



bbfc

Age Ratings You Trust

British Board of Film Classification

Annual Report and Accounts 2017

British Board of Film Classification Annual Report and Accounts

1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017

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

© British Board of Film Classification copyright 2018

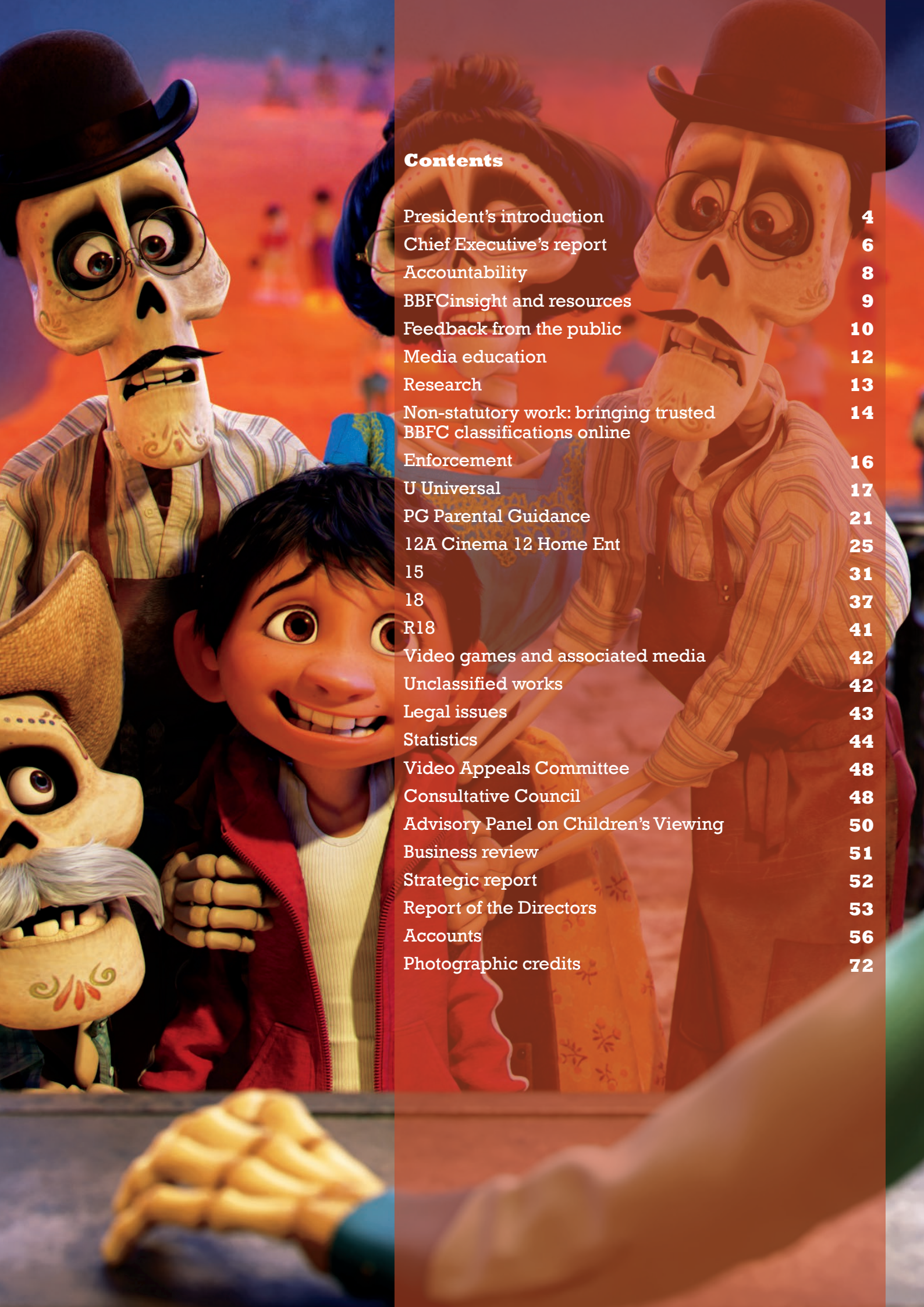
The text of this document (this excludes, where present, the Royal Arms and all departmental or agency logos) may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is reproduced accurately and not in a misleading context.

The material must be acknowledged as © British Board of Film Classification copyright and the document title specified. Where third party material has been identified, permission from the respective copyright holder must be sought.

Any enquiries related to this publication should be sent to us at feedback@bbfc.co.uk

You can download this publication from www.bbfc.co.uk

British Board of Film Classification, 3 Soho Square, London, W1D 3HD www.bbfc.co.uk



Contents

President's introduction	4
Chief Executive's report	6
Accountability	8
BBFCinsight and resources	9
Feedback from the public	10
Media education	12
Research	13
Non-statutory work: bringing trusted BBFC classifications online	14
Enforcement	16
U Universal	17
PG Parental Guidance	21
12A Cinema 12 Home Ent	25
15	31
18	37
R18	41
Video games and associated media	42
Unclassified works	42
Legal issues	43
Statistics	44
Video Appeals Committee	48
Consultative Council	48
Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing	50
Business review	51
Strategic report	52
Report of the Directors	53
Accounts	56
Photographic credits	72

President's introduction



*Patrick Swaffer
- President*

2017 was a remarkable year. How the public watches film and video content has continued to evolve, with an acceleration in convergence around our offline and online lives. This change particularly impacts children. It means that families more than ever need the right tools to ensure that what they view is age appropriate. Coupled with the UK Government's designation of the BBFC as the Age-Verification Regulator under the Digital Economy Act 2017, it means that in my introduction this year, I will focus on the increasingly important contribution the BBFC is making to child online protection and helping families choose online film and video content well.

Child online protection

The BBFC remains at the heart of child online protection policy

and good practice both in the UK and beyond. As a member of the Executive Board of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS), the BBFC contributed to the Government's Internet Safety Strategy Green Paper and participated in the European Commission's Alliance to Better Protect Minors Online.

In October, we took part in the Child Dignity in the Digital World Congress in Rome. This major international gathering brought together academic experts, technology industry leaders, leaders of civil society and religious faiths, and government representatives (including the British Government) to discuss, agree and take forward measures to protect child dignity in the digital world.

Once again we supported Safer Internet Day on 7 February and

chaired one of the key panels at the 2017 Digital Families Conference in October, hosted by The Parent Zone and Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP).

The BBFC will continue to share its good practice and collaborate internationally with organisations whose primary aims are to protect children and empower consumers through classification decisions, content information and education outreach.

Consistent application of BBFC classification standards online

In partnership with online platforms, in 2017 the BBFC continued to look at how we can ensure more consistent use of our classifications and advice for the benefit of British families. We will take this work forward into 2018. We believe that the BBFC system of

classification meets the key criteria for a regulatory system to improve child safety online. This includes having:

- child protection at the core
- effective labelling of content so that standards are trusted and understood and reflect the sensitivities and expectations of the British public, and that the symbols used are recognisable
- broad coverage
- a low cost, efficient, flexible and innovative service that can keep pace with technological change and not be burdensome to industry

The BBFC is supporting the goals of the Government's Internet Safety Strategy by promoting initiatives that help to bring offline protections online, in accordance with public expectations. These initiatives include our work as the independent regulator, on a voluntary, best-practice basis, of content delivered via the UK's four mobile networks (EE, O2, Three and Vodafone), ensuring that content which would be classified 18 or R18 by the BBFC is placed behind adult filters on all non-age-verified devices.

In addition, in recognition of the fact that user-generated content (UGC) is an increasingly significant source of content online, the BBFC and the Dutch regulator, NICAM, have developed You Rate It (YouRI). This tool enables crowd-sourced, bespoke national age classifications and content advice for UGC and includes a 'report abuse' function. A successful pilot project with the Italian media company Mediaset has been completed. The BBFC believes YouRI should be tested further in the UK and beyond with industry partners, and plans to seek support for a pilot.

Age verification and child protection

The Government's Internet Strategy Green Paper points out, 'Today's is the first generation of children who are learning about relationships and sex in an online world'. It also acknowledges that problems '...like pornography and bullying have challenged previous generations. But the Internet has amplified the risks'. The BBFC agrees with this analysis and supports the conclusions of the UKCCIS Evidence Group literature review published alongside the Green Paper including that 'Pornography is the top content-related concern for children.'

