumers benefit from clear and trusted content advice. It is also disappointing that the major record labels in the US have not taken up the BBFC's proposal to run a pilot to include US artists within the music video classification scheme. We will continue to work with Government and to engage with record labels both in the UK and the US to promote the scheme and encourage take-up of classifications.

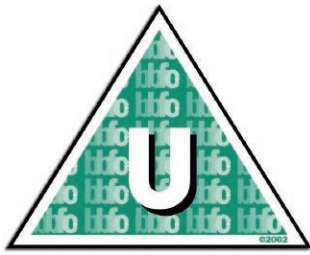


Enforcement

The Video Recordings Act 1984 requires that each video work supplied on DVD, Blu-ray or any other physical format in the UK be classified by the BBFC, unless the work is exempt from classification. The BBFC assists Trading Standards Officers and the police by providing Certificates of Evidence in respect of seized works. In 2016, the BBFC provided evidence on 249 video works. In June, the BBFC hosted an exhibition stand at the annual Chartered Trading Standards Institute conference; this promoted the BBFC's services and provided the opportunity to discuss a range of matters with Trading Standards Officers.



- 1 *Nocturnal Animals (15)*
- 2 *The Secret Life of Pets (U)*





U Universal



The U classification is awarded to works which are suitable for audiences aged four years and over. Although U is the BBFC's lowest classification, it is unlikely for a work classified U to be entirely free of issues. When deciding whether a work can be classified U, the BBFC considers specific issues including violence, threat, upsetting themes or images, bad language, rude humour and sex references, as well as broader aspects such as genre, theme, tone and impact. It is important that a U classified work is set within a positive framework and offers reassuring counterbalances.

Violence is an issue that is carefully considered by the BBFC, particularly at the junior categories. The BBFC's Classification Guidelines state that, at U, 'violence will generally be very mild. Mild violence may be acceptable if it is justified by context (for example, comedic, animated, wholly unrealistic)'. In the US children's animation *Storks*, there are several moments of mild violence in which characters are struck with objects or trapped in machinery. The violence is presented in a

slapstick style which is both comic and wholly unrealistic with no lifelike injury caused. Slapstick is a typical feature of works aimed at children and is unlikely to challenge parental expectation at the U classification.

Fantasy settings are also a common mitigation for violence at U. In the film adaptation of the popular video game *Ratchet & Clank* – a space adventure about two unlikely heroes who save the galaxy – there are several action sequences featuring explosions and laser blasts; characters also use a variety of weapons including laser guns and cannons. The violence is noisy and frenetic, but there is never any realistic injury detail and the action is all set within a fantasy context which distances the audience from the action on screen. The tone of the film is also light hearted, with comedy used to interrupt any stronger or more intense moments of violence. The film is classified U with the short BBFCinsight 'mild comic violence, very mild bad language'.

A common issue that often accompanies violence is threat.

When we classify threat at U, 'scary or potentially upsetting sequences should be mild, brief and unlikely to cause any undue anxiety to young children. The outcome should be reassuring'. In the popular children's film *The Secret Life of Pets*, there is a scene in which a character is attacked by a large scary snake while being held hostage by a gang of discarded pets who are plotting to kill humans. The scene is a little frightening, but it is a relatively brief moment which offers a positive resolution. Although some of the characters appear to adopt objectionable moral positions, the film as a whole is set within a clear positive and moral framework, which is unlikely to confound parental expectation. The film is classified U.

Unlike several animated films which the BBFC classified in 2016, the threat in the Japanese animated drama *When Marnie Was There* is not mitigated by comedy. The threat is also more 'real world' and includes scenes in which the young female protagonist is bullied by her nanny and maids. In one scene, a character is grabbed

- 1 *Fuller House* (U)
- 2 *The Eagle Huntress* (U)
- 3 *The Angry Birds Movie* (U)

aggressively by the arm and her hair is pulled. There is also a scene in which two characters run from a storm. Although these threatening scenarios feature a greater degree of realism, they are brief and isolated moments in a film which offers reassuring counterbalances and positive messages about the heroine's courageous and resilient nature. These broader aspects of the work are also important mitigations in dealing with the film's scenes of emotional upset which occur when the protagonist talks about the loss of her parents. The positive messages that arise from the more emotionally challenging moments help to create an overall sensitive tone that is suitable for younger viewers. The film is classified U with the BBFCinsight 'very mild threat, scenes of emotional upset'.

Not all films classified U are aimed at, or likely to appeal to, young children. One such film is the documentary **Notes on Blindness**, a British film about the experience of a man who became blind in the 1980s. The film contains a brief image of medical detail when the eye of a man who has suffered blindness is shown in



microscopic detail. Although the image is potentially upsetting, it is an isolated moment which features very little visual detail. The image is also unlikely to cause any undue anxiety or distress to the film's primarily adult audience.

Another documentary classified U is the film **The Eagle Huntress**, which is about a 13-year-old Mongolian girl and her golden eagle who train to become champion hunters. The film features scenes of natural hunting

when an eagle is used to hunt foxes; the two animals are seen fighting before it becomes clear that the eagle has killed the fox. The animal's dead body is seen lying on the ground, but there is limited sight of blood and injury detail. In this work, the educational and documentary context of the animal hunting are mitigating factors which permit the issue to be classified at U.

Bad language continues to be a primary issue of concern to the





U Universal

public – and particularly parents – at the most junior level. At U, the BBFC's Classification Guidelines state that there may only be 'infrequent use of very mild bad language'. In the family comedy *Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip* there was a single use of mild bad language when the film was originally submitted to the BBFC. The distributor requested a U classification, so we wrote a cuts list requiring the removal of the term 'crap' in order for the work to be classified at the most junior category. The use of the word 'crap' was changed to 'crud' – a term acceptable at U under current BBFC Classification Guidelines – so the film is now classified U with the BBFCinsight 'very mild bad language'.

A work raising a similar classification issue is the animated feature *The Angry Birds Movie*, a comedy based on the popular gaming app. The distributor sought classification advice from the BBFC before submitting the film for its formal classification. In this early submission, the film contained wordplay on strong language such as uses of the phrases 'pluck my life' and 'I need some angry flocking birds'. Although euphemistic, these terms are likely to confound parental and public expectation at U, so the BBFC advised the distributor that it was likely that these would have to be removed for the work to obtain the desired U classification. The distributor acted on the BBFC's advice and re-submitted the film without these

terms. It is classified U.

Aside from very mild bad language, *The Angry Birds Movie* also features rude humour. This is an issue that the BBFC takes into account when classifying material for a junior audience. During the film, there is mild toilet humour which includes a scene in which an eagle urinates into a swimming pool, a character who has magic farts, and several references to bodily fluids, including snot and vomit. These examples of mild rude humour are not the main focus of the work and they take place within the context of a fun, family film. This kind of comedy is a familiar trope of children's entertainment which is likely to appeal to younger audiences without causing any offence. The issue is reflected in the BBFCinsight which is 'very mild bad language, comic slapstick, innuendo, toilet humour'.

At U, there may only be 'very mild sexual behaviour (for example, kissing) and references to such behaviour'. In the adaptation of a Jane Austen novella, *Love & Friendship*, there are occasional comic references to infidelity and a character's slightly debauched reputation within high society when she is referred to as a 'flirt'. These references lack any verbal detail of physical sexual behaviour and are unlikely to confound expectation in a period drama that is predominantly aimed at an adult audience. As the issue is not likely to cause offence or harm at the junior category, the very

mild sex references are only noted in the long BBFCinsight. The short BBFCinsight is 'no material likely to offend or harm'.

In addition to film and video, the BBFC classifies works intended for online distribution. When classifying such content, we apply the same classification standards. Consequently, in an episode of the Netflix sitcom *Fuller House*, we classified it U for 'very mild bad language, sex references'. The episode features uses of the terms 'damn' and 'butt', as well as referencing sexual behaviour such as 'canoodling' and 'hanky panky'. Although these terms are almost as discreet as those used in *Love & Friendship*, we considered that in the context of a family television programme that has a broader appeal to both younger and older audiences, the issue could be of concern to the public, so we reflected it in the short BBFCinsight.

'Very mild sex references' is also a classification issue in an episode from the Amazon television series *The Kicks* – a drama about a girls' football team – when characters talk about 'going steady' and what their 'type' of boy is. These references reflect a more adolescent understanding of romantic and sexual relationships, but they remain fairly innocent and are isolated references in a work which offers many positive messages to young people. The entire first series of *The Kicks* is classified U.



1 *Love & Friendship* (U)

2 *The BFG* (PG)





PG Parental Guidance



Works classified PG are generally suitable for children aged eight years and over. PG films may contain a level of intensity that exceeds what is appropriate for the youngest children, although they will generally contain elements such as humour or fantasy that provide sufficient balance to allow slightly older children to enjoy them. 2016 saw a number of releases in which characters that children can identify with are involved in exciting adventures.

Moana is an animated adventure about a young girl who goes against the wishes and superstitious beliefs of her royal father when she ventures out to sea on a mission to save her Pacific Island people from a god's curse that has blighted their crops. The heroic central character, along with a demi-god companion who has attached himself to her, encounters various threats and challenges on her journey. These include danger from the elements, such as stormy seas, as well as fantastical creatures, such as a giant lava monster, tiny piratical coconuts and people-eating plants. Some of the threat is sustained, and the creatures have scary appearances, but the accent is on the excitement of the adventures, as well as the bravery and resourcefulness of the characters in overcoming the dangers. The threat is also relieved by the comedy in the bickering, but ultimately trusting, relationship between the young girl and the demi-god, and these mitigating factors allow the film to be classified at PG, with BBFCinsight advising of mild threat.

A fantastical setting, and an emphasis on the courage of a character with whom children can identify, also play a similar part in balancing the threats and scares in **Kubo And The Two Strings**, another animated feature about a gifted boy who goes on a magical quest, accompanied by a maternal monkey and a samurai beetle. The film also contains moments of mild violence in which fantastical weapons are used, and which arise out of more frequent scenes in which the central character encounters danger in the form of smoke-breathing witches, a large, angry skeleton, and the figure of his grandfather who assumes the form of a ghostly dragon and threatens to take out the boy's eyes. Although there is a dark and scary edge to the action, it comes with a clear indication that the character can rely on the protection of his companions, and he is ultimately able to find the courage within himself to stop being frightened, and to face his challenges with defiance.

Mild threat and violence also feature in the animated film **Zootropolis**, set in a world full of animals living human-like existences, in which a young female rabbit dreams of becoming a city police officer. The threat includes a young animal being pushed over and scratched by another, as well as characters being dangled over an ice hole and threatened with being 'iced'. Other characters are threatened by animals who have turned wild, with the creatures seen with glowing eyes as they growl and chase after others

with their claws out. The intensity in these scenes is reduced by a strong comic tone to the action, and there is further mitigation at the PG category provided by the context of the film as a whole which delivers positive messages to a children's audience about teamwork, self-respect and being determined about pursuing your dreams.

Whilst **Moana**, **Kubo And The Two Strings** and **Zootropolis** introduce new characters to an audience, the familiarity of certain material provides a 'known quantity' element that can also be helpful in classifying feature films with potentially challenging issues at PG. Steven Spielberg's film adaptation of Roald Dahl's children's book, **The BFG**, retells the story of a young orphaned girl who is carried away to a magical land by a big friendly giant. The film contains scenes of mild threat which will be familiar to those who have read the book. There is obviously a greater intensity and sense of threat in the visual presentation of scenes featuring the young girl, such as when she hides from not-so-friendly giants who are intent on eating her, or having a nightmare in which she is dropped into a giant's mouth. However, these sequences are not unduly sustained and are also lightened by comic moments, along with the wonder and spectacle of the girl's adventures, which allows the mild threat to be classified at PG.

The story of **The Jungle Book** is well known to children and adults alike, mainly through Disney's 1967

1 *Zootropolis*
(PG)

2 *Moana* (PG)

3 *Kubo and the Two Strings* (PG)

animated feature which was remade by the same studio for release in 2016 with modern computer animation techniques and a live-

Shere Khan, and faces the dangers of a landslide and a forest fire. There are also scenes in which animal characters are subject to attacks and

achieve a PG classification, with the 'known quantity' nature of the work being taken into account at the time of the advice viewing.



action Mowgli. The familiarity of the characters and the story, along with the presence of new versions of popular songs from the original film, such as 'The Bear Necessities' and 'I Wanna Be Like You', are key elements in the film's classification at PG for mild threat as the boy Mowgli is chased by an ape and the tiger

fight with each other. **The Jungle Book** is also an example of a film seen by the BBFC for advice, ahead of its formal submission, as part of a service to assist distributors in seeking to achieve their particular classification. In the case of **The Jungle Book**, the BBFC did not advise any changes to the film to

The work of Raymond Briggs in books and animated films for children, such as **The Snowman**, is also well known to a wide audience. However, the latest feature based on his writings and drawings, **Ethel And Ernest**, departs from those earlier films aimed at children and tells the life story of Briggs' mother and father from their courtship in the 1920s, through marriage and parenthood, to their deaths within a short time of each other in 1971. The film has no obvious appeal to a children's audience and deals with mature issues, but its gentle, affectionate tone and discreet treatment of these issues allow it to be classified at PG, with BBFCinsight advising of 'mild innuendo, threat, mild bad language'. The innuendo includes comments made by a neighbour to Briggs' father, Ernest, that he might like to visit the man's 'demanding' wife on his milk round and that it would help him out (the offer is declined). There is also a reference to a popular joke made about American servicemen





PG Parental Guidance

stationed in the United Kingdom during the Second World War and their interaction with local women: 'One Yank and they're down.' There is also mild threat in scenes portraying the London Blitz, mild bad language ('bloody') and sensitive portrayals of serious illness and bereavement. The film also contains references to outdated attitudes to race, religion, gender, sexuality and mental health, but these simply reflect the times in which Briggs' parents lived, and are not endorsed by the film as a whole.

