

BBFC Board of Classification Meeting

Monday 7 November 2022

Present

Natasha Kaplinsky	President
Murphy Cobbing	Vice President
Kamlesh Patel	Vice President
David Austin	Chief Executive
Sarah Peacock	Compliance & Education Manager (for items 3 and 4)
David Hyman	Compliance Officer (for item 3)
Faye Harcourt	Director, Marketing and Outreach (for item 4)
Matt Tindall	Senior Policy Officer (minutes)

Apologies

Dave Barrett	Deputy Chief Executive
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Minutes of the previous meeting

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Matters arising

2. Natasha welcomed attendees to the meeting, and expressed how honoured and excited she is to be starting in the role of BBFC President.

Recent classification decisions

3. The Board discussed LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER, a new adaptation of D.H. Lawrence's novel in which a woman conducts an affair with her gamekeeper. The film contains several scenes of strong sex, including brief genital nudity and a scene of rough sex initiated by Lady Chatterley. David H explained that the film was considered 'borderline 15/18' by the viewing team and that the most challenging aspect was the sheer quantity of sex rather than any individual scene. The film was referred to the Compliance Managers, who ultimately determined it could be classified 15 with the ratings info 'strong sex, nudity, language'. Given recent precedent, including the series NORMAL PEOPLE, and the narrative's focus on a positive, consensual and tender relationship, the Board agreed that the film was defensible within the BBFC's Classification Guidelines at 15.

4. The Board next discussed the classification of period drama THE WONDER. Set in Ireland in the 1860s, the film tells the story of a girl who stops eating but remains miraculously healthy. Rated 15, the film carries the relatively uncommon ratings info 'distressing scenes', which David H explained covers a range of issues which are described in greater detail in the long ratings info. The viewing team was conscious that a key theme present in the work was not revealed until some way into the narrative and could be considered a major plot spoiler if it appeared on the cinema black card. The Board supported this approach, and agreed that the formulation 'distressing scenes' provided sufficient guidance as to the tone and content of the work while concealing certain plot developments for those who would prefer not to know.

Guidelines research

5. Faye and Sarah presented a proposal for our forthcoming guidelines research. Every four to five years, the BBFC commissions a major consultation exercise during which we speak to more than 10,000 members of the public to seek their views on key classification issues. Based on the findings of these consultations, we redraft our Classification Guidelines to ensure they continue to reflect the views of audiences in the UK. The project will run throughout 2023, with the new Classification Guidelines being published in 2024.

AOB

6. There was no other business.

Date of next meeting: 30 November 2022