The regulation, by the BBFC, of pornography offline is well-established and largely effective. However, online the situation is quite different. The BBFC has therefore accepted the Government's designation as the Age-Verification Regulator under the Digital Economy Act. This new regulatory regime imposes requirements on commercial pornographic services to impose age-verification controls to help to prevent children accessing and stumbling across pornographic content online. It is therefore a key component of the BBFC's mission to protect children and preparation for its implementation will be a key part of our work in 2018.

Education outreach

The BBFC does not focus solely on children. As part of our commitment to working with vulnerable adults, the BBFC's Education Team worked this year with librarians working in three of Her Majesty's Prisons to help run film clubs with inmates, as well as at a community public library near the prisons. Following the positive response from prisoners, staff and governors, we will continue to look for new opportunities to work with these and other vulnerable adults.

Hails and farewells

I should like to welcome Lesley Mackenzie and Merion Alcock as new members of the Council of Management.

Maggie Carver, our current chairperson of the Council of Management and I, want to express our deep gratitude, thanks and farewell to Graham Lee, former chairperson for twelve years of dedication and hard work, and to Steve Jaggs, both of whom stepped down from the Council of Management in April 2017. Graham and Steve oversaw significant changes at the BBFC, including in particular the growth of our online regulatory partnerships that provide families with trusted advice, whenever, however and wherever they watch content.



Alison Hastings - Vice President



Gerard Lemos - Vice President



David Austin -
Chief Executive

I am delighted to present the 2017 BBFC Annual Report and Accounts.

Central to the BBFC's core mission is ensuring we remain the trusted guide across multiple platforms to help families and children throughout the UK choose well. In the last year, we have progressed this mission with a range of initiatives and we plan to build on this success over 2018.

Helping the UK public to choose well

The BBFC remains 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. We have been classifying film in the UK for over 100 years, video for over 30 years and online content for 10 years. The BBFC's success is based on reflecting the views of people right across the country, being a valued source

of information for parents and an efficient and respected regulator for industry.

In late 2017, we began our fifth Classification Guidelines consultation. This consultation is conducted every four to five years, with more than 10,000 members of the UK public taking part. It pays particular attention to changes in public taste, attitudes, concerns and changes in the law. It is intended to complement our accumulated experience over many years. The Classification Guidelines, our standards and policies also take into account new evidence from other research and expert sources. This consultation is our public mandate for all the classification decisions we make and is vitally important to ensure that we accurately reflect the British public's views on age-appropriate content. We will publish the revised Classification Guidelines in early 2019, setting out the reasoning

behind any amendments based on the consultation.

IT infrastructure for fast, efficient service

Following last year's commitment to invest in our IT infrastructure, 2017 saw us launch an ambitious two-year project to overhaul the technology we use. With the project being funded entirely from reserves that we had built up for this purpose over the last two to three years, we aim to deliver a step change in how we operate by providing leading-edge, cloud-based systems and processes that will transform our operation and support future business needs. Delivering a 30% reduction in turnaround time is a key project objective and we are already working collaboratively with industry partners to achieve it. We plan to launch the new system in the second half of 2019 and look forward to delivering even better cost-effective services to our broad customer base.

Age-verification regulation to protect children online

2017 saw the passing into law of The Digital Economy Act (DEA). Under this innovative law that is attracting international attention from several countries looking to protect children from inappropriate pornographic content, all providers of online commercial pornographic material accessible in the UK will be required to carry age-verification arrangements for UK consumers to ensure that their content is not normally accessible to children. Those providers will also not be able to carry extreme pornography, as defined in the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008, on its UK services. This legislation is an important step in making the internet a safer place for children and is a cornerstone of the Government's Internet Safety Strategy.

The Government declared its intention to designate the BBFC as the Age-Verification Regulator under the DEA because of our acknowledged expertise in assessing and classifying content, including pornographic content, and our longstanding experience of online regulation to protect children from potentially harmful content. When the law comes into force, adults will be required to demonstrate that they are 18 or over before accessing online pornography. As the regulator, the BBFC will take a proportionate approach to its new regulatory role and will focus on the sites that are most frequently visited in the UK.

Over 2017, in preparation for our proposed new role (formal designation itself took place in February 2018), we actively engaged with the adult industry to ensure adult content providers understand the new law and how they may comply with the age-verification requirements. We also engaged with age-verification providers, Internet Service Providers, Mobile Network Operators, Payment Service Providers and Ancillary Service Providers to make them aware of the implications of the new regulatory regime. A BBFC Age-Verification Charities Working Group held its inaugural meeting in 2017. This group brings together

many of the UK's leading child protection charities including Barnardo's, Childnet, Children's Charities Coalition on Internet Safety, Internet Matters, the NSPCC, The Parent Zone and the PSHE Association. It will help inform the BBFC's evidence-based approach and will assist with monitoring the impact of the legislation on child protection.

Public engagement and education outreach

In 2017, we began a major review of the way we communicate with the public. As part of this review, we conducted research into the way children and families consume media. Against the backdrop of a significant shift in the public's viewing habits, with the continued growth in digital online services within the home, parents and children need us more than ever. The desire among families for consistency between offline and online classifications and content advice remains strong. However, trusted BBFC advice that helps families choose well is not always easy to find. We must work harder, including in partnership with industry, to give British families the guidance they need and deserve.

Educators tell us the same thing. Through our BBFC Education resources and outreach programme, we work with education professionals throughout the UK to help children and young people choose content that is right for them and avoid content that is not. For example, in partnership with the BBFC, the PSHE Association created – and will deploy in 2018 – two quality-assured, PSHE Association-accredited lesson plans, with guidance for teachers on BBFC classifications. Available online or as a download, this resource will assist teachers and children to explore the social aspects of classifications, as well as how to make good viewing choices.

In 2017, our educational outreach team held a range of seminars as part of the Into Film Festival. This UK-wide celebration of film and education attracted more than 500,000 children and their educators, with 3000 screenings and events

across 600 venues throughout the UK. The BBFC's involvement in the festival is very much about helping the next generation realise the benefits of making positive and informed choices.

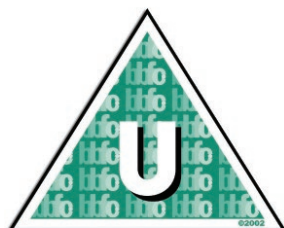
For the seventh year in succession, the BBFC has proudly sponsored the Childnet Film Competition. Open to all UK schools and youth organisations, this annual competition invites young people aged 7-18 to take on the challenge of creating a short film about internet safety. I took part in the judging panel which was looking for films that were the most creative, inspiring and contained a clear message. The three selected finalists from both the primary and secondary age categories were invited to a screening at London's BFI where I and others presented the winning teams with prizes for their school or youth organisation to reward their creative achievements.

It only remains for me to thank the Board of Classification and the Council of Management for their advice and support. I would also like to thank the Consultative Council and Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing for their expertise and invaluable counsel. And last but by no means least, I would like to thank the BBFC management and staff for their hard work and tireless commitment to the BBFC's mission to protect children and vulnerable adults and to help families choose well.

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 during 2017 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. This service is called BBFCinsight. BBFCinsight is published on our websites and our free mobile and tablet app. 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 helps viewers, in particular parents, make informed decisions about what they and their family watch at the cinema, on DVD/Blu-ray or on Video on Demand (VoD) platforms or services. The BBFC website provides information about all cinema films, DVD/Blu-ray and VoD films and series classified by the BBFC. Parents wishing to look at BBFCinsight with their younger children can find child-friendly BBFCinsight for films classified at U, PG and 12A on the BBFC's website for children (cbbfc.co.uk).

All BBFC film classifications come with BBFCinsight, a summary sentence and, since Autumn 2007, a longer explanation about why a film received a particular classification, plus further details about a film that parents have told us they like to be aware of, such as examples of mild bad language or themes which may upset some children, including divorce and bereavement. Short BBFCinsight is printed on DVD and Blu-ray packaging and on the theatrical BBFC black card shown before a film at the cinema. More detailed BBFCinsight for films is available on the BBFC website and the BBFC iPhone, Android and tablet apps.