Similar issues in films also aimed at a mature, rather than a children's, audience occur in the biographical drama **Race**, based on the life of the African-American athlete Jesse Owens, who made his name at the Berlin Olympics of 1936. The racist attitudes that prevailed at the time, both in Owens' homeland and abroad, are reflected in discriminatory language when a white character tells him, 'You niggers can wait your turn'. Although abusive, in the context of a film that is both educative and inspirational as

it celebrates Owens' challenging of such attitudes, and his triumph over them, the BBFC considered the use to be appropriately classified at PG, along with mild bad language, sex references and violence.

Florence Foster Jenkins is another biographical drama, set in the 1940s and starring Meryl Streep as a New York heiress and patron of the arts who is determined to perform opera at Carnegie Hall despite having a poor singing voice. The film contains mild sex references, such as comments about affairs and a man with wandering hands, as well as references to the central character having contracted syphilis from her first husband and, as a consequence, agreeing with her second husband to abstain from sexual relations. The treatment of the issue is sufficiently discreet and sympathetic to allow such references to be passed at PG.

Alongside theatrical and home entertainment works submitted for classification under statutory requirements, there were films and

series intended for online viewing, and classified PG, submitted to the BBFC on a non-statutory basis. **David Beckham: For the Love of the Game** is a documentary in which the sports star sets out to play a game of football on every continent across ten days to mark the end of his professional career and support his charitable fund. The film contains only infrequent mild bad language ('bloody', 'shit') which allows it to be classified at PG.

Buddy Thunderstruck is an online animated series about a truck-racing dog and his misadventures on and off the racetrack. Although the humour is offbeat, the show also has an appeal to children, and its characteristic mild rude humour and mild slapstick violence are elements that are familiar from many children's series that achieve PG classifications.



1 *Race* (PG)

2 *Arrival* (12A)





12A Cinema/12 Home Entertainment



The 12A category is awarded to films that are suitable, in general, for those aged 12 and over. An adult may take a younger child if, in their judgement, the film is suitable for that particular child. In such circumstances, responsibility for allowing a child under 12 to view the film lies with the accompanying adult. To help adults make such decisions, the BBFC provides BBFCinsight, available on the BBFC website and free apps, which describes significant issues in the film that influenced its classification, such as bad language, sex, nudity and violence. The 12 classification is the equivalent category for video works, and no one under 12 may buy or rent a video classified 12.

Action blockbusters, especially those in the sci-fi and fantasy genres, are frequently submitted to the BBFC with a 12A category request. This is helpful in indicating the audience that the distributor is hoping to reach. The BBFC Classification Guidelines at 12A allow for the depiction of moderate

violence, although the instances should not feature emphasis on blood or injury detail. A number of films containing scenes of moderate violence were released in 2016, including **Rogue One: A Star Wars Story**. Set before the events of 1977's **Star Wars**, this latest instalment follows a group of rebels as they embark upon a dangerous mission to steal the plans to a powerful new weapon – the Death Star. **Rogue One: A Star Wars Story** has similarities to war films, especially classic World War Two adventures, but its intense combat sequences are restrained in their depiction of blood and injury detail. In this respect, the film's content is similar to previous entries in the **Star Wars** franchise and it is classified 12A accordingly.

Superhero films inspired by comic book and graphic novel sources continue to be a staple of contemporary blockbuster cinema. Moderate violence and threat are frequently category-defining issues in these films, with many being

classified 12A. Recent examples include **X-Men: Apocalypse**, **Captain America: Civil War** and **Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice**. Also released in 2016 was the Hindi-language action adventure **A Flying Jatt**, featuring a Sikh superhero who must stop an evil businessman and his mutant henchman. The film is classified 12A for moderate violence and occasional bloody images. In a comic sequence, the hero displays his ability to instantly heal his wounds by allowing his mother to stab him with a small knife. As the scene is comic, fantastical and features only very brief sight of blood, it is within the BBFC's Classification Guidelines' allowance at 12A.

In some cases, companies choose to submit unfinished versions of films to the BBFC for advice on how to achieve a particular classification. In the case of **Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice**, an extended cut of the film was submitted for advice ahead of its formal classification

¹ *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (12A)

² *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (12A)

on video. The film follows Gotham City's caped crusader as he seeks vengeance on Superman for the deaths he inadvertently caused in the destruction of a city. The extended version of the film contains additional instances of violence that are not in the theatrical cut. The BBFC considered the impact of these additional scenes but concluded that they did not require a 15 classification. The film was then formally submitted and classified 12 for moderate violence, threat and infrequent strong language.

Instances of violence, threat and injury detail in films such as *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* and *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* largely exist within a context that is fantastical and distanced from reality. By contrast, other films present these issues, especially violence, in a slightly more 'gritty' and realistic style. Examples include *Jason Bourne* and *Jack Reacher: Never Go Back*, two thrillers in which highly-trained men with military backgrounds go on the run from

government agencies. Audiences often approach sequels with the expectation that the films' content will be similar to previous entries in a series. In the case of the *Bourne* franchise, the previous four films are classified 12A for moderate violence. Indeed, the original film in the series, *The Bourne Identity*, was the first film ever to be classified 12A after the certificate's introduction in 2002. *Jack Reacher*, adapted from Lee Child's popular series of novels, was classified 12A in 2012 after cuts were made to remove some instances of violence that would have required a 15 classification. In 2016, both *Jason Bourne* and *Jack Reacher: Never Go Back* were shown to the BBFC for advice ahead of their formal submission. The BBFC advised the distributors that the films were likely to achieve the requested 12A classifications, provided no stronger material was added. Upon formal submission, the BBFC classified *Jack Reacher: Never Go Back* 12A for moderate violence and brief bloody moments, and *Jason Bourne* 12A for moderate violence.

Scenes of threat are often the category-defining issue in horror films. Based on a young adult novel by Ransom Riggs, Tim Burton's *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* is a fantastical adventure in which a boy discovers a seemingly abandoned building on a Welsh island which serves as a secretive home for children with unusual abilities. However, these 'Peculiar' are under threat from an evil shapeshifter and his minions who are intent on consuming the children's eyeballs. Some of the imagery in the film is quite frightening and there are occasional scenes of supernatural threat. However, the overall tone of the film is fantastical and uplifting, with many scenes of action and threat containing verbal and visual humour which diffuses the tension. Under the BBFC Classification Guidelines, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* is more appropriately placed at 12A, which does not preclude admission to more robust viewers under the age of 12 as long as they are accompanied by an adult.





12A Cinema/12 Home Entertainment

Certain films blur the line between fantastical and more realistic scenarios. **10 Cloverfield Lane** is a tense thriller in which a young woman wakes from a car crash to find herself in an underground bunker with a man insisting that a hostile event has left the surface of the Earth uninhabitable. Loosely linked to the 2008 sci-fi horror **Cloverfield**, the film follows the protagonist's struggle to ascertain whether she is in the thrall of a captor or saviour. The scenes of moderate threat are infused with uncertainty concerning the man's intentions towards her, but instances of violence in the film are infrequent and the sci-fi elements of the story distance the drama from reality. The BBFC therefore awarded **10 Cloverfield Lane** a 12A classification for moderate threat, violence and infrequent strong language.

Occasionally, classification issues that are not of a typical nature will arise and present an interesting challenge for the BBFC. **The Hunt for the Wilderpeople**, for instance, is a comedy drama in which a

rebellious orphan accustomed to city life is adopted by foster parents living in rural New Zealand. The film contains two scenes in which wild boar are killed, although no animals are actually harmed. Within the context of the story, the foster family are shown to hunt wild boar for food, and a sequence in which they fight off a boar attacking their dogs does not dwell on gory detail. The BBFC therefore classified **The Hunt for the Wilderpeople** 12A for moderate bad language and innuendo in addition to occasional bloody moments.

The context in which issues appear is a key consideration when classifying material, including depictions of drug misuse. The BBFC Guidelines at 12A state that scenes of drugs misuse 'must be infrequent and should not be glamorised or give instructional detail'. This proved to be the case in the classification of **A Street Cat Named Bob**, a 2016 British drama adapted from a series of autobiographical books by James Bowen. A former drug addict, Bowen found redemption through rehabilitation and the friendship of a

stray cat, Bob, who accompanied him while busking in London. The film shows the dangers of drug addiction without showing actual drug misuse, and the life-affirming conclusion provides a positive message that neither glamorises nor condones Bowen's earlier lifestyle. The film is therefore classified 12A, with the BBFCinsight advising that it contains 'moderate drugs references'.

Just as depictions of violence, threat and drug misuse must remain moderate in order to qualify for a 12A, so must depictions of, and references to, sex. The BBFC Guidelines for 12A state that 'sexual activity may be briefly and discreetly portrayed.' This is evident in **The Light Between Oceans**, a drama adapted from M. L. Stedman's novel of the same name. Set in the 1920s, the film follows the lives of a young couple operating a lighthouse on a remote island while raising a child that was washed ashore in a boat. A sex scene in the film features brief breast nudity and sight of the couple in bed together. The sequence focuses on the head and shoulders



- 1 *A Monster Calls* (12A)
- 2 *Fantastic Beasts and Where To Find Them* (12A)



of the couple as the man makes thrusting motions, while in another scene he is seen kissing his wife's bare torso as she straddles him in bed. As the scenes feature no strong detail, the film conforms to the BBFC Guidelines at 12A and is classified accordingly.

Bad language is also a key issue in classifying films at 12A. The frequency of strong language ('f**k') at this category is not always the sole determining factor. Contextual justification, such as the manner in which language is used, is also taken into account. *My Feral Heart* is a British drama in which a young man with Down's syndrome must adapt to a new life after the death of his mother. During the course of the narrative, the protagonist and his friend attempt to sabotage a fox hunt but are confronted by a group of pro-hunt campaigners. The sequence includes four aggressive uses of strong language as the two sides argue. Although the frequency of strong language in the scene does not exceed the BBFC Guidelines at 12A, the BBFC considered the aggressive manner in which they are used. The BBFC concluded that the film's positive depiction of people

with Down's syndrome could be of value to viewers within the 12A age range and this mitigated the aggressive uses of strong language. It therefore classified the film 12A for infrequent strong language and moderate sex references.

Language can be closely connected to issues of discrimination. At 12A, the BBFC Classification Guidelines state that discriminatory language or behaviour 'must not be endorsed by the work as a whole. Aggressive discriminatory language or behaviour is unlikely to be acceptable unless clearly condemned.' *A United Kingdom* is a biographical romantic drama set in the 1940s in which Prince Seretse Khama, later to become the first president of Botswana, causes a diplomatic stir when he marries a white woman. In one scene, the central couple are accosted by a group of men as they stroll along a street at night and Khama is called a 'coon'. A similar issue occurs in *The Man Who Knew Infinity*, a film about a self-taught Indian mathematician who was admitted to Cambridge University prior to the First World War. While studying, the protagonist is met with racial insults

and aggression from his teachers and fellow students. However, neither film condones racist attitudes and instead feature inspiring narratives about overcoming racial prejudice.

A United Kingdom and *The Man Who Knew Infinity* are both classified 12A, with BBFCinsight advising that they contain 'racist language, moderate violence' and 'racist language and behaviour', respectively.

The BBFC classifies a diverse range of world cinema, although some films intended to be viewed by people of all ages in their countries of origin feature material that is not permissible under the BBFC Guidelines at 12A. This is sometimes true for South Asian films, a large number of which are submitted to the BBFC each year. In 2016, this included Vikram Kumar's *24*, a Tamil language sci-fi thriller about a scientist who creates a time travel device. The original version of the film contained moments of strong bloody violence, including shootings and the severing of a man's arm. The BBFC advised the distributor that the film as it stood would be classified 15. However, the distributor chose to re-edit the film in order to secure a



12A Cinema/12 Home Entertainment



12A classification. The final version of the film is classified 12A for moderate violence and occasional bloody images.

Older films are sometimes resubmitted to the BBFC in order to obtain a contemporary classification. In 2016, this included Stanley Kubrick's 1975 historical drama **Barry Lyndon**, which had previously been classified PG but was reclassified 12A under modern BBFC Guidelines for moderate violence, sex and nudity. Similarly, the classification of Andrei Tarkovsky's **Solaris** was raised in 2016 from a PG classification to 12A for moderate injury detail and suicide references.

Recordings of live performances of theatre, opera and dance productions are submitted to the BBFC for classification if they are to have a cinematic release. One such example was **Branagh Theatre Live: The Entertainer**. Written for Sir Laurence Olivier by John Osborne in 1957, **The Entertainer** follows a failing music-hall performer in the 1940s. This 2016 production stars Kenneth Branagh in the title role and was classified

12A for outdated discriminatory language, moderate bad language and sex references. Also to receive a 12A classification was **National Theatre Live: The Deep Blue Sea**, a recording of a 2016 live performance of Terence Rattigan's play about a woman's self-destructive relationship with a former test pilot. The work features a 'suicide theme' in which the protagonist attempts to take her own life. The play then explores the emotional turmoil that influenced her actions, with the supporting characters working to deter her from future attempts. As such, the work does not encourage or condone suicide and is more appropriately placed at 12A.

A range of category-defining issues can also be seen in our ongoing work classifying music videos online. Among the music videos which received a 12 classification in 2016 are Tinie Tempah's **Girls Like** and Dua Lipa's **Hotter Than Hell**, both of which feature moderate sex references. Rizzle Kicks' **Everyone's Dead** is classified 12 for infrequent strong language and drugs references, while Bastille's

Send Them Off received a 12 classification for moderate threat.

Several Video on Demand services voluntarily choose to submit works to the BBFC in order to obtain a classification. In 2016 Amazon Studios launched **The Grand Tour**, a motoring adventure series presented by Jeremy Clarkson, James May and Richard Hammond. The BBFC classified the first episode 12 for bleeped strong language, moderate sex references and drugs references, although some subsequent episodes are classified 15.