In addition to classifying content for cinema and home entertainment, the BBFC is also responsible for the Classification Framework used by Mobile Network Operators to define content that is unsuitable for customers under the age of 18. The Classification Framework has been developed using the BBFC's Classification Guidelines and is used to calibrate the filters used by the Mobile Network Operators to restrict access to internet content via mobile networks by those under 18 to the maximum extent technically possible. The BBFC publishes quarterly reports on any sites reported as over-blocked or under-blocked by Mobile Network Operators.

The BBFC took part in Safer Internet Day in 2017 by promoting resources for understanding and finding out about classifications for online video content via the BBFC's new tablet app, BBFCinsight information and new Rate-A-Trailer resources available on the CBBFC website

for children. Rate-A-Trailer aims to help children understand BBFC classifications and Classification Guidelines, while child-friendly BBFCinsight on CBBFC lets children find out about classification issues in a film and choose content that is suitable for them.

Age Ratings You Trust

- Films
- Latest decisions
- Podcasts
- About us

< Back

Details BBFCinsight Synopsis & Cast ★ Favourite ↑ Share

GOODBYE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN

2017

PG

Duration: 103 mins (approx)
Release date: 26 February, 2018

mild war violence

Watch trailer

BBFCinsight

GOODBYE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN is a biopic about the relationship between author A.A. Milne and his son, who inspired the Winnie the Pooh stories.

Violence
There are brief flashbacks to the battlefields of the First World War in which dead bodies are glimpsed. They are partially hidden in the low light and mud, and there is no strong injury detail. The images inform Milne's behaviour in the narrative, as he suffers from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder following his service.

A scene of school bullying depicts a young boy being pushed down a flight of stairs while people chant a mocking rhyme. The work does not condone or endorse the bullies' behaviour.

Occasional use of very mild bad language includes 'damn', 'hell' and 'God'. There is infrequent very mild innuendo.

Synopsis & Cast

Synopsis
GOODBYE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN is a biopic about the relationship between author A.A. Milne and his son, who inspired the Winnie the Pooh stories.

Distributors: Twentieth Century Fox Home Ent., 20th Century Fox Film Co. Ltd

Directors: Simon Curtis

Cast: Domhnall Gleeson, Margot Robbie, Kelly Macdonald, Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Nico Miral...

Related decisions

GOODBYE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN
[Trailer 1]
FilmTrailer (13/06/2017) 1m 31s

GOODBYE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN
[Trailer 2]
FilmTrailer (25/07/2017) 0m 40s

Feedback from the public



The BBFC generally receives a relatively small number of complaints about its classification decisions, and this was particularly true in 2017, with only 262 complaints received compared to 371 the previous year. 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.

Logan generated the largest amount of public feedback in 2017, with twenty complaints received. This is a relatively small number compared to films in previous years, some of which have attracted between forty and fifty complaints. Members of the public who wrote in felt that the film's violence was too strong for a 15 classification and would have been more appropriately placed at 18. However, the BBFC Classification Guidelines permit strong violence at 15 provided it does not dwell on

the infliction of pain or injury. While the violence in **Logan** is strong and frequently bloody, it is also rapidly edited with a focus on action rather than sadism. The film's fantastical setting and super-powered central character further distances the violence from reality, allowing the issue to be acceptable at 15.

Padmaavat is a Hindi-language drama in which a Sultan leads an invasion to capture a Rajput queen. It was submitted under an alternative title in November 2017 and classified 12A. Following media and public feedback to the distributor of the film, a new version was submitted for classification in January 2018.

This version of the film is also classified 12A. In 2017 ten people complained to the BBFC that the film misrepresented a revered figure in India. The BBFC fulfils its role by providing age classifications and publishing advice (BBFCinsight) for individual films and videos. We do this without infringing the right of adults to choose what they view provided that it remains within UK law and is not potentially harmful. We seek to ensure that films and videos reach the widest audience that is appropriate for their theme and treatment. There is nothing in **Padmaavat** that is unacceptable at the 12A category.

Atomic Blonde attracted eight complaints highlighting the film's violence and to a lesser extent its sexual content and language. There are frequent scenes of strong violence in the film, including people being shot, resulting in large spurts of blood into the air or onto walls, and gruelling fist fights. However, the violence is presented in a stylised manner, without dwelling on the infliction of pain or violence in a manner that would demand an 18 classification.

Sexual activity may also be portrayed at 15, but usually without strong detail. The level of detail depicted in the **Atomic Blonde** sex scene means that the scene, in isolation, sits at the lower end of the 15 classification.

Regarding language, the Guidelines state that very strong language may be permitted 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. Very strong language ('c**t') is used just once in **Atomic Blonde**, and is therefore acceptable at 15.



- 1 *Padmaavat* (12A)
- 2 *Atomic Blonde* (15)
- 3 *Kingsman: The Golden Circle* (15)
- 4 *Kong: Skull Island* (12A)



Kingsman: The Golden Circle also attracted eight complaints in 2017, most focused on the film's sexual content. However, given the comic context of the scenes in question and the lack of strong detail this content is acceptable at 15. The Guidelines state that there may also be strong verbal references to sexual behaviour at 15, but the strongest references are unlikely to be acceptable unless justified by context.

One complainant took issue with a scene of cannibalism in which a man is required to eat a burger as part of an initiation. Before he does so the camera pans to a pair of clothed legs sticking out from the top of a mincing machine, and then to a pile of minced meat. Considering the lack of detail and the scene's comic tone, this content is acceptable at 15.

Kong: Skull Island received six complaints. Complainants felt that the language in the film was too

strong for a 12A classification, with some also voicing concerns about the violence. Infrequent strong language is permitted at 12A and occurs only once during **Kong: Skull Island**, with a second instance being interrupted before the word can be completed. The film's violence is similarly acceptable at 12A given its fantastical nature, involving a giant ape and large prehistoric creatures.

Five members of the public complained about the violence in **Alien: Covenant**, feeling that it would have been more appropriately classified 18. Though there are moments of strong bloody violence in the film, these do not dwell on the infliction of pain or injury in such a way that would require an 18 classification. Context is central to the question of acceptability of film and video content. When considering context, we take into account issues such as public expectation in general and the expectations of a work's audience

in particular, as well as other factors such as the setting (historical, fantasy, realistic, contemporary) and tone. The violence in **Alien: Covenant** is acceptable at 15 in terms of detail and occurs in the context of a well-known science fiction franchise with which its audience is likely to be familiar.

Ghost in the Shell generated five complaints from viewers who considered the violence too strong for a 12A classification. Although there are frequent violent scenes, there is no focus on injury detail and the film's action sequences sit within a clear science fiction context. Accordingly, they are not strong enough to warrant a 15 classification.

The BBFC also received five complaints about **It** from members of the public concerned that the film's horror elements were too strong for 15. The Classification Guidelines allow for strong threat and horror at 15, though a sustained focus on sadistic or sexual threat is unlikely to be acceptable. In the film there are several frightening scenes in which characters are menaced by various monstrous figures, including a killer clown. However, there is no sadistic or sexual component to these scenes and the film's fantastical elements distance it from reality. Furthermore, the work is based on a popular novel which had previously been adapted for the screen, and therefore its content was deemed unlikely to confound the expectations of its audience at 15.



Media education

Our education team used a combination of approaches to our outreach work in 2017. The aim was to provide relevant support and information for learners and the public, reaching a wide range of people, and exploring avenues for connecting with new audiences, whilst providing a feedback loop from the public direct to our staff.

Our staff delivered 137 education sessions to just over 8,000 people across all four nations of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland over the year, reaching viewers of different ages, and a wide range of geographical locations.

These included face-to-face visits, interviews and lectures and large-scale events ensuring feedback from young people and their teachers and parents. We spoke to learners in formal education, from primary and secondary schools and universities, and other groups including industry trainees, home-educated pupils, enthusiasts, filmmakers, media producers, charity staff and other regulators. Teenagers, especially secondary school and university students, made up the majority of our audiences in 2017, accounting for two thirds of our reach.

With younger audiences in particular, our focus was on encouraging and exploring viewing decisions on- and offline. Building on good practice, we ran sessions with three primary schools looking at our rubric for classification, and the strategies children themselves use to make the best possible choices about what they watch. This will inform the presentations and resources we create for younger audiences in 2018.

We delivered 88 sessions at external UK locations in 2017. Given the huge value placed on our external visits programme by schools and colleges, these trips continued to make up the majority of our face-to-face outreach work.

There was increased interest from all audiences in hearing about our non-statutory work, including our classifications for VoD content, alongside recent classification decisions for cinema and packaged

media. Several groups also asked about our pilot scheme for classifying music videos online, our content information, and our research. We modified presentation materials and clips to reflect these growing areas. There was strong interest in our public consultation process too, and audiences of all ages were enthusiastic about our commitment to listening to the public, including teenagers, and adapting our Classification Guidelines to reflect shifts in public opinion.

We continued to promote remote learning events actively, and spoke to groups in Bangor (Northern Ireland), Norwich, Liverpool, Cardiff, Bargoed, Manchester, Glasgow and Omagh over Skype in 2017. The sessions appeal to university and BFI Academy audiences in particular.

Our in-house seminars remained popular, although there was a decline in take-up following changes in the Media Studies and Film Studies syllabuses, and concerns around terror threat levels.

We continued to work with industry and education partners including charities, festivals and conferences. This included supporting the Department of Education Character Awards, giving speeches at the Media Live! Conference in Paris, and the final Communications and Culture A Level conference. We also hosted sessions at the Shetland Screenplay Film Festival in Lerwick and with local schools on the islands, the Cinemagic Film Festival in Northern Ireland, and the BFI Summer School in London.

Our continuing collaboration with Into Film enjoyed another successful year: during their 2017 Into Film Festival (IFF) we travelled to 18 locations in England, Scotland and Wales, introducing 23 film screenings and seminars. Whilst in Scotland for IFF we spoke at a public session for the Edinburgh Film House. We repeated the popular horror workshops launched in 2016, adding in two mornings focusing on classification issues in documentaries. Our staff spoke to almost 3,000 people, including learners aged between



five and nineteen years old and their teachers, as well as home-educated students.

Engaging with the next generation of filmmakers and working with industry remains important. We spoke at a staff briefing for Universal and worked with aspiring filmmakers at the Eastside Film Project in Hackney, including a workshop with young women looking at careers in media production. We also spoke to Film Exhibition, Distribution and Sales Trainees, NFTS students, and several regional BFI Academies.

In direct response to requests from parents, teachers and students we published long BBFCinsight for several older film titles and created online resources, including podcasts, to support the latest exam specifications. New case studies included **Kingsman: The Secret Service**, requested by teachers at the BFI Media Conference, where we also championed our suite of classroom and online resources.

In 2017, we sent out 1,134 free posters for classrooms (897 secondary school posters, 219 primary school posters and 18 posters about 12A).

To support Safer Internet Day we updated the interactive element of our children's website CBBFC to add further Rate-A-Trailer exercises on recent titles. CBBFC allows children to find out about the classification issues, and directs adults to our main website and free phone app.

We collated the findings of the first six iterations of our annual student survey, in which we ask teenagers about recent cinema classifications, to feed them into the next public consultation on the BBFC Classification Guidelines.

1 John Wick:
Chapter 2 (15)

The BBFC carries out regular research projects to ensure that classifications reflect the opinions and expectations of the UK public.

2017 saw the receipt of our tendered research into how families with young children use BBFC classifications in making their viewing decisions. This research project provided insights into family viewing and rulemaking for the home and cinema, and looked at how children consider issues around classification.

The research on families and young children will feed directly into the planning stages of the public consultation that forms the bedrock of our BBFC Classification Guidelines. We carry out the BBFC Classification Guidelines research 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, canvassed the views of more than 10,000 members of the public from across the UK, including, for the first time, groups of teenagers.

The insights the research generated fed directly into the publication of our current Guidelines, which came into force on 24 February 2014.

The research process for our next set of BBFC Guidelines began at the end of 2017, with the full consultation beginning in the first quarter of 2018. We will publish the associated research and the revised BBFC Classification Guidelines in early 2019.



1

Non-statutory work: bringing trusted BBFC classifications online

The BBFC remains committed to helping the UK public choose well regardless of how and where they consume film, TV and other media content. We do this through partnerships across the film, TV, mobile and media industries to develop innovative, self-regulatory solutions. Details of these initiatives that ran throughout 2017 are set out below.

Working with Video on Demand services 2017

In 2017 Video On Demand services continued to innovate and to change how consumers in the UK access film and TV content. As a result, online video subscription services such as Netflix, Amazon and NowTV continued to grow.

The three big Subscription VoD (SVoD) services have continued their commitment to TV content, and specifically to making shows available to watch in their entirety with either all episodes of a new season being released simultaneously, or popular older shows being made available in box set form.

Each service has taken a different approach to film content. Amazon acquires prestige movies to premiere on their service after a traditional theatrical window for films like *Moonlight*, *The Handmaiden*, *The Big Sick* and *Manchester By The Sea*. Netflix have had a big push in film features that live exclusively on their platform such as *Okja*, *The Meyerowitz Stories*, *Bright* and *Mudbound*. NowTV (who do not use BBFC classifications) continue to gain traction by offering consumers earlier access to cinema films from Sky's premium movie channels without the need for a 12-month contractual commitment, a dish, or to be tied to linear broadcast schedules.

These differing approaches are bearing fruit with BARB (Broadcasters

Audience Research Board) research showing that in Q3 of 2017 9.5 million UK homes had at least one SVoD subscription. Although sales of physical media continue to decline, the growth in digital subscriptions and digital transactions has helped the UK video market grow by 7.5%, the third consecutive year of growth. The category is now worth £2.69bn. 71% of revenue in this market is now from digital.¹

The BBFC continues to support the changing ways in which Video On Demand services have made content available to UK consumers. Primarily this is via two key programmes which extend the use of our classification services and IP into areas not covered by The Video Recordings Act 1984.

Our licensing scheme allows Digital Video Services to use existing BBFC home entertainment classifications on their platforms when they make the equivalent digital versions available. This works in partnership with our streamlined and low cost digital-only classification solution that encourages the classification of content that is distributed via methods outside the scope of traditional statutory classification.

Watch & Rate, our digital-only classification service, is designed to offer the utmost flexibility to the industry, to ensure we can offer the same recognised and trusted classifications in the most efficient way possible. Digital-only classification continued its healthy growth in 2017, with 3,565 works viewed. This represented just under 160,000 minutes of content classified, a 25.3% increase from 2016.

Our licensing system allows digital video services to display BBFC classifications, symbols and long and short insight, as well as giving these platforms access to age labelling best practice, customer complaint



handling and compliance advice. In 2017 22 services and brands licensed the use of our classifications. This number of licensed services continues to decline as the larger players in the digital video space attract greater popularity, and others either consolidate or leave the space.

Mobile

During 2017, 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 2017, the BBFC adjudicated in relation to twenty one cases on whether filters had been appropriately applied to websites. These requests came from website owners, members of the public and the Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) themselves. In the interest of transparency, the BBFC publishes all its adjudications, in full, every quarter.

1 *Taboo (18)*

¹ BASE <http://baseorg.uk/press-releases/disney-celebrates-video-category-success-as-consumer-spend-increases-7-5-per-cent-in-2017/>
<http://tvision.com/2018/01/09/netflix-uk-subs-rate-slows-as-now-tv-gains-barb/>
<https://eraltd.org/news-events/press-releases/2018/streaming-boom-powers-entertainment-market-to-new-all-time-high-of-724bn-in-2017/>

Non-statutory work: bringing trusted BBFC classifications online

Among requests in 2017 for adjudication relating to sites that had been restricted to adults only by the mobile networks were a website offering CBD (Cannabidiol) oil/balm products for sale as a food supplement; a lifestyle website containing references to sexually transmitted diseases in the context of promoting sexual health awareness; a website offering business consultancy services; a website offering optical components for target and hunting firearms; a website offering a service providing training and consultancy for organisations to improve accessibility to LGBT customers, employees and communities; and two websites dedicated to videogame franchises. In all these cases, we found no content that we determined to be suitable for adults only. The MNOs consequently removed filters from these sites.

The BBFC also found that some sites were correctly placed behind adult filters, for example a website that promoted the cultivation of cannabis and offered instructions and equipment for its cultivation. The MNOs maintained filters on these sites.