On Netflix, 2016 saw the return of Lorelai and Rory Gilmore in **Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life**. Three of the four episodes are classified 12 for issues including moderate bad language, sex references and drugs references. In submitting these works for classification, the Video on Demand services provide their customers with a consistent and recognised classification system across cinema, home media and online viewing.

1 *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life* (12)

2 *The Crown* (15)





In 2016, the BBFC classified more films at 15 than at any other category. Unlike the 12A, which permits children under the recommended age to be admitted subject to adult accompaniment, the 15 is a restrictive classification. Accordingly, films classified 15 may include significantly stronger content than films classified 12A and may also deal with more challenging themes and issues.

Suicide issues feature in the US films *Kate Plays Christine* and *Christine* (the latter was classified in 2016 and released in 2017). Both films concern Christine Chubbuck, a news anchor who took her own life on live TV in 1974. In *Kate Plays Christine*, an actor prepares to play Chubbuck, and suicide is discussed at length throughout, including how Chubbuck's mental health issues and the lack of sufficient treatment for depression in the early 1970s contributed to her decision to take her own life. At 15 suicide may be portrayed and described but should not dwell on details that could be copied. The suicide references in the film and occasional use of strong

language ('f**k'), required a 15 classification. The long BBFCinsight for the film also makes audiences aware that the film contains flashing images which may affect viewers who are susceptible to photosensitive epilepsy. In *Christine*, Chubbuck takes her own life during a television broadcast by shooting herself in the head, accompanied by a brief blood spurt. This limited injury detail as well as strong language ('f**k') and references to drug misuse placed the film at the 15 category. Neither film condones or glorifies Chubbuck's actions, or suicide in general.

The US psychological thriller *Split* (classified in 2016, released in 2017), which concerns a man with Dissociative Identity Disorder who abducts three teenage girls, features sustained threat throughout as the man abducts and holds the girls captive. At 12A/12, threat should be moderate and the overall tone of the film should not be disturbing. The sustained threat in *Split*, along with the film's abduction theme, goes beyond the 12A/12 level and the film is therefore classified 15.

Another US film, *Imperium*, in which an FBI agent goes undercover to stop a white supremacist group building a bomb, was also classified 15. Racist behaviour features throughout, as characters from white supremacist groups frequently use discriminatory terms. There are also scenes from films showing archive footage of racist imagery, as well as violence and threat associated with racist behaviour. The film goes beyond the Classification Guidelines at 12A/12 where aggressive discriminatory language or behaviour is unlikely to be acceptable unless clearly condemned; however, as a whole the film does not endorse discrimination and, accordingly, the BBFC classified the film 15.

Potentially distressing scenes and themes also featured in documentaries classified at 15 in 2016, even though these works are less likely to have immediate appeal to teenagers. *Welcome to Leith* is a documentary about an attempt by white supremacists to colonise a small town in North Dakota. These supremacists, along

1 *Jonathan Creek*
Daemons' Roost
(15)

2 *Jackie* (15)

with members of extreme right-wing organisations, propound racist attitudes, exhibit racist behaviour and use discriminatory terms. As with **Imperium**, the work as a whole does not endorse discriminatory language or behaviour, so it was similarly classified 15.

The Fog of Srebrenica concerns the Srebrenica massacre of 1995. There is footage of real killings and dead bodies, men are shot dead by soldiers, and there are images of human remains. The film also contains a scene in which a woman recounts being raped by several soldiers. These disturbing images and references to sexual violence mean the film is classified 15, where violence may be strong but should not dwell on the infliction of pain or injury, and detailed verbal references to sexual violence are permitted.

At 15, the BBFC's Classification Guidelines state that the strongest gory images and strong sadistic violence are unlikely to be acceptable. **Jackie** (classified in 2016, released in 2017) is a drama about the life of Jacqueline Kennedy in the days immediately following the assassination of her husband, US President John F Kennedy. The film contains a scene in which President Kennedy is shot in the head. There is a large blood spurt from the bullet impact followed by sight of his exposed brain and a head wound, and pieces of brain are gathered from the car. Although the scenes are brief, they go beyond what is

acceptable at 12A/12 and required a 15 classification.

On video, **Jonathan Creek Daemons' Roost** (classified in 2016, released in 2017) is a feature-length episode of the BBC TV mystery series. It concerns events at an isolated manor house and includes a scene in which a character burns to death after being drenched in flammable liquid. This strong violence required a 15 classification.

The US mystery thriller **The Girl on the Train** concerns a woman who becomes obsessed with uncovering the truth behind a person's disappearance. The film contains strong violence in scenes in which a character is stabbed in the neck, causing a spurt of blood, and one in which a character stamps on another's head before hitting it repeatedly with a rock. There is some sight of blood, but no sight of the blows impacting. These scenes, as well as frequent use of strong language, including ('f**k' and 'motherf**ker'), and several brief strong sex scenes required a 15 classification.

At the upper end of the category, the US war drama **Hacksaw Ridge**, based on a true story of conscientious objector Desmond Doss, who served as a combat medic in World War Two, contains strong bloody violence and gory injury detail. There are extended and intense battle scenes, in which many soldiers are killed or wounded. These

include large blood spurts and injury detail when soldiers are shot, blown up or stabbed. The film also contains strong injury detail, including shots of dead bodies, decaying corpses and severed limbs featuring strong grisly detail, as well as other bloody wounds suffered by soldiers in battle. Accordingly, the film is classified 15 with BBFCinsight advising viewers of 'strong bloody violence, gory injury detail'.

Strong bloody violence features throughout fantasy action comedy **Deadpool**, which concerns a reluctant anti-hero who gains superhuman powers after receiving experimental cancer treatment. There are scenes featuring blood spurts following shootings and stabbings, as well as others containing limb-severing and gory decapitations. These scenes, along with frequent use of strong language ('f**k' and 'motherf**ker'), and frequent strong sex references, both visual and verbal, mean the BBFC awarded a 15 classification. The BBFCinsight for **Deadpool** highlights 'strong bloody violence, strong language, sex references' as the key classification issues in the film.

Strong violence also features in some of the year's South Asian releases. The Hindi language action thriller **Rocky Handsome**, in which an agent takes on a drug cartel that has kidnapped a young girl, required cuts for 15 to substantially reduce a scene in which the hero repeatedly stabs several men. Strong violence



in several other fight scenes, as well as strong injury detail, and a scene of drug misuse, means the film is classified 15. An 18 classification without cuts was available to the distributor.

The Punjabi language drama ***Saka – The Martyrs of Nankana Sahib*** concerns a massacre that occurred during Sikh protests at the Gurdwara Nankana Sahib in 1921. The film contains scenes in which people are shot and stabbed, and a scene in which a man is hung upside down from a tree and burned alive. Implied sexual violence occurs in a scene in which a man pushes a woman onto a bed. However, the rape is not shown, but is implied in a subsequent scene showing the man leaving the room and wiping sweat from his face. The film is therefore classified 15 with BBFCinsight informing viewers of 'strong violence, implied sexual violence'.

Sexual violence is the classification issue in ***The Innocents***, a historical drama in which a French medic working with the Red Cross in Poland in 1945 discovers a number of pregnant nuns in a convent. In one scene, a woman is confronted by soldiers, one of whom pins her down and makes lewd remarks while groping her breasts over her clothes, ignoring her pleas to stop. The film goes beyond the Classification Guidelines at 12A/12 where sexual violence may only be briefly or discreetly indicated and, accordingly, is classified 15.

The BBFC Classification Guidelines at 15 state that 'There may be strong threat and horror. A sustained focus on sadistic or sexual threat is unlikely to be acceptable'. ***Nocturnal Animals*** is a drama in which a disillusioned woman escapes into the world of a crime thriller novel written by her former husband. The film contains occasional and sometimes prolonged scenes of strong threat, including sight of corpses and a sequence in which a group of men force a family off the road, surround their car, and terrorise the mother and daughter with sexual threats. There is also strong violence, including shootings and a man being attacked with a crowbar, with resultant sight of a bloody injury to his face. The film also contains frequent strong language ('f**k'), and scenes of strong nudity, including footage of women dancing, revealing breast and buttock nudity and sight of pubic hair, as well as women posing naked in an art gallery. However, there is no sustained focus on sadistic or sexual threat so, accordingly, the BBFC classified the film 15.

Threat was also a classification issue in ***Suicide Squad***, a fantasy action thriller about a group of super-villains who are recruited by a secret government agency to carry out dangerous missions. There are scenes in which characters in prison face harsh discipline and punishment, and others in which characters are placed in life-endangering situations. Although featuring within an obvious fantasy context, and

including comedic elements, the sustained sense of threat gives a dark and sometimes unsettling tone to the action, with some characters displaying a relish in their potential to cause pain and mayhem. Some of the threat also takes the form of horror in the appearance and actions of characters with supernatural powers. This meant the film required a 15 classification, with BBFCinsight highlighting 'sustained threat, moderate violence'.

Two 2016 horror films classified 15 also contain strong threat. In the Persian language film ***Under the Shadow***, a mother and daughter are threatened by a mysterious evil that invades their home, and scenes of sustained supernatural threat focus on a distressed girl who can see an evil force. The US horror film ***Don't Breathe*** features three young thieves who become trapped in a blind man's house after their attempt to rob him goes wrong. Scenes of strong threat occur throughout the film as the principal characters are stalked by a man inside the house. There is also a scene of strong sexual threat in which a woman is tied up in a sling and has her trousers cut, after which a man attempts to introduce semen into her using a pipette. The strong threat in both films go beyond the Classification Guidelines at 12A/12 where there may be moderate physical and psychological threat and horror sequences, and where, although some scenes may be disturbing, the overall tone should not be, and where horror sequences should not be frequent or sustained. Accordingly, the BBFC classified both films 15.

Bad language is a classification issue at 15, where the BBFC's large-scale public consultation exercises repeatedly demonstrate a concern about the use of very strong language at this level. At the lower end of the category scale, the US drama ***Paterson***, which follows a week in the life of a bus driver and aspiring poet, contains some strong language ('f**k' and 'motherf**ker') that takes the film to within the BBFC Classification Guidelines at 15. Other issues in the film include brief moments of threat which, without the uses of strong language, may have been contained at the 12A level.

- 1 *Deadpool* (15)
- 2 *The Girl on the Train* (15)
- 3 *American Honey* (15)



National Theatre Live: No Man's Land

is a recording of a 2016 performance of the Harold Pinter play. There is occasional use of very strong language ('c**t') and strong language ('f**k'), as well as infrequent use of homophobic terms ('poof', 'ponce'), which the BBFC considered to be acceptable at 15.

There are several uses of very strong language in the lyrics of a song playing in the background during a party scene in **Disorder**, a thriller about a former soldier with PTSD who works as a security guard for the family of a wealthy businessman. These background uses are non-aggressive, not directed, are only repeated as part of song lyrics, and the film lacks complicating or aggravating factors such as violence or power imbalances. There is also strong violence and threat in several scenes. Accordingly, the BBFC classified the film 15.

The BBFC Classification Guidelines on sex at 15 state that 'Sexual activity may be portrayed, but usually without strong detail. There may be strong verbal references to sexual behaviour, but the strongest references are unlikely to be acceptable unless justified by context'. **Mustang**, a subtitled Turkish language drama about five young sisters who are imprisoned in their house by their grandmother as punishment for their perceived flirtatious behaviour, and to keep them unsullied for their future husbands, contains infrequent strong sex references. These occur during a scene in which one of the sisters explains how she engages in anal sex with her boyfriend, in order to avoid getting pregnant and to remain a virgin for her husband-to-be. These



references exceed the Classification Guidelines at 12A/12, which state that frequent crude references are unlikely to be acceptable, and the film is therefore classified 15.

Another foreign language film, the German comedy drama **Toni Erdmann** (classified in 2016, and released in 2017), about a man trying to reconnect with his daughter by accompanying her on a business trip, contains a strong scene of sexual activity that places the work at the upper end of the category. Male masturbation occurs in front of a woman, and is conveyed by arm movements and by accompanying sounds and verbal references, following which the man's flaccid penis is briefly visible. It is subsequently suggested that the watching woman eats a cake on which the man's semen has landed. The film also contains strong nudity, and a scene of drug misuse, and so the BBFC awarded the film a 15 classification.

The US drama **American Honey**, which concerns a teenage girl who joins a door-to-door magazine sales team, also features strong sex scenes

containing nudity, as well as a scene of male masturbation. These scenes, together with a single use of very strong language ('c**t'), as well as strong language throughout ('f**k' and 'motherf**ker'), full frontal male nudity and drug use led to the film's 15 classification.

The animated comedy **Sausage Party** features products in a supermarket discovering what will really happen to them when they are sold. As well as very strong language, there are strong, crude sex references throughout, which occur in the comic context of animated supermarket products exhibiting human behaviour. These include references to masturbation, ejaculation, oral sex and sexual organs, and there is also a scene in which food products take part in an 'orgy' during which various sexual activities are depicted. However, these scenes are presented in an unrealistic and comic manner and do not go beyond the Classification Guidelines at 15 where sexual activity may be portrayed, but usually without strong detail. The film also contains infrequent very strong language ('c**t') and frequent strong language ('f**k', 'c**ksucking', 'motherf**ker', 'donkey-f**ker'). Accordingly, the BBFC awarded a 15 classification.

Another 2016 comedy, **Grimsby**, about a pair of estranged brothers, one of whom is a secret agent, contains strong verbal and visual sex references, including to oral sex, masturbation and ejaculation. Some of the references are crude. The film also contains two sex scenes, both of which are comic in nature and lacking in strong detail, although there is sight of pubic





hair. The film also contains some occasional stronger moments of violence, including some focus on blood spurting as people are shot. There is also a scene of drug misuse in which a character accidentally injects himself with heroin and later expresses the view that the experience was better than expected. However, the comment is comic and the film as a whole does not promote illegal drug use. There are also several uses of strong language ('f**k'). The film was originally shown to the BBFC, for advice, in an incomplete form because the distributor wanted to ensure it received a 15 classification. The BBFC advised the distributor that **Grimsby** was likely to be classified 18 but that its preferred 15 classification could be achieved by making reductions to two scenes of crude humour. The distributor made reductions and the BBFC classified the film 15.

At 15, drug taking may be shown but the work as a whole must not promote or encourage drug misuse. **Miles Ahead** is a US drama based on the life of jazz musician Miles Davis. As well as frequent strong language, and some brief sexualised nudity, there are scenes of drug misuse in which characters use cocaine, and also several verbal drug references. However, the drug use has negative consequences. Nevertheless, the scenes exceed 12A/12 Classification Guidelines, which state that misuse of drugs must be infrequent and should not be glamorised or give instructional detail. Accordingly, the film is classified 15.

With regard to imitable behaviour, the BBFC Classification Guidelines state that 'Dangerous behaviour (for example, hanging, suicide and self-harming) should not dwell on detail which could be copied'. The US drama **Nerve** concerns a young woman who becomes involved in a dangerous online game in which people participate in risky dares. The film contains scenes in which young people engage in risky and dangerous behaviour while carrying out dares, as they are watched and cheered on by onlookers. Some of the more dangerous dares include young people lying on train tracks, driving a motorbike blindfolded, and jumping across subway platforms. There are also scenes in which young women attempt to cross a ladder which has been suspended at height between buildings. Although there is a cautionary message, the scenes exceed 12A/12 Classification Guidelines, which state that there must be no promotion of potentially dangerous behaviour which children are likely to copy, and no endorsement of anti-social behaviour. Accordingly, the film's risky imitable behaviour puts the film most suitably at 15.

Some films classified PG-13 in the US (a category which allows films to be shown to children of all ages, with the caveat that parents are strongly cautioned that 'some scenes may be inappropriate for children under 13'), were classified 15 in the UK during 2016. **Split**, **Nerve** and **Suicide Squad** were classified PG-13 in the US, and there were also a number of horror films featuring strong

tonal elements that were classified PG-13 in the US but which the BBFC classified 15. These films include **The Boy**, **The Forest**, **Ouija: Origins Of Evil**, **The Shallows**, **Pride And Prejudice And Zombies**, and **The Bye-Bye Man** (the latter film was classified in 2016 and released in 2017).

The BBFC also classifies works for online distribution. **The Crown** is a Netflix biographical drama series about the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. In the opening episode, there is a use of very strong language ('c**t'), which occurs when King George VI recites a limerick. Accordingly, the BBFC classified the episode 15.

Two episodes of **The Grand Tour**, an Amazon Video motoring television series, were classified 15 for strong sex references and frequent crude references. The episode **Happy Finnish Christmas** features frequent crude references in a sequence in which condoms are placed over various phallic-shaped objects, while the episode **Moroccan Roll** contains strong sex references during a sequence in which sexual aids are displayed and discussed. These scenes exceed the BBFC 12A/12 Classification Guidelines, which state that frequent crude references are unlikely to be acceptable. Accordingly, both episodes are classified 15.

The BBFC also classified a number of music videos in 2016. **Professor Green One Eye on the Door** features scenes of drug misuse, as well as drug references that put it most suitably at 15. Sexual content led to 15 classifications for **Gorgon City – Smile**, which contains sexual scenes in a pole-dancing club, and **Toothless Feat. The Staves – The Sirens**, which contains sexual behaviour and images.

As in previous years, some older films with 18 classifications were submitted for re-release on film, DVD and Blu-ray and are now acceptable at 15. These films included **One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest** (classified in 2016, released in 2017), **Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!** and **Bride Of Reanimator**.

1 *Suicide Squad* (15)

2 *The Neon Demon* (18)





1

Where concerns arise about content in films and videos at lower categories they can usually be dealt with by giving a higher classification. At 18, however, the only option may be to cut or refuse to classify a work. The BBFC's Classification Guidelines at 18 therefore reflect a desire to balance concerns about protecting rights to freedom of expression with a need to protect vulnerable individuals, and wider society, from the possible harmful effects of some film and video material. This position corresponds with the legal framework within which the BBFC operates, including the Human Rights Act 1998, the Video Recordings Act 1984, and the Obscene Publications Acts 1959 and 1964. The BBFC's Classification Guidelines, underpinned by strong public support, respect the right of adults to decide for themselves what to watch. The BBFC keeps exceptions to this principle to a minimum.

Since its amendment in 1994, the Video Recordings Act has placed a duty on the BBFC to have 'special regard (among other relevant factors) to any harm that may be caused to potential viewers or, through their behaviour, to society by the manner in which the work deals with: criminal behaviour; illegal drugs; violent behaviour or incidents; or human sexual activity'. Throughout 2016 the BBFC continued to give special regard to harm issues using classifications at 18 where

appropriate and cutting material where necessary.

Some of the most challenging material considered by the BBFC in 2016 concerned representations of sexual violence. The BBFC's Classification Guidelines state that we may refuse to classify content which makes sexual or sadistic violence look appealing or acceptable; reinforces the suggestion that victims enjoy sexual violence; or invites viewer complicity in sexual violence or other harmful violent activities.

Sexual and sexualised violence was the key factor in the BBFC classifying several foreign language feature films at 18. These included **Black**, a modern Belgian interpretation of Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet', which showed the gang rape of a teenage girl; Polish drama **United States of Love**, about the romantic and sexual desires of four women in the 1990s, in which one of the main characters is sexually assaulted while unconscious by a man who masturbates over her, ejaculating onto her naked body; and **The Club**, a Chilean drama about a psychologist sent to counsel residents at a retirement home for priests, one of whom is accused of the sexual abuse of children. The very strong and graphic verbal references to the rape of children required the 18, with the BBFCinsight highlighting the distressing nature of the material.

The 30th anniversary theatrical reissue of David Lynch's **Blue Velvet** retained its 18 certificate, chiefly for elements of sexual violence including a scene in which a man forces a woman to have sex while threatening her with a pair of scissors and punching her in the face.

A cut was made for sexual violence to the 1984 horror film **The Mutilator** in 1993 and again in 2000. In 2016 the film was submitted to the BBFC for a third time and the previously cut material was restored before it was passed 18 uncut. While the film still requires restriction to adults, under current Classification Guidelines further intervention is no longer justified and so the BBFC classified the film 18 without cuts.

Both strong sexual violence and bloody violence contributed to the 18 classification of the home entertainment work **American Horror Story: Hotel**, which features in the opening episode a man being anally raped by a ghoulish wearing a spiky metal strap-on dildo. The horror of the scenario required the adult classification.

The arguments that relate media effects to harm are a good deal less convincing where violence without a sexual element is concerned and the BBFC's treatment of non-sexual violence at 18 reflects this. The BBFC remains confident the differentiation

1 *The Neon Demon* (18)

2 *Fifty Shades Of Black* (18)

in its treatment between sexual and non-sexual violence is substantiated by the available evidence and, additionally, research undertaken to inform the BBFC Classification Guidelines shows the general public supports this position.

In 2016, as in previous recent years, no cuts were made on grounds of violence alone.

There were, however, several films placed at the adult category by the BBFC because of the strength of their depictions of violence. These included **Green Room**, a US horror thriller about a rock band who come under attack from a gang of neo-Nazis, with strong bloody violence including detail of a box cutter being used to slice open the arm, abdomen and throat of victims. A very bloody throat-cutting scene was also one of the key category-defining moments in kidnap-gone-wrong crime thriller **Dog Eat Dog**.

In the action thriller **Hardcore Henry**, dozens of bloody killings are shown from the point of view of the killer in the style of a first-person-shooter video game. There are frequent moments of bloody violence including a knife lodged in a man's eye and the gory sight of a man's head ripped in two. The strong violence and gore in the film go beyond the BBFC Classification Guidelines at 15 where violence may

be strong but should not dwell on the infliction of pain or injury and the strongest gory images are unlikely to be acceptable. Accordingly, the BBFC classified **Hardcore Henry** 18.

Depictions of violence need not be bloody to require an 18. Spy thriller **Rogue Agent** features a torture scene in which the tendons in a man's arm are exposed and calmly cut in order to make the victim talk. The scene is not bloody, but the prolonged dwelling on the infliction of pain and injury went beyond allowances under the BBFC's Classification Guidelines for a 15 classification.

There was also a dwelling on the infliction of pain and injury in the Arabic language thriller **Rattle the Cage**, in a bloody and sadistic attack where a man stabs a police officer in the throat before driving a letter opener into his ear and twisting the blade as blood pours out. Accordingly, the BBFC classified the film 18.

Sadism was also an aggravating consideration which contributed to the 18 classification of Polish crime drama **Pitbull - Nowe porzadki**. This film features several brutal attacks, including a woman inserting curling tongs into a naked man's anus.

Several older works previously classified 18 by the BBFC were

resubmitted in 2016 and retained their 18 classifications for strong violence. These include the 1990 Mafia drama **Goodfellas** and the 1979 serial killer feature **The Driller Killer**.

The distributor of **Exterminator 2**, a US action drama sequel about a flamethrower-wielding vigilante, chose to reinstate material previously cut to achieve an 18 certificate for theatrical release in 1984 and for video release in 1985. The uncut version still requires an 18 classification for gory images of corpses, including a man impaled on a large spike.

Challenging depictions of strong violence were not limited to feature films. Several episodes of the original Amazon Prime series **Preacher** required an 18 classification, including the pilot episode, which features gory dismemberment, vampire attacks, an exploding body, and a man cutting out his own heart.

In respect of horror films, the BBFC does not intervene merely because these works might alarm or shock. Indeed, the likely audience chooses to watch such films because they enjoy being frightened. However, the BBFC does ensure that the young and vulnerable are protected. Films and videos featuring strong threat and menace that is sadistic or sexualised are likely to be classified at 18. Horror films at 18 are also likely to contain stronger gory images that are unacceptable at 15. Other 18 indicators may include the film being rooted in the real world, as opposed to having a fantastical setting or supernatural elements, horror that is played straight with little or no humour or irony, and the sexual terrorisation of women.

Southbound, a US anthology horror film, comprises five interlocking stories that all occur on the same stretch of highway. Strong bloody violence, requiring an 18, includes a man's head being blown off with a shotgun and blood oozing from the stump of an injured man's forearm after his hand is shot off.

Classified in 2016 and released in 2017, the French-Belgian horror film **Raw**, about a vegetarian college



student who develops a craving for human flesh, contains several scenes with strong gory images and injury relating to cannibalism which go beyond the BBFC's Classification Guidelines at 15. These include a finger being bitten off and eaten. The BBFC classified the film 18 with BBFCinsight highlighting 'strong gory images, injury detail'.

The Neon Demon is a stylised drama with horror elements in which a young model provokes both desire and jealousy when she arrives in LA. Scenes of strong bloody violence, including cannibalism, together with scenes depicting necrophilia, sexual threat and sexual assault, required an adult restriction. The BBFC classified the film 18 with BBFCinsight highlighting 'strong bloody images, necrophilia, sexual assault'.

One of the BBFC's likely exceptions to the principle that adults should be free to choose their own entertainment is where there are more explicit images of sexual

activity in the context of a sex work, a work whose primary purpose is sexual arousal or stimulation, or where the primary purpose of the images in question is sexual arousal.

In 2016 a number of films were classified at 18 for scenes of strong sex including the Italian thriller **Suburra** in which a member of parliament is blackmailed after his hedonistic party leads to the death of a young woman. The depiction of drug-fuelled sex, including a woman performing oral sex on a man as he uses crack cocaine, led to the film's 18 classification.

Several strong sex scenes in **The Greasy Strangler**, a black comedy horror in which a grease-covered serial killer wanders the streets looking for victims, place the film at the adult category. These include implied masturbation, oral sex and anal sex accompanied by frequent crude verbal references. Strong sex also features in **We are the Flesh**, a Mexican horror drama about the

relationship that develops when a brother and sister move in with a reclusive older man. There are scenes of full frontal male and female nudity during implied incestuous sex, masturbation, oral sex and simulated ejaculation taking the film to 18.

Cinema and DVD re-releases of the 1976 science fiction drama **The Man Who Fell to Earth**, starring David Bowie as an alien who visits Earth in a desperate bid to save his own planet, were also rated 18 for strong sex and nudity.

Strong real sex featured in several films classified at 18 in 2016. **Theo and Hugo** is a French drama about two men falling in love while also dealing with the potentially dangerous consequences of unprotected sex. The film opens with a sequence in a Parisian club where men engage in explicit oral sex and masturbation. **The Exhibitionists**, a US drama from Amazon about a film-maker exposing the secret perversions of his closest friends,



1 *The Greasy Strangler* (18)

2 *Girls* (18)



includes a scene in which images from porn websites are visible on a computer screen. These images include explicit oral sex and penetration.

Strong images of real sex also appear in the documentary **Mapplethorpe: Look at the Pictures**, about the life and work of Robert Mapplethorpe whose sometimes controversial images blur the line between art and pornography. Another documentary, **Peter de Rome**, explores the life and films of the pioneer of gay erotic cinema, and also features explicit images of real sex. Numerous clips from de Rome's films are featured and include images of real masturbation, oral sex and ejaculation. Both documentaries are explorations of their subject matter in which the explicit detail is illustrative of the subject rather than serving any primary intention to arouse.

In 2016 two music videos were rated 18 for sexual content. **Jamie T – Power over Men** focusses on the activities of a dominatrix who has a client in her dungeon, with the strong portrayal of fetish behaviour requiring the restriction to adults. **George Maple Ft Goldlink – Sticks and Horses** contains shots of pole dancing and lap dancing which take the music video beyond what is allowable under the BBFC Classification Guidelines at 15.