In two cases, we were asked to

consider whether websites without filters contained material that should be restricted to those aged 18 or over. The first adjudication related to two websites that contained images of a pornographic nature which we considered unsuitable for children. The MNOs consequently added filters to these sites. The second adjudication related to a website explaining the terms of use of a particular app service. The BBFC considered that this website contained no material unsuitable for children according to the Classification Framework.

The BBFC also considered the twenty one adjudications under the EE's 'Strict' Classification Framework. We considered eleven unsuitable for children under the age of 12. Such material included drug references, suggestive images and sex references, strong language, violence and gore. EE consequently maintained or imposed filters on the eleven sites.

Music videos 2017

Since 2014 the BBFC has worked with the UK music industry to make its trusted and understood age labelling available for UK music videos viewed online. This helps parents whose children use Vevo and YouTube to better understand the suitability of

the music videos that their children watch. Under the agreement with the major UK labels, their trade body the British Phonographic Institute (BPI), and with independent labels, any new release short-form videos from UK repertoire that may contain content or themes unsuitable for those under 12 will be submitted to the BBFC for classification.

In 2017 the BBFC classified 51 new release music videos for online use. This is down from a peak of 101 in 2015. The resulting classifications broke down to: seven music videos classified at U; one at PG; 16 at 12 and 27 at 15. No music videos submitted in the last twelve months were classified at the 18 category.

Participation in this scheme remains voluntary for the music labels, and as a result support from the independent labels continues to be low with only one music video submitted in twelve months. The BBFC will continue to make these fast turnaround classification services available at a discount to the music industry to support the classification of online music videos. 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 our classification services.



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 2017, the BBFC provided evidence on 298 works. In June, the BBFC hosted an exhibition

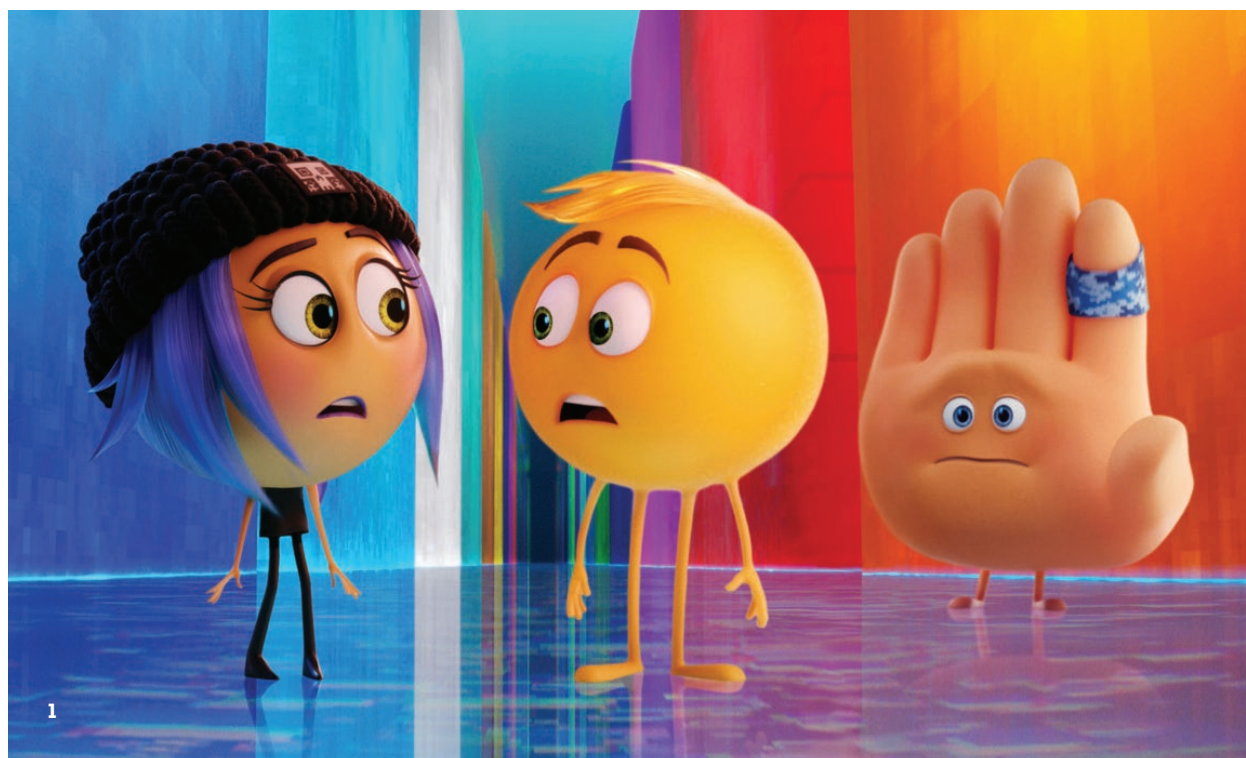
stand at the annual Chartered Trading Standards Institute conference; this promoted the BBFC's services and provided the opportunity to discuss a range of matters with Trading Standards Officers.



1 *Ghost in the Shell (12A)*

2 *The Lego Batman Movie (U)*





The U category, which stands for 'Universal', is awarded to films which are generally suitable for audiences aged four years and over. The BBFC Guidelines state that a U film 'should be within a positive framework and should offer reassuring counterbalances to any violence threat or horror'. Although U is the lowest category, there may still be issues in the work which need to be considered. This includes issues such as threat, violence, bad language, sex references and dangerous behaviour, as well as wider aspects such as theme and tone.

One of the most common issues at the most junior category is threat, which is carefully considered when classifying films. The Guidelines state that 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'. **Ferdinand** is an animated comedy in which a powerful bull with a gentle nature attempts to avoid his fate in the bullring. The distributor sought advice for the classification of the film before submitting the animation for formal classification. The animation contained darker moments of threat, including a scene in which a bull escapes from an abattoir, and a

scene which shows a face-off in the bull ring between Ferdinand and the champion matador. The BBFC advised that these moments needed to be toned down in order to achieve the desired U classification. Scenes of dangerous behaviour involving railway tracks which could be copied were also removed to achieve the U classification. The distributor re-submitted the film in which the cuts were implemented and the film is now classified U for 'mild threat, very mild bad language'.

Threatening situations also arise in the fantasy animation **My Little Pony**, a US animation adventure in which the Mane Six go on a journey to defend their home from a dark force. There are scenes of fantasy threat, including a scene in which it's implied that a unicorn's horn is struck off by a villain. There are numerous scenes which show the heroes trying to escape from the villains, but the threat is never unduly intense, and there are always reassurances that the characters to whom the young audience relate are safe. The film is classified U for 'mild fantasy threat, slapstick violence'.

At the most junior category, a common mitigating factor for most violence is fantasy settings. In 2017,

the BBFC classified two popular animations from the Lego Movie franchise, **The Lego Batman Movie** and **The Lego Ninjago Movie**. **The Lego Batman Movie** is an animated action comedy in which Lego Batman tries to save Gotham City from being taken over by a group of super-villains led by Lego Joker. There are scenes of violence throughout which includes blasts with fantastical weapons, characters delivering punches and kicks, and scenes of mild threat which show characters caught up in explosions. Although the film is packed with fast-paced action, the overall tone of the film is comic and light-hearted, and the toys which are seen breaking apart bear no resemblance to human figures. **The Lego Batman Movie** is classified U for 'mild comic violence, rude humour, very mild bad language'.