Depending on the manner in which very strong language is used, who is using the language, its frequency

within the work as a whole and any special contextual justification, very strong language may mean a film is restricted to the 18 classification. In 2016 there were several British films which featured multiple uses of very strong language. **Essex Heist**, an action drama about a group of friends attempting to rob an Essex gangster; **Undercover Hooligan**, about a police officer going undercover to infiltrate a gang of London criminals; and **We Still Steal The Old Way**, a crime drama in which a gang plan to break an old friend out of prison, all required 18 classifications for very strong language, often accompanied by aggression or violence.

Two older films resubmitted for modern film classifications also featured frequent very strong language. Danny Boyle's 1996 drama **Trainspotting** and **Sid and Nancy**, the 1986 drama about British punk musician Sid Vicious, both remained at 18 for very strong language, strong sex, violence and hard drug use in **Trainspotting** and very strong language and self-harm in **Sid and Nancy**.

Multiple use of very strong language also took several episodes of television shows to 18, including two episodes from the Argentine Netflix prison drama **El Marginal**; an episode from the Netflix talk show **Chelsea**, featuring the US comedian Chelsea Handler; and the episode 'I Love You Baby' from season five of Lena Dunham's US comedy drama **Girls**.

In 2016 there was a decrease in the number of explicit pornographic works submitted to the BBFC. The 476 works in 2016 represents an a 19% decrease on 2015, ending the trend of year-on-year increases that had taken place over the preceding three years. The proportion of R18 works subject to cuts in 2016 was 35%, an increase of 22% over the previous year. This continues to reflect the BBFC's strict policies on material which combines sexual detail with activity which is illegal, harmful, abusive or involves a lack of consent or the infliction of pain or injury.

The BBFC made cuts to a number of works to remove abusive and potentially harmful activity, including choking and gagging during deep throat fellatio and instances of oxygen being restricted during sexual activity. Cuts were also made to remove abusive scenarios encouraging an interest in underage sex. The BBFC continues to cut material in accordance with current interpretation of the Obscene Publications Acts 1959 and 1964 (OPA), which includes, but is not limited to, sexualised urination. In consultation with enforcement agencies, and in order to ensure intervention is consistent with current interpretation of the legislation, the BBFC may pass brief and isolated examples of sexualised urination so long as there are no harm concerns arising under the Video Recordings Act 1984 (VRA) and where there is no realistic prospect of successful prosecution under the OPA. Aside from OPA considerations, the BBFC does not allow at R18 penetration with objects likely to cause actual harm, or objects associated with violence. Consequently, in 2016 cuts included the removal of potentially harmful penetration with objects which could cause physical damage. In making these decisions the BBFC continues to draw upon expert research which can be found on the BBFC's website.

Video games and associated media

Since 30 July 2012, and with a few exceptions, the responsibility for classifying video games lies with the Video Standards Council (VSC), applying the PEGI system. The BBFC continues to be responsible for classifying any video game content attached to primarily linear submissions and the VSC must send non-integral linear material, which may form part of a game, to the BBFC for a determination of suitability, as this content may affect the overall classification of a game. In 2016, this included add-on material for five video games. The BBFC is also responsible for classifying any video games containing R18 level material, although we have given no video game an R18 classification since 2007.

In 2016 the BBFC advised 15 classifications for three submissions of linear material attached to video games. Linear material for ***The Heavy Rain & Beyond: Two Souls Collection***, a compilation of two previously released games, included fictional television broadcasts

reporting on the abduction and murder of young children. While the footage contained no details of the murders, the BBFC considered the overall tone unsuitable below 15 and advised the VSC accordingly.

Compilation of footage from ***Deadlight: Director's Cut*** included various trailers of the game and some interviews. The submission included sight of a decapitation in silhouette, zombies feeding and some stylised blood spurts. The BBFC classified the submission 15 for strong violence and gory images.

Linear material from the compilation ***Bioshock: The Collection*** comprised interviews with the creators of the game series, interspersed with cut scenes and gameplay footage. This footage contained some strong bloody violence and gory images, including sight of spraying blood when characters are shot, and a sequence in which a 'Big Daddy' character grabs an enemy and beats him repeatedly before throwing

him through a window. Given the documentary context of the submission, the BBFC considered the footage suitable at the 15 category.

The BBFC also recommended 18 classifications for two submissions attached to video games. Video material from the video game ***Mafia III*** comprised four short clips, one of which featured brief sight of a character spanking a restrained and gagged woman with paddles. The BBFC considered this material unsuitable below 18 due to the fetishist elements.

The BBFC viewed material from the game ***Yakuza 0***, a prequel to the long-running series. This consisted of a series of live-action sequences featuring women in bikinis, with focus on their bodies along with occasional sight of them rubbing themselves against poles or playing with phallic-shaped balloons. While there is no full nudity, we considered the tone of the footage to warrant an 18 due to the level of sexualisation present.

Unclassified works

Films, DVDs or digital media which contain unlawful or potentially harmful material will, where possible, be cut. If this is not possible because, for instance, the cuts are so extensive or complex that a viable release cannot be salvaged from the remaining material, or if the distributor refuses to make the required cuts, then a work may be refused a classification altogether. In 2016 no film or video works were refused a classification.

The BBFC must have regard for several pieces of legislation that sometimes affect the classification of works. The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) requires the BBFC to consider, among other things, the requirement that a filmmaker's freedom of expression is not unfairly infringed by its classification decisions. The Act permits such restrictions on that freedom of expression as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society for the protection of health and morals or the prevention of crime and disorder. If the BBFC does intervene with a film or video the intervention must be proportionate to the breach concerned.

Although no specific issues with the HRA arose in 2016, its application is something that remains at the forefront of the BBFC's thinking when classifying material.

The Video Recordings Act 1984 (VRA) is the legislation that underpins the supply and classification of age-rated audio-visual works in the United Kingdom. It is a piece of legislation that features prominently in the BBFC's deliberations.

Apart from setting out the requirement to have works classified, the VRA also requires the BBFC to pay special regard to material that could be said to cause harm to its potential audience. It goes on to provide a list of subjects which the BBFC must consider. Those subjects are: criminal, violent or horrific behaviour, illegal drugs and human sexual activity.

The application of the Obscene Publications Acts (OPA) of 1959 and 1964 tends to be limited to the BBFC's work with pornography. If a work is deemed likely to be obscene under the current interpretation of the OPA, the BBFC is required to intervene. A work will be considered obscene if it has a tendency to deprave and corrupt a significant proportion of the audience likely to see it. In 2016 a number of works required cuts to remove material that was deemed likely to be obscene under the current interpretation of the Act and this discussion is continued in the R18 section of this Report.

Under the Protection of Children Act 1978 (POCA), it is a criminal offence to exploit children by making indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs of them. It is also an offence to distribute or advertise indecent images. The BBFC will refuse to classify works that contain indecent images of children (those under 18). This can often be a difficult decision to make, especially since the definition of the term 'indecent' is wide and open to various interpretations. The BBFC has sought legal advice on the meaning of this term and returns to lawyers where necessary on a case-by-case basis. The BBFC also seeks proof of age for younger looking performers in pornographic works.

The French drama **Bang Gang** features scenes in which teenage characters have sex. The BBFC sought assurances from the film company to confirm that the actors in those scenes were all adults. The film company provided proof of age for each of the actors, confirming that no one under the age of 18 featured in sex scenes.

The Coroners and Justice Act 2009 introduced an offence of possessing a 'prohibited image of a child'. Under this legislation a prohibited image of a child covers non-photographic pornographic images of child abuse which must portray any of a specific range of acts. It strengthens the law on child pornography.

The Cinematograph Films (Animals) Act 1937 prohibits the exhibition of a film if any scene within it has been 'organised or directed' in such a way as to involve the cruel infliction of pain or terror, or cruel goading to fury of any live animal. The word 'animal' is defined as any domestic animal (tame or sufficiently tamed to serve some purpose for the use of man) or any vertebrate which is in captivity or confinement. It is the BBFC's policy to apply the Act equally to theatrical and home entertainment submissions.

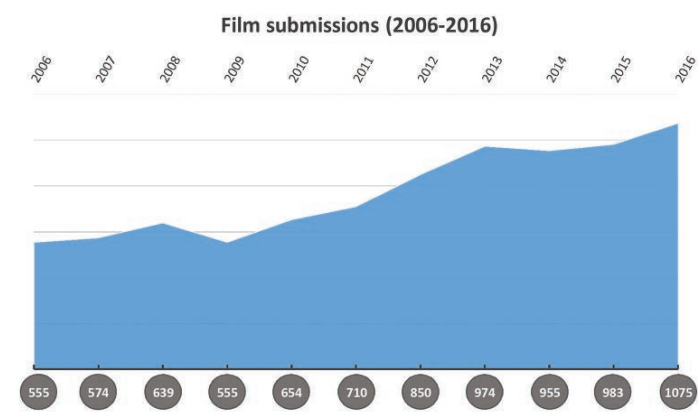
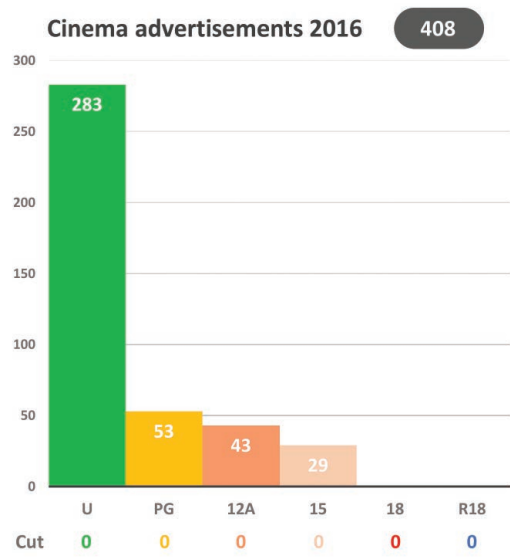
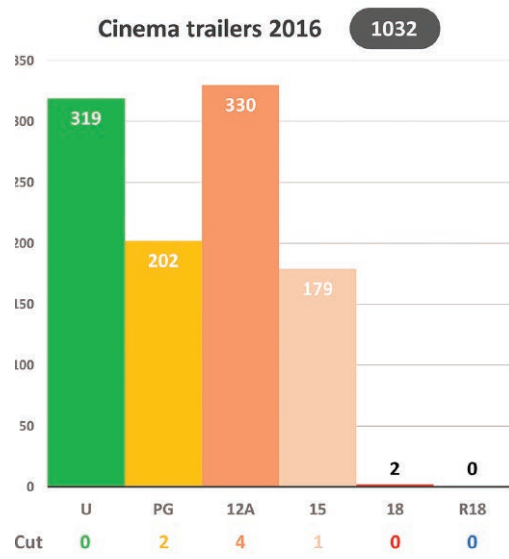
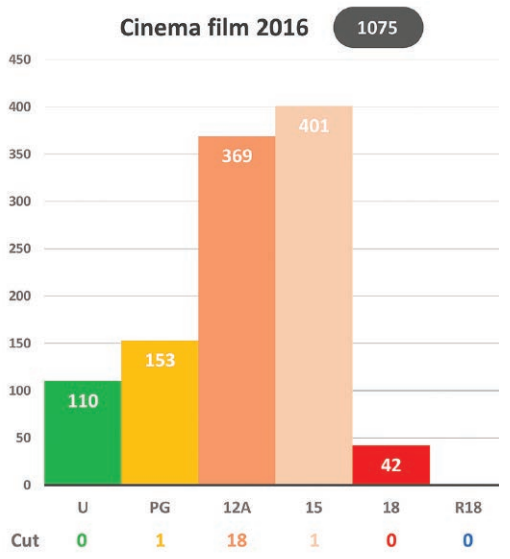
The Malayalam language drama **Pulimurugan** required cuts to a scene of two roosters fighting. Compulsory cuts were also required to the DVD re-release of the 1975 film

Lucky Lady. The film was classified after cuts to a scene of cockfighting in 1989 and the same cuts were required when it was resubmitted in 2016. Cuts were required to the 1983 film **Sahara**, to remove shots of a horse being dangerously tripped.

In 1990, John Waters' **Multiple Maniacs** required cuts to remove scenes of sexual activity with a rosary. The cuts were made under the common law offence of blasphemous libel. The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 abolished the common law offence of blasphemy in England and Wales. Consequently, the blasphemy cuts were waived when **Multiple Maniacs** was submitted for a theatrical release in 2016. The BBFC classified the film 18 without cuts.