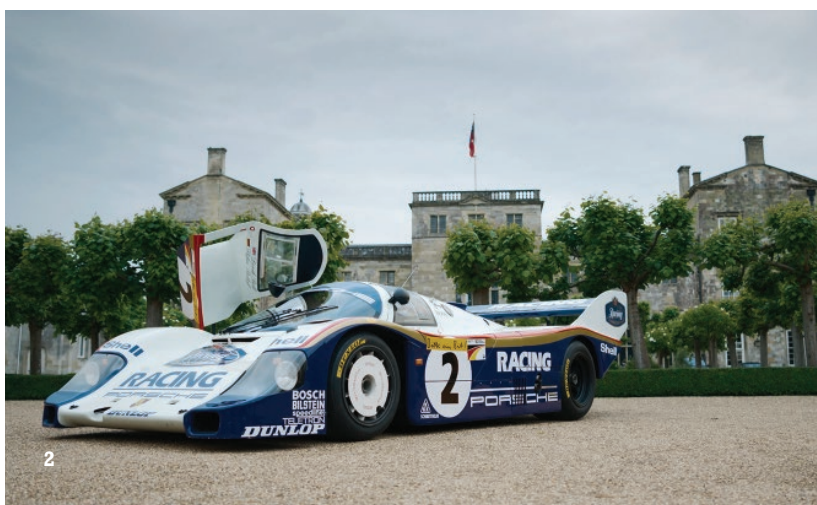
Although fantasy settings are a mitigating factor, imitable and dangerous behaviour is still cautiously considered at the U category. At U, 'potentially dangerous or anti-social behaviour which young children may copy must be clearly disapproved of'. In the French animation, **Big Bad Fox**, a brief scene of dangerous behaviour shows two characters light a match in order to check how full a lawnmower's petrol

- 1 *The Emoji Movie* (U)
- 2 *The Green Hell* (U)
- 3 *Despicable Me 3* (U)

tank is. Another character rushes in to stop them, but there is a large explosion off screen. The dangerous behaviour in the scene is clearly presented as a bad idea and the consequences are clearly presented.

Bad language continues to be a principal issue of concern for the public. The early submission of the animation adventure, **The Emoji Movie**, contained a visual use of 'WTF', which is considered as disguised strong language, and a use of the term 'turd'. The terms are likely to confound parental expectation at the most junior category, so the BBFC advised the distributor to remove the language in order to obtain the desired U classification. The film is now classified U for 'mild rude humour, comic threat, very mild bad language'.

A recurring issue at the junior categories is rude humour. **Captain Underpants: The First Epic Movie** is an animated comedy in which two young pranksters cause their mean head teacher to turn into the superhero, Captain Underpants. There is plenty of rude humour throughout, including jokes around the supervillain's name, Mr Poppypants, and jokes about the pronunciation of the planet Uranus. There are also scenes in which toilets become weapons and frequent use of whoopee cushions.



However, the film is based on a well-known book series and this type of humour is expected in comedies which appeal in particular to younger viewers. **Captain Underpants: The First Epic Movie** is classified U for 'mild rude humour, comic threat'.

Rude humour is also an ongoing issue in the **Despicable Me** movies. In **Despicable Me 3**, the third instalment of the children's animation comedy, one scene shows two characters' clothes being blown off by a powerful gun, resulting in some undetailed buttocks nudity. There is also a verbal reference to 'boobies' and a scene in which the Minions play around with coconut shell bikini

tops. The BBFC's Guidelines at U state there may be 'Occasional nudity, with no sexual context' and this type of cheeky humour is likely to be familiar to both parents and young children who enjoyed the previous instalments.

At U, there may be 'only very mild sexual behaviour (such as kissing) and references to such behaviour'. In **A Woman of No Importance**, a recording of a live performance of the Oscar Wilde drama, there are references to two people 'making love'. The society expectations from the period about marriage and pregnancy also places a central theme in the performance, but it is





U Universal



treated in a discreet manner.

Discrimination is another issue which is considered cautiously through all the categories, especially at the junior categories. In the US family comedy ***Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul*** about a family who take a road trip to attend their grandmother's ninetieth birthday party, there is one scene in which a teenager refers to his brother as a 'spaz'. In line with BBFC Classification Guidelines research, the term is unacceptable at the U category and the distributor chose to remove the language in order to achieve a U classification. The film is now classified U for 'very mild bad language, rude humour'.

There are also films which have been classified U that are more likely to appeal to a mature audience. For example, ***Menashe*** is a US Yiddish language drama in which a widower battles for the custody of his son. There are scenes of emotional upset, including scenes which show a family arguing over the care of a young boy. There are also references to death, but the themes are treated sensitively enough to be contained at the most junior category. The film is classified U for 'very mild violence'.

Films which are classified U can also be mitigated by an educational context. The US documentary ***Dream Big: Engineering Our World*** looks into the work of engineers who are helping to

create better lives worldwide. The documentary contains images of natural disasters which also includes photos in newspapers of collapsed buildings, featuring headlines about how many people were killed and injured. There are also images of people being pulled out of rubble after an earthquake in Nepal. However, these images are part of a wider context as the documentary focuses on positive outcomes of how engineers are working hard to create safer buildings for the future. The documentary is classified U for 'images of natural disasters'.

In ***The Green Hell***, a documentary about the history of the Nürburgring race track, archival footage shows sight of cars crashing which combust into flames. Although there are references to drivers dying and

being injured by crashes, there is never any sight of any injury detail, and the historical context and the reassuring voiceover throughout contains the film at the U category. The documentary is classified U for 'footage of car crashes, very mild bad language'.

The BBFC also classifies works for online distribution for platforms such as Netflix and Amazon in which the same classification standards apply. The Netflix pre-school series ***Julie's Greenroom*** in which Julie Andrews teaches performing arts to a group of children is clearly aimed at younger viewers as there is an emphasis on educational, simple narratives and interactive singalongs which promote positive messages. The first season is classified U with BBFC insight of 'no material likely to offend or harm'.



- 1 *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul* (U)
- 2 *Dream Big: Engineering Our World* (U)
- 3 *Coco* (PG)





Works classified PG are generally suitable for children aged eight years and over. PG films may depart from the safe and generally non-threatening world generally presented in films classified U, but will usually feature elements such as humour or fantasy, in order to ensure that slightly older children are still able to enjoy them. 2017 saw a number of releases in which characters that children can identify with are involved in exciting adventures.

Paddington 2 is a comedy adventure film in which Paddington Bear is accused of stealing a valuable pop-up book of London after expressing an interest in buying it for his Aunt Lucy's 100th birthday. In pursuit of trying to clear his name and capture the real culprit of the crime, Paddington encounters various threats and challenges. The threat is most pronounced in a scene in which Paddington has to be rescued from drowning after he becomes trapped in a train carriage which has fallen into a river. There is also a scene in which Paddington floats towards

dangerous rapids while hanging on to a log. These scenes of threat are a little too intense for very young children, but the reassuring outcomes and overall comic and light-hearted tone of the film act as mitigating factors, allowing it to be classified at PG.

Another animated film which features mild threat is **Coco** (classified in 2017; released in 2018), Disney's animated adventure, set in Mexico, in which a young boy is magically transported to the Land of the Dead after stealing a guitar from the mausoleum of his musical hero. When Miguel – the film's 12-year-old protagonist – first encounters skeletal characters in the underworld, he is afraid and fears that they will hurt him. However, he soon learns that the dead are no scarier than the living, and begins to befriend his dead ancestors. The Land of the Dead is a vibrant, exciting and magical setting which provides a reassuring counterbalance to the film's darker moments involving the death of characters. The fantastical nature of the threat, along with an emphasis

on the child's capacity for resilience and ability to accept loss as a natural part of life, ensure that the film is suitable for older children. The film is classified PG, with BBFCinsight advising of mild threat and violence.

Mild threat and violence also feature in Disney's live action re-make of the classic animated feature, **Beauty and the Beast**, which is about a young woman who is imprisoned in an enchanted castle. The film contains several scenes of mild violence, including a sequence in which a man is knocked unconscious with a heavy punch to the face, a scene in which a man is shot, without sight of blood or injury, and a battle scene in which an angry mob clash with the magical inhabitants of the castle. Although the live action nature of the film ensures that the violence is more visually detailed than in its 1991 animated predecessor, the familiarity of the characters and the story, along with the clear fantasy context, enable the violence to be acceptable at PG.

Mild violence outside of a fantasy context features in the British

- 1 *Paddington 2*
(PG)
- 2 *Hotel Salvation*
(PG)
- 3 *Darkest Hour*
(PG)

biographical drama, **Goodbye Christopher Robin**, a film about author A.A. Milne and his son, who inspired the Winnie the Pooh stories. The film contains brief flashbacks to the battlefields of World War I, in which Milne is seen running through the trenches as explosions erupt around him. In one sequence, Milne turns around and looks at dead bodies lying on the ground, some of which have blood on them. The injury detail is limited and the violence as a whole serves to contextualise Milne's behaviour towards his son, after it becomes clear that he is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. The historical context, narrative justification and discreet sight of blood and injury detail allow the mild war violence to be classified at PG.

Another British biographical drama classified in 2017 is **Darkest Hour**, a film based on Prime Minister Winston Churchill's attempts to rally the nation against Germany's advances across Western Europe during World War II. The film contains uses of mild bad language and a rude hand gesture when Churchill directs a V-sign towards a journalist. Although the rude gesture is prominently framed in close-up, Churchill is subsequently instructed on how to deliver the gesture in an appropriate way, so that it is not offensive. The critique of the gesture by another character, and the fact that Churchill is a historical figure, ensures that the issue is acceptable at the upper junior category. The film is classified PG with the BBFC insight of 'mild bad language'.



A film based on the life of another British historical figure is **Victoria and Abdul**, which is a drama based on Queen Victoria's relationship with an Indian man who joined her household staff. The racist attitudes that prevailed at the time are reflected in scenes in which Indian men are treated in an abusive manner, including when white men manhandle the protagonist after the death of the Queen and burn the belongings which were given to him by the monarch. Racist language is also evident when an Indian man ironically refers to his Indian friend as a 'wog' in order to emphasise the racist way in which they are

perceived. The racism in the film is clearly disapproved of by the work as a whole, which serves to educate about the racist social attitudes of the time. The BBFC considered the treatment of the racism theme and racist language to be appropriately classified at PG.

An Indian film classified PG is the Hindi-language drama **Hotel Salvation**, a film in which an elderly man decides to travel to the holy city of Varanasi for salvation. The film includes a couple of drug references, such as a reference to opium when a man is asked whether he's ever smoked the drug, and a reference to marijuana when a man reads from a woman's diary which states that she had once asked for two glasses of lassi laced with marijuana. In the context of this genteel drama that has no natural appeal to young children, the infrequent drug references, which are mitigated by the fact that no on-screen drug misuse occurs, are allowable at the PG category.

An animated film which references drugs and deals with challenging themes is the French coming-of-age film **My Life As A Courgette**. The film is about a young boy who is transferred to a care home after accidentally causing the death of his alcoholic mother. While at the care home, the boy meets other children who have also experienced



PG Parental Guidance

trauma. In conversations, children make undetailed reference to adults taking drugs, committing suicide and murder; a girl refers to her father as a 'creep' who is now in prison, and admits that she has nightmares about him. The references to children's abusive pasts are all implied, with no explicit verbal detail about any of the events. The film also contains mild sex references in comic conversations between child characters as they refer to adults 'wriggling around' and 'willies exploding'. The references demonstrate the children's limited and inaccurate understanding of sexual behaviour and features no direct verbal references to sex. The sensitive treatment of the issues raised in the film are sufficiently brief, discreet and justified by the overall context, which offers a positive and reassuring outlook. The BBFC classified the film PG with the BBFCinsight advising of mild sex references and references to traumatic childhood experiences.

The Space Between Us is a romantic science fiction film, in which a teenage boy - who was born on Mars - travels to Earth for the first time and falls in love with a high school student. The film contains a love scene between two teenage characters in which they are seen



lying in a sleeping bag, kissing and talking romantically towards one another, before the boy strokes his girlfriend's skin and begins to position himself on top of her. Sexual activity is only implied and the scene as a whole offers a positive and respectful portrayal of romantic relationships between young characters that is unlikely to confound parental expectation. The film is classified PG.

Mild sex references are also a defining issue in episodes of the Netflix comedy series **The Good Place**. Although the series is intended for online distribution, the

BBFC applies the same classification standards when classifying such content. An episode classified PG includes a line of dialogue in which a character exclaims that he and a robot woman 'did a bunch of amazing awesome stuff which almost turned out to be sex'. Mild sex references also feature in **Terrace House: Aloha State**, a Japanese reality television series that is also distributed on Netflix. A particular episode from the series contains a reference to a man 'sleeping' with a woman, a sex reference which the BBFC considers to be sufficiently discreet enough to be suited to the PG category.



- 1 *The Space Between Us* (PG)
- 2 *Victoria and Abdul* (PG)
- 3 *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* (12A)





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 mobile and tablet 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. 2017 saw the release of numerous action films that obtained a 12A classification for moderate violence. These include *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, the ninth film in the science fiction saga and the sequel to 2015's *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. Like *The Force Awakens*, which was also rated 12A, *The Last Jedi* contains combat sequences including lightsabre battles and aerial dogfights. While occasionally intense, the action is restrained in terms of blood and injury detail, allowing a

12A classification.

Another of 2017's high profile releases was *War for the Planet of the Apes*, an action sci-fi sequel in which the leader of the ape rebellion searches for his son while also facing a human army led by a merciless colonel. Brief bloody moments include aftermath images of the massacre of an ape family and of apes that have been tortured and killed. In another scene an ape is whipped, resulting in bloody lacerations on his back. Occasional gory moments are allowable in 12A films if justified by context and providing there is no focus on blood or wound detail. In *War for the Planet of the Apes* the bloodier moments are brief and often occur in the aftermath of violence rather than during the battles themselves. The film was therefore classified 12A for moderate violence and injury detail.

Action violence and injury detail may be mitigated by a science fiction or fantasy context that distances such sequences from reality. This is often the case in superhero action blockbusters, a genre which remained a popular cinema staple in 2017. Examples include DC Comics adaptations *Wonder Woman* and *Justice League*, as well as Marvel sequels *Thor: Ragnarok* and *Guardians of the Galaxy 2*. *Guardians of the Galaxy 2* features explosive spaceship battle



- 1 *Dunkirk* (12A)
- 2 *War for the Planet of the Apes* (12A)
- 3 *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* (12A)

sequences, as well as occasional scenes of shoot-outs and hand-to-hand combat. The weaponry used is futuristic in nature and neither the shooting nor the physical blows result in realistic injuries. We classified the film 12A for moderate fantasy action violence, sex references and bad language.

In addition to fantasy violence, Marvel's **Spider-Man: Homecoming** also contains sequences of threat including one in which Spider-Man comes to the aid of a group of teenagers who are trapped in a lift in a crumbling building. Scenes of moderate threat are permissible at 12A as long as the overall tone is not disturbing. In the case of **Spider-Man: Homecoming**, individual moments of threat within the action sequences are generally quickly resolved, and the tension is frequently defused by the characters' comic quips. The film was therefore classified 12A for moderate fantasy violence, threat, sex references and obscured strong language.

By contrast, other films present threat and violence within a more realistic context. 2017's **Dunkirk**, for example, is based on the true events of the 1940 Allied evacuation of Northern France. The film contains sustained threat throughout, as well as scenes of violence including sequences in which people are shot or caught in explosions or fire. The sound effects and musical score further heighten the intensity of scenes in which soldiers face tense, life-threatening situations. However, the film is firmly grounded in a historical context and considerably restrained in terms of gory detail. Consequently, the BBFC decided that this level of threat was allowable at 12A alongside BBFCinsight advice that clearly highlights the film's key classification issues. We therefore classified **Dunkirk** 12A for 'sustained threat, intense sequences, moderate violence and strong language'.

In Hindi-language drama **Secret Superstar**, one of the category-defining issues is scenes of domestic violence. **Secret Superstar** tells

the story of a 15-year-old girl who becomes a YouTube singing sensation but must hide her new fame from her abusive father. Potentially distressing scenes include one in which the heroine and her younger brother take shelter in her bedroom while listening to the sounds of their father repeatedly hitting their mother. However, very little violence occurs on screen, and the overall tone is uplifting and inspirational. Under the BBFC Classification Guidelines, **Secret Superstar** 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.

Companies sometimes choose to submit unfinished versions of films to the BBFC for advice on how to achieve a preferred classification. One example of a film submitted for advice ahead of its formal classification in 2017 is action sequel **Fast & Furious 8**. The film features frequent stylised action violence without focus on individual blows,





12A Cinema/12 Home Entertainment

in keeping with previous 12A-rated entries in this franchise. However, the distributor was advised that in order for this film to achieve the requested 12A, reductions would have to be made to a sequence in which a man's neck is broken by a heavy punch to his jaw. As a result of this advice the distributor decided to make changes to the scene in question prior to the formal submission of the film. The version submitted for formal classification was classified 12A for moderate violence and infrequent strong language.