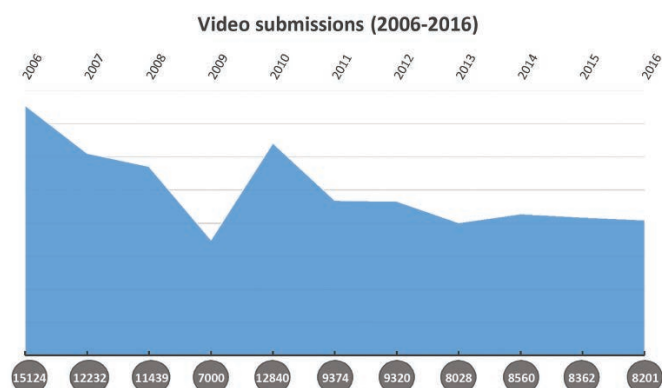
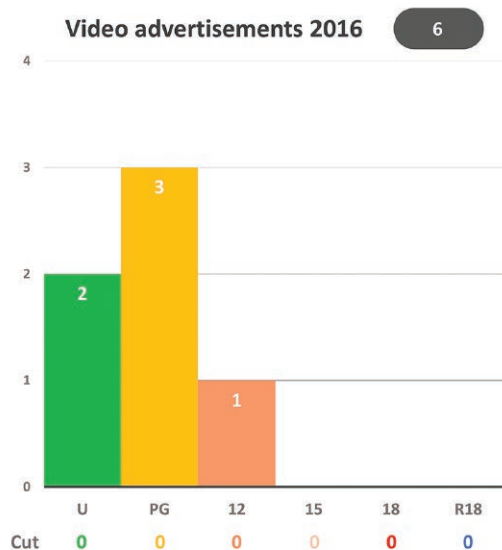
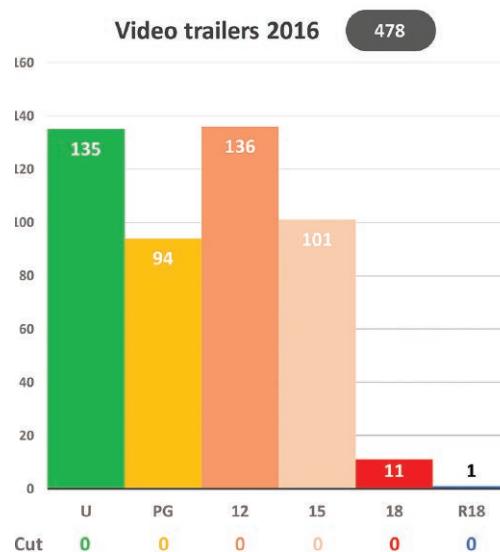
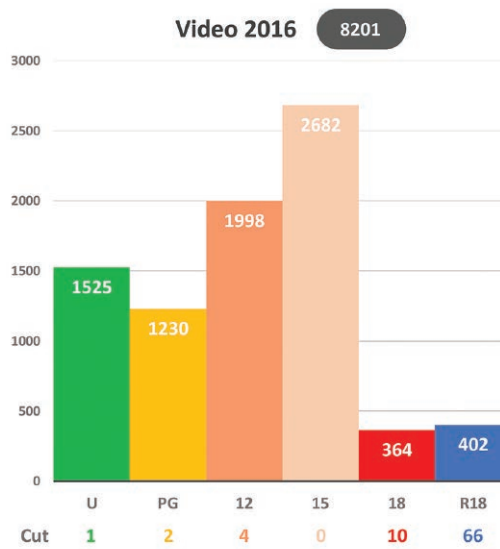
The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 is relevant to the BBFC's work. A key feature of this legislation is the offence of the possession of extreme pornography. Material classified by the BBFC under the VRA is excluded from the definition of extreme pornography. In order for a work to be in breach of this legislation it must be pornographic (produced solely or principally for the purpose of sexual arousal), be grossly offensive, disgusting or otherwise of an obscene character and, in an explicit and realistic way, portray either an act which threatens a person's life; an act which results, or is likely to result, in serious injury to a person's anus, breasts or genitals; an act which involves sexual interference with a human corpse; or a person performing an act of intercourse or oral sex with an animal (whether dead or alive). Cartoon images are not caught by this Act.

Statistics



Film statistics 2006-2016

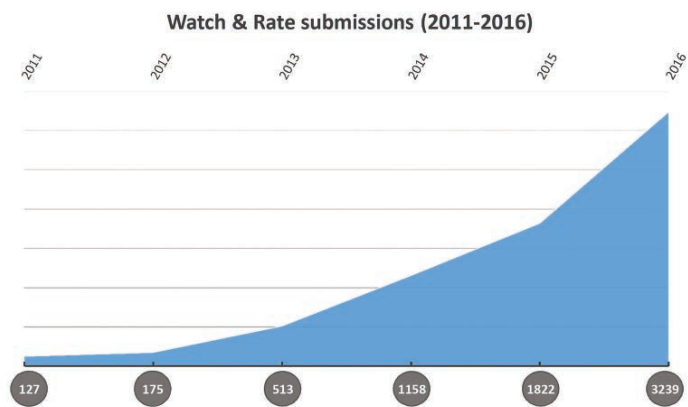
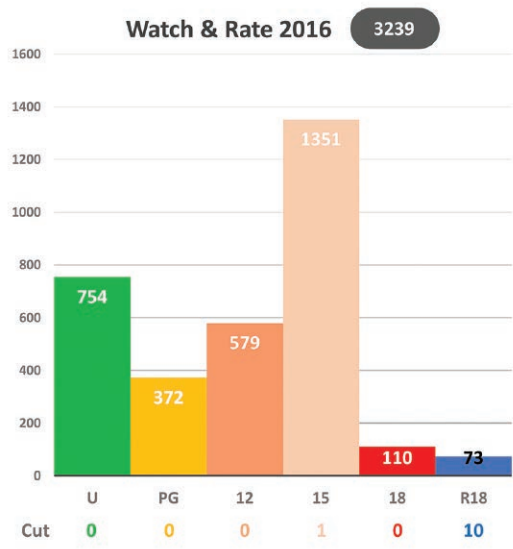
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
U	53	36	69	53	81	102	87	127	128	81	110
PG	92	104	117	83	110	98	150	145	147	137	153
12A	160	159	178	143	174	215	234	321	275	321	369
15	198	222	227	226	226	239	315	313	372	383	401
18	52	53	48	50	63	56	64	68	33	61	42
R18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Video statistics 2006-2016

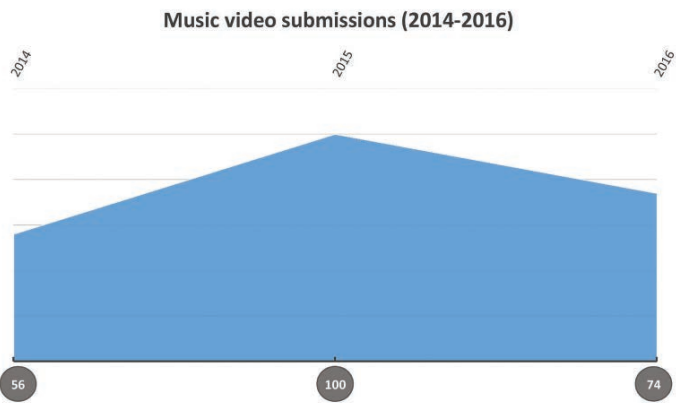
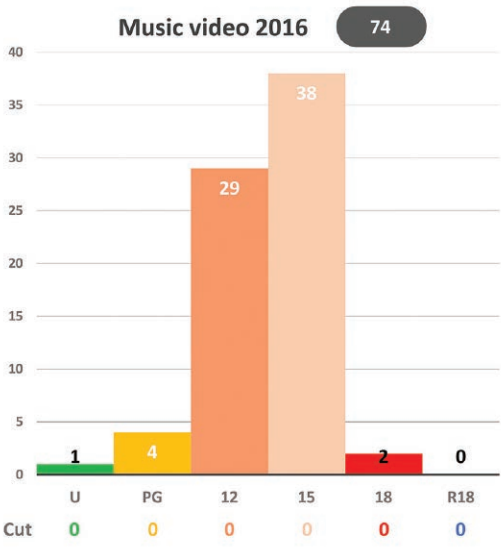
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Uc	66	12	15	7							
U	3010	2482	1967	981	2190	2127	1798	1387	1333	1303	1525
PG	4102	2722	2609	1502	2567	1538	1520	1307	1433	1191	1230
12	2807	2563	2613	1768	2963	2250	2284	1992	2283	2199	1998
15	2890	2343	2432	1728	3204	2327	2739	2454	2590	2716	2682
18	1031	950	904	456	790	507	424	368	379	416	364
R18	1217	1159	897	555	1125	623	555	520	542	537	402
Rejected	1	1	2	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0

Statistics



Watch & Rate statistics 2011-2016

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
U	19	30	112	481	602	754
PG	29	54	89	145	119	372
12	22	47	85	225	300	579
15	48	42	192	266	688	1351
18	9	2	32	38	67	110
R18	0	0	3	3	45	73
Rejected	0	0	0	0	1	0



Music video statistics 2014-2016

	2014	2015	2016
U	6	3	1
PG	10	4	4
12	17	48	29
15	22	43	38
18	1	2	2
R18	0	0	0
Rejected	0	0	0

Video Appeals Committee

During 2016, there were no appeals to the Video Appeals Committee (VAC).

The VAC is an independent body constituted under Section 4(3) of the Video Recordings Act 1984 to hear appeals from submitting companies against BBFC decisions they consider stricter than warranted.

At the end of 2016, the full membership of the VAC was as follows:

Video Appeals Committee Chair
Professor Andrew Burrows QC, FBA: Professor of the Law of England at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of All Souls College. Barrister at

Fountain Court Chambers, London and a part-time judge.

Members

Judy Clements: Former Director of the Independent Police Complaints Commission and Adjudicator for HM Revenue and Customs. Now Independent Adjudicator and Chief Executive for The Office of The Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, and a member of Victim Support's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Salman Momen: Former Head of Interactive Media Group, IBM. Now Managing Director at Accenture Interactive.

Valerie Owen, OBE: Managing Director, Le Vaillant Owen. Former Managing Director of London First and Director of Jones Lang LaSalle. Non-Executive Chair of Swan Housing Group, Chair of the British Board of Agrément, and Chair of Lantra.

Professor Samuel Stein: Consultant in Child, Adolescent and Family Psychiatry. Barrister. Qualified Family Mediator.

The terms of office for **Clare Dodgson** and **Athene Heynes** came to an end in 2016, and we wish to thank them for their valued contribution.

Consultative Council

The Consultative Council is the BBFC's chief stakeholder body, with members including representatives from the film and video industry, local authorities, other media regulators, enforcement agencies and parenting and family groups. It is an independent source of expert advice and the meetings are an opportunity to examine industry, legislative and media policy developments.

During 2016, the Council contributed to discussions in relation to external research into children's media use and attitudes and offensive language; the presentation of violence at the BBFC's 15 and 18 categories; and imitable/dangerous behaviour as portrayed in films across the categories.

In February, the Council discussed the film **The Danish Girl** (15), a true story of a pioneering figure for sex reassignment surgery in the 1920s that contained sexualised scenes. While Council members acknowledged that the sexualised nudity present would not have been suitable below 15, they noted that the film's theme of gender transition was not in principle unsuitable for younger audiences, provided it is handled sensitively.

The Consultative Council unanimously agreed with the 15 classification of the film.

The Council viewed **Deadpool** (15) in June. The film contained strong bloody violence and strong language throughout, and frequent sex references. Council members primarily focused on the level of violence in the film's fight scenes, noting that whilst said moments were bloody and detailed they were individually brief, and did not dwell on the infliction of pain or injury. There was also discussion of the film's sex references.

The Council agreed with the BBFC's 15 classification of the film, with the comic tone and fantastical context

providing mitigation for the stronger moments.

In October, the Council viewed **Nerve** (15), which contained scenes of risky imitable behaviour such as characters lying on a train track, climbing across buildings and driving a motorbike blindfolded. Council members discussed whether the defining issue of imitable behaviour required a 15 classification rather than a 12A. They also discussed the glamorisation of such behaviour in the film, and whether it contained a suitable moral message for young audiences.

Some Consultative Council members believed that the film would have been suitable at 12A, but the majority agreed that the 15 classification was more appropriate.

We would like to thank the members of the Consultative Council for their input into discussions on BBFC Classification, policy and associated matters. In 2016, we welcomed Councillor Faye Abbott, LGA Culture, Tourism and Sport Board Representative and Ian Rice, Director of Operations, VSC. Justine Roberts, CBE, Founder and CEO of Mumsnet and Gransnet stepped down in February 2016, we would like to thank Justine for her contribution to the Consultative Council since joining in October 2011.



1

1 *Deadpool (15)*

2 *Nerve (15)*



Membership of the Council in 2016

Reg Bailey, CBE

Independent Reviewer of the Commercialisation and Sexualisation of Childhood

Liz Bales

Chief Executive, British Association for Screen Entertainment

Mark Batey

Chief Executive, Film Distributors' Association

Kim Bayley

Chief Executive, Entertainment Retailers Association

Leanne Buckle

Senior Editorial Adviser, BBC Trust

Phil Clapp

Chief Executive, UK Cinema Association

Patrick Down

Criminal Law and Licensing Division, Scottish Government

Melissa Dring

Director of Policy, Chartered Trading Standards Institute

Alison Edwards

A leading expert in legal issues relating to the provision of film and DVD works under the Video Recordings Act

Susie Hargreaves

Chief Executive, Internet Watch Foundation

Councillor Mervyn Jones

Northern Ireland Local Government Association

Hamish MacLeod

Chairman, Mobile UK

Alison Marsden

Director, Standards and Audience Protection, Ofcom

Detective Superintendent Wendy Morgan, MBA

Metropolitan Police

Jo Poots

Head of Operations (Complaints and Investigations), Advertising Standards Authority

Justine Roberts, CBE

Founder & CEO, Mumsnet & Gransnet

Natalie Rose

Senior Editorial Strategy Adviser, BBC Trust (Stepped down in February 2016)

Councillor Manjinder Shergill

Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

There is currently no representative from the Welsh Local Government Association on the Council.

New Members of the Council

Councillor Faye Abbott

LGA Culture, Tourism and Sport Board Representative

Ian Rice

Director of Operations, VSC

Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing

The BBFC greatly values the expertise provided by The Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing (APCV). The APCV presents a wide range of skills and expertise connected with child welfare and development, and the views of its members feed into the development of BBFC policy and, in turn, classification.

During 2016, the APCV contributed to discussions on depictions of sexual activity at the 12 and 15 categories; potentially indecent images of children; research into children's mental development and their understanding of themes in films; and violence at each of the BBFC's categories, the latter including discussion between panel members of issues such as the realism of a scene, the propensity for children to enjoy being scared and the portrayal of violence in relation to real-life events.

In March the Panel viewed ***Zoolander 2*** (12A), a comedy set in the world of fashion that stars Ben

Stiller, Owen Wilson and Penelope Cruz. The Panel discussed the classification issues in the film, with primary focus on the moderate sex references, which included jokes about a transgender character, and a detailed description of a previous sexual encounter between two characters. The consensus was that the film sat at the top end of the 12A classification but that the more challenging moments were largely mitigated by the comic context and slapstick tone, and the Panel agreed with the BBFC's 12A classification.

The Panel watched ***The BFG*** (PG) in July, a fantasy film about a young girl who is befriended by a giant. In the subsequent Panel discussion, members gave specific focus to the mild threat in the film, including scenes where the young girl dreams that a giant has eaten her, and a scene in which other giants hunt her. Due to the presence of such scenes, there was a difference of opinion among Panel members as to whether the film was more

appropriately classified at U or PG, but all present considered the BBFC's PG classification to be reasonable.

In November, the Panel viewed ***The Innocents*** (15), a historical drama based on real events, in which a French medic working with the Red Cross in Poland in 1945 discovers a number of pregnant nuns in a convent. APCV members discussed various classification considerations, including the distressing yet non-exploitative nature of the rape scene (including the dialogue); the portrayal of suicide; the narrative's lack of any apparent appeal to children and the feeling that the discreet nature of the film actually added to its impact. There was also discussion about the tone of the film, which the sexual violence pervades.

The Panel unanimously agreed with the BBFC's 15 classification for the film.

Membership of the Panel in 2016

Margo Boye-Anawomah
Childcare barrister and family judge

John Carr, OBE
Expert on child protection in relation to new media

Naomi Eisenstadt
Senior Research Fellow, Oxford
University Department of Education

Joe Godwin
Director, BBC Academy & BBC
Midlands

Professor Charlie Lewis
Professor of Family and
Developmental Psychology, Lancaster
University

Andrew Mackereth
Principal, The Parker Academy in
Daventry

Annie Mullins, OBE
Co-Founder, Trust & Safety Group

The Very Revd Professor Martyn Percy
Dean of Christ Church, Oxford

Professor Ann Phoenix
Co-Director, The Thomas Coram
Research Unit

Honor Rhodes, OBE
Director of Strategic Development,
Tavistock Relationships

**The principal officers of
the British Board of Film
Classification in 2016**

President
Patrick Swaffer

Vice Presidents
Alison Hastings
Gerard Lemos

Chief Executive Officer
David Austin

Chief Operating Officer
Dave Barrett

Policy Director
Alexandra Evans

Finance Director
Helen Fowweather

Senior Examiners
Craig Lapper
Murray Perkins

Head of Business Services
Tom Cairns

Head of Communications
Catherine Anderson

Head of Education
Lucy Brett

Council of Management

Chair
Graham Lee

Vice Chair
Maggie Carver

Finance Committee Chair
Jon Teckman

Remuneration Committee Chair
Sonita Alleyne

Members

Alison Hastings
Steve Jaggs
Gerard Lemos

Auditors

Grant Thornton UK LLP
Grant Thornton House
Melton Street
London NW1 2EP

Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC
27 Soho Square
London
W1D 3QR

Solicitors

Goodman Derrick LLP
10 St Bride Street
London
EC4 4AD

Registered Office

3 Soho Square
London
W1D 3HD

Registered number

117289

Report of the Directors for the year ended 31 December 2016

The Directors present their report with the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2016.

Principal activities

The company, which is limited by guarantee, is responsible for the classification of cinema films on behalf of local authorities and, in accordance with the terms of the Video Recordings Act 1984, for the classification of video works. It also classifies, under voluntary self-regulatory services, video content distributed over the internet and commercial and internet content distributed via the UK's mobile networks. Its revenue is derived principally from fees charged to distributors for the classification of their product.

Review of the business

The BBFC continues to focus on providing trusted classification for film and video and online services.

The results for the last financial year are shown in the annexed financial statements. The key financial indicators used by management to monitor performance, and to assess risks, continue to be sales volumes, turnaround times, operating costs and level of cash generated from operations.

Operating turnover for the year has remained steady at £5.4m. There has been a decline in income from DVD classification, which was expected. The decline in submissions seen in the previous nine years is predicted to continue, as the demand for online product increases.

Online submissions continue to rise as anticipated, but the current rate of increase is not expected to offset further declines in DVD income.

Turnaround times for DVD works to be processed were maintained at 7.4 days, demonstrating a 7.5% reduction on our eight-day business target.

Film submissions remain steady, with income of £1.1m, the same as in 2015. It is anticipated that the current level of submissions will continue to be maintained.

The BBFC continues to monitor and review its operational procedures with the aim of providing the best and most cost-effective services to its customers.

The BBFC continues to work in partnership with different industry sectors (for example, VOD platforms, mobile network operators, broadcasters) to develop consistent, transparent, best-practice self-regulatory services which apply trusted BBFC standards for the voluntary space. Although current levels of income for such services are low at 10% of total fee income, this presents an increase of 65% on the previous year and the BBFC expects demand for this line of service to rise significantly in the future.

The requirement for improvements in our IT infrastructure has been budgeted for over 2015 and 2016 and the necessary finances are available to embark on this ambitious project. Over 2017 and 2018 we will be reinvesting in the BBFC's systems and workflow infrastructure. Consequently, we will be able to provide an even more cost-effective service, including to those operating in a self-regulatory landscape, as well as to communicate more effectively with the public.

The BBFC also continues to review its investment policies.

The BBFC has reviewed its funding and liquidity positions and current performance forecasts which indicate that a trading surplus is likely to be generated in 2017. It therefore considers that the Company has adequate resources to continue its operations for the foreseeable future. For this reason, the BBFC continues to adopt the 'going concern' basis in preparing the financial statements.

Financial instruments

The Company's financial instruments at the balance sheet date comprised bank loans, investments, cash and liquid resources. The Company has various other financial instruments such as trade debtors and trade creditors that arise directly from its operations.

Interest rate risk

The company has no interest rate exposure as all long-term debt is at a fixed rate.

Liquidity risk

The company has significant net cash balances as at the balance sheet date.

Foreign currency risk

The company's risk to foreign exchange transactions does not arise as all the company's financial instruments are denominated in sterling.

Borrowing facilities

As at 31st December 2016, the company had undrawn committed borrowing facilities of £536,000 (2015 - £536,000).

Report of the Directors for the year ended 31 December 2016

Directors' responsibilities statement

The Directors are responsible for preparing the Strategic Report, the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'. Under company law the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless satisfied that they a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the surplus or deficit of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies for the Company's financial statements and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The Directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Environment, health and safety

The Company is firmly committed to managing its activities so as to provide the highest level of protection to the environment and to safeguard the health and safety of its employees, customers and the community.

Results

The surplus for the year, after taxation, amounted to £1,173,270 (2015 - £1,247,453).

Directors

The Directors of the Company are the members of the Council of Management together with the President, Vice Presidents and the Secretary.

The Directors who served during the year were:

Patrick Swaffer
President

Alison Hastings
Vice President

Gerard Lemos
Vice President

Graham Lee
(Resigned as Chair 20 April 2016)

Maggie Carver
(Appointed as Chair 20 April 2016)

Jon Teckman
(Appointed as Chair of the Finance Committee 11 October 2016)

Sonita Alleyne
(Appointed as Chair of the Remuneration Committee 20 April 2016)

David Cooke
(Director until 11 March 2016)

Steve Jaggs

David Austin
(Appointed Chief Executive on 11 March 2016)

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the persons who are Directors at the time when this Directors' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Company's auditor is unaware, and
- that the Director has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Director in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Company's auditor is aware of that information.

Auditor

The auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP, will be proposed for reappointment in accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the board and signed on its behalf.

David Austin
Chief Executive

5 April 2017

Independent auditor's report to the Members of British Board of Film Classification

We have audited the financial statements of British Board of Film Classification for the year ended 31 December 2016, which comprise the Statement of comprehensive income, the Statement of financial position, the Statement of cash flows, the Statement of changes in equity and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is the applicable law and the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

This report is made solely to the Company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Directors and Auditor

As explained more fully in the Directors' responsibilities statement on page 3, the Directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and

fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

A description of the scope of an audit of financial statements is provided on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditscopeukprivate.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Company's affairs as at 31 December 2016 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Strategic report and the Directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with those financial statements; and

- the Strategic report and the Directors' report been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report under the Companies Act 2006

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the Company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic report and the Directors' report.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received
- from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Sergio Cardoso

for and on behalf of
Grant Thornton UK LLP
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
London Euston

5 April 2017

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 December 2016

	Note	2016	2015
		£	£
Turnover	4	5,456,941	5,472,923
Operating costs		(4,924,810)	(4,363,395)
Gross profit		532,131	1,109,528
Other operating income		140,359	107,813
Fair value loss on investment property		(49,302)	-
Operating profit		623,188	1,217,341
Gain on financial assets at fair value		575,454	172,150
Interest receivable and similar income	6	209,324	146,460
Interest payable and similar charges	7	(25,450)	(43,993)
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation		1,382,516	1,491,958
Taxation on profit on ordinary activities	11	(209,246)	(244,505)
Profit for the financial year		1,173,270	1,247,453
Total comprehensive income for the year		1,173,270	1,247,453

There were no recognised gains and losses for 2016 or 2015 other than those included in the statement of comprehensive income.

The notes on pages 59 to 69 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2016

	Note	2016	2015
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	12	3,111,842	3,033,561
Investments	14	6,984,340	6,108,886
Investment property	13	3,540,030	3,589,335
		<u>13,636,212</u>	<u>12,731,782</u>
Current assets			
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	15	542,578	749,554
Cash at bank and in hand	16	2,358,303	2,156,712
		<u>2,900,881</u>	<u>2,906,266</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(1,546,464)	(1,600,328)
Net current assets		<u>1,354,417</u>	<u>1,305,938</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		14,990,629	14,037,720
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18	(112,970)	(407,773)
Provisions for liabilities			
Deferred tax	20	(268,788)	(194,346)
		<u>(268,788)</u>	<u>(194,346)</u>
Net assets		<u>14,608,871</u>	<u>13,435,601</u>
Capital and reserves			
Profit and loss account		14,608,871	13,435,601
		<u>14,608,871</u>	<u>13,435,601</u>

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board and were signed on its behalf on 5 April 2017.

M Carver - Director

J S P Teckman - Treasurer

The notes on pages 59 to 69 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended 31 December 2016

	Profit and loss account	Total equity
	£	£
At 1 January 2016	13,435,601	13,435,601
Comprehensive income for the year		
Surplus for the year	1,173,270	1,173,270
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total comprehensive income for the year	1,173,270	1,173,270
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total transactions with owners	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2016	14,608,871	14,608,871
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended 31 December 2015

	Profit and loss account	Total equity
	£	£
At 1 January 2015	12,188,148	12,188,148
Comprehensive income for the year		
Surplus for the year	1,247,453	1,247,453
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total comprehensive income for the year	1,247,453	1,247,453
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total transactions with owners	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2015 Restated	13,435,601	13,435,601
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The notes on pages 59 to 69 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016	2015
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities		
Profit for the financial year	1,173,270	1,247,453
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of tangible assets	161,257	263,377
Interest paid	29,257	43,993
Interest received	(209,324)	(146,460)
Taxation charge	209,246	244,505
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	206,976	(158,196)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(240,221)	25,131
Corporation tax (paid)	(56,082)	(159,916)
Gain on assets	(575,454)	-
Net cash generated from operating activities	698,925	1,359,887
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(276,187)	(210,532)
Sale of tangible fixed assets	(36,650)	-
Purchase of listed investments	(300,000)	(3,920,000)
Sale of listed investments	-	2,804,450
Interest received	209,324	8,572
Dividends received	203,691	137,888
Net cash from investing activities	(199,822)	(1,179,622)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment of loans	(268,255)	(255,886)
Interest paid	(29,257)	(43,993)
Net cash used in financing activities	(297,512)	(299,879)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	201,591	(119,614)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	2,156,712	2,276,326
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of year	2,358,303	2,156,712
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of year comprise:		
Cash at bank and in hand	2,358,303	2,156,712

The notes on pages 59 to 69 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

1. General information

British Board of Film Classification is a company whose liability is limited by guarantee, which is incorporated in England and Wales. Its registered head office is located at 3 Soho Square, London, EC4 4AD.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland and the Companies Act 2006.

The preparation of financial statements in compliance with FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise judgment in applying the company's accounting policies (see note 3).

The following principal accounting policies have been applied:

2.2 Going concern

The directors have prepared the financial statements on the going concern basis having projected cashflow and operating forecasts for the business for a period of at least 12 months from the date of signing these financial statements. In considering the going concern assumption, the directors have also taken into account the balance sheet position at the date of signature of these financial statements.

2.3 Revenue

Revenue is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the company and the revenue can be reliably measured. Revenue is measured as the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes.

2.4 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at ordinal cost. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value of each asset on a straight line basis over its estimated useful life, as follows:

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Moveable furniture and equipment	- 4 years
Computer equipment	- 4 years
Building improvements	- 5 years

Long leasehold property is amortised on a straight line basis over the duration of the lease.

Expenditure on leasehold property and immovable furniture and equipment is fully depreciated in the year of acquisition.

2.5 Investment property

Investment property is carried at fair value and derived from the current market rents and investment property yields for comparable real estate, adjusted if necessary for any difference in the nature, location or condition of the specific asset. No depreciation is provided. Changes in fair value are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

2.6 Valuation of investments

Investments in listed company shares are remeasured to market value at each Statement of financial position date. Gains and losses on remeasurement are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income for the period.

2.7 Debtors

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

2.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature in no more than three months from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

2.9 Financial instruments

The Company only enters into basic financial instruments transactions that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other debtors and creditors, loans from banks and other third parties, loans to related parties and investments in non-puttable ordinary shares.

Debt instruments (other than those wholly repayable or receivable within one year), including loans and other accounts receivable and payable, are initially measured at present value of the future cash flows and subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Debt instruments that are payable or receivable within one year, typically trade debtors and creditors, are measured, initially and subsequently, at the undiscounted amount of the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received. However if the arrangements of a short-term instrument constitute a financing transaction, like the payment of a trade debt deferred beyond normal business terms or financed at a rate of interest that is not a market rate or in case of an out-right short-term loan not at market rate, the financial asset or liability is measured, initially, at the present value of the future cash flow discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument and subsequently at amortised cost.

Investments in non-convertible preference shares and in non-puttable ordinary and preference shares are measured:

- at fair value with changes recognised in the Statement of comprehensive income if the shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably;
- at cost less impairment for all other investments.

Financial assets that are measured at cost and amortised cost are assessed at the end of each reporting period for objective evidence of impairment. If objective evidence of impairment is found, an impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of comprehensive income.

For financial assets measured at amortised cost, the impairment loss is measured as the difference between an asset's carrying amount and the present value of estimated cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate. If a financial asset has a variable interest rate, the discount rate for measuring any impairment loss is the current effective interest rate determined under the contract.

For financial assets measured at cost less impairment, the impairment loss is measured as the difference between an asset's carrying amount and best estimate, which is an approximation of the amount that the Company would receive for the asset if it were to be sold at the reporting date.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset and the net amount reported in the Statement of financial position when there is an enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

2.10 Creditors

Short term creditors are measured at the transaction price. Other financial liabilities, including bank loans, are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2.11 Pensions

Defined contribution pension plan

The Company operates a defined contribution plan for its employees. A defined contribution plan is a pension plan under which the Company pays fixed contributions into a separate entity. Once the contributions have been paid the Company has no further payment obligations.

The contributions are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Income when they fall due. Amounts not paid are shown in accruals as a liability in the Statement of financial position. The assets of the plan are held separately from the Company in independently administered funds.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

2.12 Holiday pay accrual

A liability is recognised to the extent of any unused holiday pay entitlement which is accrued at the Statement of financial position date and carried forward to future periods. This is measured at the undiscounted salary cost of the future holiday entitlement so accrued at the Statement of financial position date.

2.13 Interest income

Interest income is recognised in the Statement of comprehensive income using the effective interest method.

2.14 Provisions for liabilities

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Company a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefit, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the Statement of comprehensive income in the year that the Company becomes aware of the obligation, and are measured at the best estimate at the Statement of financial position date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, taking into account relevant risks and uncertainties.

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Statement of financial position.

2.15 Current and deferred taxation

The tax expense for the year comprises current and deferred tax. Tax is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income, except that a change attributable to an item of income and expense recognised as other comprehensive income or to an item recognised directly in equity is also recognised in other comprehensive income or directly in equity respectively.

The current income tax charge is calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the reporting date in the countries where the company operates and generates income.

Deferred balances are recognised in respect of all timing differences that have originated but not reversed by the Statement of financial position date, except that:

- The recognition of deferred tax assets is limited to the extent that it is probable that they will be recovered against the reversal of deferred tax liabilities or other future taxable profits; and
- Any deferred tax balances are reversed if and when all conditions for retaining associated tax allowances have been met.

3. Judgements in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation uncertainty

Management consider the only key judgement to be in relation to the market value of property.

4. Turnover

The turnover and operating surplus are attributable to the principal activity of the company. The entire turnover in both periods is attributable to geographical areas within the United Kingdom.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016	2015
	£	£
5 Other operating income		
Income from education seminars	4,250	-
Net rents receivable	136,109	107,813
	<u>140,359</u>	<u>107,813</u>
6 Interest receivable		
Other interest receivable	209,324	146,460
	<u>209,324</u>	<u>146,460</u>
7 Interest payable and similar charges		
Interest on loan repayable	25,450	43,993
	<u>25,450</u>	<u>43,993</u>
8 Employees		
Staff costs, including directors' remuneration, were as follows:		
Wages and salaries (including severance pay)	3,027,732	2,470,545
Social security costs	287,093	282,697
Cost of defined contribution scheme	190,888	175,034
	<u>3,505,713</u>	<u>2,928,276</u>

The average monthly number of employees, including the directors, during the year was as follows:

	2016	2015
	No.	No.
Non-executive directors	5	5
Presidential team	3	3
Management	5	5
Administration	8	9
Operations	31	33
	<u>52</u>	<u>55</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016	2015
	£	£
9 Directors' remuneration		
Directors' emoluments	335,092	355,382
Company contributions to defined contribution pension schemes	37,353	11,092
	372,445	366,474

During the year retirement benefits were accruing to 3 directors (2015 - 5) in respect of defined contribution pension schemes.

The highest paid directors received remuneration of £116,405 (2015 - £183,495).

10 Operating profit

The operating surplus is stated after charging:

Directors' remuneration	372,445	366,474
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	161,256	-
Audit remuneration - audit	16,250	16,000
Audit remuneration - non-audit	17,200	14,500
Fees payable to the Company's auditor and its associates for the audit of the company's annual accounts	-	3,500

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016	2015
	£	£
11 Taxation		
Corporation tax		
Current tax on surplus for the year	147,613	246,290
Adjustments in respect of previous periods	(12,809)	755
Total current tax	134,804	247,045
Deferred tax		
Origination and reversal of timing differences	82,412	1,240
Adjustments in respect of prior periods	(7,970)	-
Adjustments in respect of FRS 102	-	(3,780)
Total deferred tax	74,442	(2,540)
Taxation on surplus on ordinary activities	209,246	244,505
Factors affecting tax charge for the year		
The tax assessed for the year is lower than (2015 - lower than) the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 20% (2015 - 20.25%). The differences are explained below:		
Surplus on ordinary activities before tax	1,382,516	1,491,958
Surplus on ordinary activities multiplied by standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 20% (2015 - 20.25%)	276,503	302,070
Effects of:		
Expenses not deductible for tax purposes	8,321	7,719
Depreciation on ineligible assets	28,868	25,187
Marginal relief	-	(174)
Adjustments to tax charge in respect of previous periods	(20,779)	755
Non-taxable income	(28,267)	(27,918)
Investment gains/losses not taxable	(19,590)	(63,478)
Other timing differences	(13,201)	15,090
Differences in tax rates	(22,609)	(14,746)
Total tax charge for the year	209,246	244,505

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Long leasehold property	Long leasehold property expenditure	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost or valuation				
At 1 January 2016	3,137,264	299,822	3,769,651	7,206,737
Additions	-	241,151	35,036	276,187
Disposals	-	(158,209)	(1,434,673)	(1,592,882)
Transfers between classes	-	(141,613)	141,613	-
	<u>3,137,264</u>	<u>241,151</u>	<u>2,511,627</u>	<u>5,890,042</u>
At 31 December 2016	3,137,264	241,151	2,511,627	5,890,042
Depreciation				
At 1 January 2016	317,909	299,822	3,555,445	4,173,176
Charge for the period on owned assets	25,098	43,729	92,429	161,256
Disposals	-	(158,209)	(1,398,023)	(1,556,232)
Transfers between classes	-	(141,613)	141,613	-
	<u>343,007</u>	<u>43,729</u>	<u>2,391,464</u>	<u>2,778,200</u>
At 31 December 2016	343,007	43,729	2,391,464	2,778,200
Net book value				
At 31 December 2016	2,794,257	197,422	120,163	3,111,842
At 31 December 2015	2,819,355	-	214,206	3,033,561

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

13 Investment property	Long term leasehold investment property
	£
Valuation	
At 1 January 2016	3,589,335
Deficit on revaluation	(49,305)
	<hr/>
At 31 December 2016	3,540,030
	<hr/>

The 2016 valuations were made by Reid Rose Gregory, a firm of chartered surveyors, on an open market value for existing use basis.

14 Fixed asset investments	Listed investments
	£
Cost or valuation	
At 1 January 2016	6,108,886
Additions	300,000
Revaluations	575,455
	<hr/>
At 31 December 2016	6,984,341
	<hr/>
Net book value	
At 31 December 2016	6,984,341
	<hr/>
At 31 December 2015	6,108,886
	<hr/>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016	2015
	£	£
15 Debtors		
Trade debtors	310,057	373,996
Other debtors	74,126	194,144
Prepayments and accrued income	95,425	118,444
Deferred taxation	62,970	62,970
	<u>542,578</u>	<u>749,554</u>
16 Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>2,358,303</u>	<u>2,156,712</u>
17 Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year		
Bank loans	276,193	255,855
Trade creditors	54,320	32,745
Corporation tax	147,613	256,059
Taxation and social security	213,933	225,550
Other creditors	20,530	-
Other creditors and accruals	833,875	830,119
	<u>1,546,464</u>	<u>1,600,328</u>
18 Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year		
Bank loans	<u>112,970</u>	<u>407,773</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016	2015
	£	£
19 Bank loans		
Analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:		
Amounts falling due within one year		
Bank loans	276,193	255,855
	<u>276,193</u>	<u>255,855</u>
Amounts falling due 1-2 years		
Bank loans	112,970	255,855
	<u>112,970</u>	<u>255,855</u>
Amounts falling due 2-5 years		
Bank loans	-	151,919
	<u>-</u>	<u>151,919</u>
20 Deferred taxation		
At beginning of year	(131,376)	(133,916)
Charged to the profit or loss	(74,442)	2,540
At end of year	<u>(205,818)</u>	<u>(131,376)</u>
The provision for deferred taxation is made up as follows:		
Provisions b/fwd	(131,376)	(133,916)
Prior year deferred tax adjustment	7,970	-
Current year charge at 18% (PY 20%)	(82,412)	2,540
	<u>(205,818)</u>	<u>(131,376)</u>
Comprising:		
Asset	62,970	62,970
Liability	(268,788)	(194,346)
	<u>(205,818)</u>	<u>(131,376)</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

21 Reserves

Profit and loss account

Includes all current and prior period retained surplus and losses.

22 Capital commitments

The company had no capital commitments at 31 December 2016 (2015: £NIL).

23 Pension commitments

The company operates a defined contribution scheme to provide retirement benefits for staff. The total pension charge for the year was £190,888 (2015: £175,034).

24 Operating lease commitments

At 31 December 2016 the Company had future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2016	2015
	£	£
Operating leases which expire:		
Not later than 1 year	2,895	2,793
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	1,382	1,382
Later than 5 years	37,500	37,500
	<hr/> 41,777 <hr/>	<hr/> 41,675 <hr/>

25 Company status

The company is limited by guarantee and is under the control of its members. The liability of the members is limited to £1 each, in the event of the company being wound up.

26 Related party transactions

There were no transactions with related parties during the year (2015: £nil).

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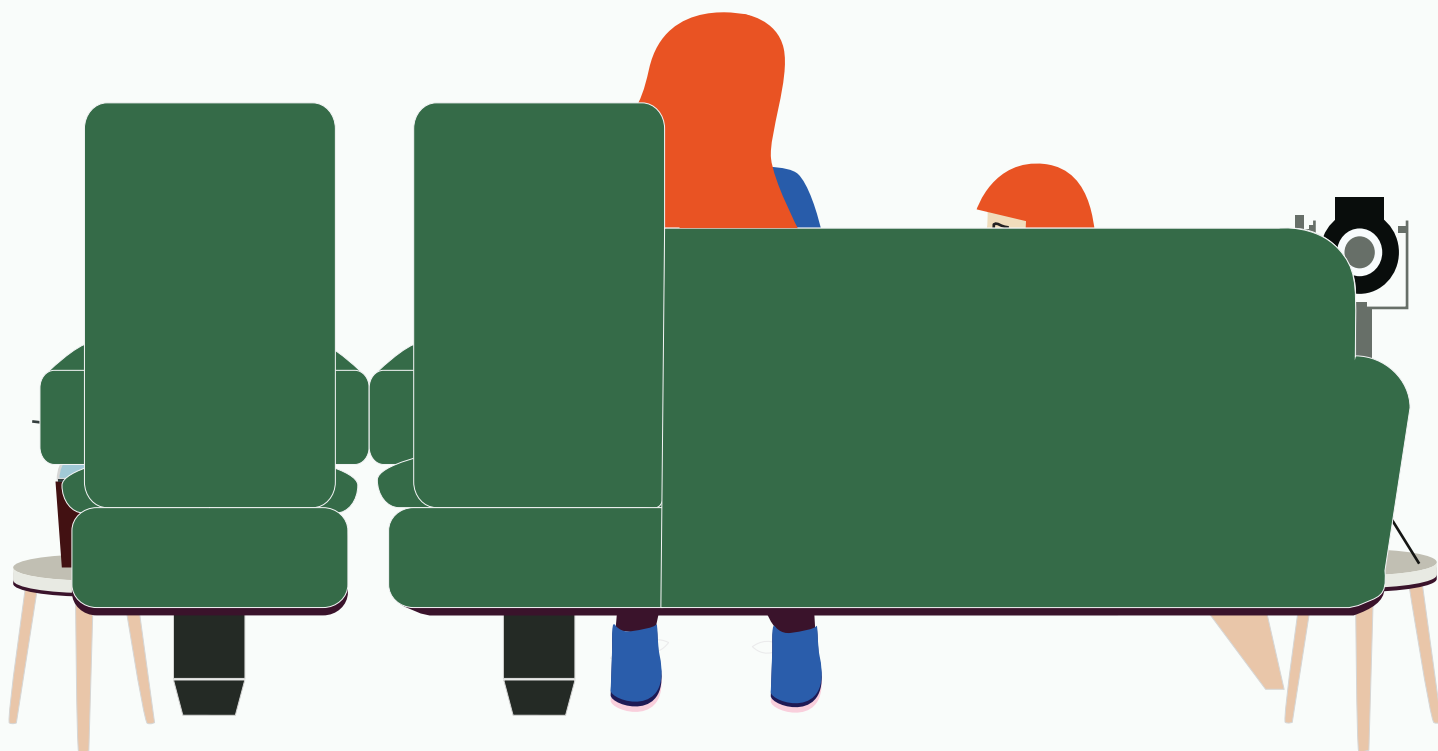


mild slapstick violence

Parental Guidance. General viewing, but some scenes may be unsuitable for young children

Patrice Swaffter
President

David Austin
Chief Executive



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