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 2017 this included **Raees**, a Hindi-language crime drama in which a man rises to become the most powerful bootlegger in Prohibition Gujarat. The original version contained moments of strong bloody violence including a stabbing and several



slow-motion spurts of blood resulting from shootings. The BBFC advised the distributor that the film as it stood would be classified 15. The distributor chose to re-edit the film in order to achieve a 12A classification. Consequently, the BBFC classified the final version of the film 12A for moderate violence and occasional bloody images.

Just as depictions of violence, threat and injury detail must remain moderate in order to qualify for a 12A, so must depictions of, and references to, sex. **My Cousin Rachel** is a romantic mystery period drama in which a young man becomes obsessively enamoured with the woman he holds responsible



- 1 *My Cousin Rachel* (12A)
- 2 *Fast & Furious 8* (12A)
- 3 *A Quiet Passion* (12A)



for the death of his cousin. The film contains a scene in which a man is seen making thrusting motions on top of a woman before groaning in climax. Because there is no strong detail, the film conforms to the BBFC Guidelines at 12A and is rated accordingly. Meanwhile, one of the key classification issues in fantasy adventure sequel **Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle** is infrequent moderate sex references. These include a joke about penis size and a scene in which a character experiences an implied, off-screen erection. The references are occasionally crude but never graphic or strong and thus adhere to BBFC Guidelines at 12A.

In the case of scenes of drug use, BBFC Guidelines at 12A state that they 'must be infrequent and should not be glamorised or give instructional detail'. An example of this treatment of drug use and references to drugs can be seen in survival thriller **6 Below** in which a snowboarder who is addicted to methamphetamine must fight to stay alive after he becomes lost in the mountains. The film contains images of white powder in bags and verbal references to 'meth' and cocaine, and in one scene the main character can be heard ingesting drugs off

screen. The film strongly emphasises the negative impact of drug misuse on the character's life, in addition to the life-affirming success of his battle with addiction. As a result, the BBFC classified **6 Below** 12A, with BBFCinsight advising that it contains 'drug misuse, moderate threat and injury detail'.

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'. 2017's **I Am Not Your Negro** is a documentary, based on James Baldwin's unfinished manuscript *Remember This House*, which examines the history of racial discrimination and violence in the USA. The film contains multiple uses of discriminatory terms, as well as photographs and archive footage of violence directed at African-Americans including race-based attacks during the Civil Rights era and the beating of Rodney King by police in Los Angeles in 1991. The film also features images of dead bodies including a photograph of the faces of black men who have been lynched. In this case the racist

violence and language is mitigated by the historical documentary context, and the film does not condone or endorse discriminatory language or behaviour. The BBFC classified **I Am Not Your Negro** 12A, with BBFCinsight advising that it contains 'images of real violence and racist and strong language'.

Bad language is another 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. An issue that may challenge the placing of works at 12A is strong language ('f**k'). The BBFC Guidelines state that such language may be permitted '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'. **Overdrive** is an action thriller in which two brothers are forced into stealing classic cars for a crime boss. There is a total of eight uses of strong language in the film, but all of them feature in the particular context of the lyrics of a song playing over the opening and end credits, rather than in dialogue exchanges



12A Cinema/12 Home Entertainment



between characters in the film where they might have been more audible or used in an aggressive or sexual manner. In fantasy action adventure **Kong: Skull Island**, a team of scientists and soldiers venture onto a previously unexplored island in the South Pacific where they encounter gigantic creatures including the titular ape. In this film there is one clear use of 'f**k' in addition to one cut-off use of a particularly strong term ('motherf**ker'). Use of this term is unusual in films classified 12A but in this case the BBFC considered the word sufficiently obscured to allow 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. This is the case in biographical period drama **A Quiet Passion**, which follows the life of nineteenth-century poet Emily Dickinson from her childhood to her reclusive later years. Much of the second half of the film depicts the debilitating illness that eventually resulted in her death, although the stronger scenes in which Dickinson suffers from seizures and delirium are infrequent and generally brief. However, in recognition that such scenes may prove distressing for some audiences, the film is classified 12A, with accompanying BBFCinsight advising that it contains 'upsetting scenes of illness'.

Another film that deals with serious issues is **Loving Vincent**, an animated drama about the final days of Vincent Van Gogh which contains frequent references to Van Gogh having taken his own life. Because the theme of suicide and mental illness is handled with sensitivity, **Loving Vincent** is classified 12A for suicide theme, infrequent moderate sex and injury detail. Meanwhile, Irish drama **The Drummer and the Keeper** contains a short scene depicting an act of self-harm. This film tells the story of a rock drummer with bipolar disorder who befriends a teen with Asperger's syndrome. In one scene a man is shown pouring lighter fluid over his sleeve and then setting his arm on fire. No injury detail is depicted and the man is subsequently shown recovering from his injury and receiving treatment for mental illness. Taking into account the brevity of the scene and the lack of strong detail, the BBFC classified **The Drummer and the Keeper** 12A for brief self-harm, infrequent discriminatory terms and moderate sex references.

Older films are sometimes resubmitted to the BBFC in order to obtain a contemporary classification. In 2017 this included Mike Nichols' 1967 romantic comedy drama **The Graduate**. Originally rated X in 1968, this was changed to AA when the new category was introduced in 1970. When the film was first released on video in 1985, before the introduction of the 12 certificate,

it was classified 15. Under current Guidelines, however, **The Graduate** is classified 12A for theatrical release with the BBFCinsight 'moderate sex references, infrequent brief nudity'. By contrast, the classification of Japanese drama **An Actor's Revenge**, also first released in 1967, was raised from PG to 12A for scenes of suicide and moderate threat.

Recordings of live performances of theatre, opera and dance productions are occasionally submitted to the BBFC for classification if they are to have a cinematic release. One such example in 2017 was **Bizet - Les Pecheurs De Perles**, a recording of a live performance at the Metropolitan Opera of Georges Bizet's opera in which two friends are both in love with a priestess. In this adaptation, a pair of lovers are doused with petrol after being sentenced to death, but the sentence is not carried out. There is also a sequence in which a man pushes a woman to the floor and climbs on top of her before she pushes him away. As a result, **Les Pecheurs De Perles** is classified 12A for moderate threat and brief sexual threat. Also classified in 2017 was **National Theatre Live: Hedda Gabler**, a performance of the Henrik Ibsen's 1891 play about a newly-married woman who has become bored with her life. **Hedda Gabler** is classified 12A for a scene of suicide.

Several Video on Demand services voluntarily choose to submit works to the BBFC in order to obtain a classification. Following the release of a pilot episode in 2016, in 2017 Amazon Studios released a five-episode 'half series' of superhero comedy reboot **The Tick**. Three of those five episodes are classified 12 for issues including moderate violence and threat, and infrequent strong language. 2017 also saw the release of numerous stand-up comedy specials via Netflix's online service. **Ryan Hamilton: Happy Face**, which features a recording of a live performance in New York City by the US comedian, is classified 12 for drug 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 *National Theatre Live: Hedda Gabler* (12A)

2 *Get Out* (15)





In 2017 the BBFC classified more feature films at 15 than at any other category. Unlike the 12A classification, which permits children under the recommended age to be admitted subject to adult accompaniment, 15 is a restrictive classification. Accordingly, films classified 15 may include significantly stronger content than those classified 12A and may also deal with more challenging themes. As with all categories, the BBFC provides BBFCinsight for films classified 15. This is available on the BBFC website and free mobile and tablet apps and describes significant issues in the film that influenced its classification.

BBFC Guidelines state that at 15 violence 'may be strong but should not dwell on the infliction of pain or injury. The strongest gory images are unlikely to be acceptable. Strong sadistic violence is also unlikely to be acceptable.' Although many action blockbusters target family viewing, some are pitched towards an older

audience. 2017 saw Hugh Jackman give his final performance as the superhero Wolverine in **Logan**, following the eponymous hero as he tries to care for the elderly Charles Xavier until the arrival of a young mutant, Laura, brings trouble. Jackman first played Logan/Wolverine in 1999's **X-Men**, kicking off a franchise that is largely comprised of films classified 12A. **Logan**, however, draws on the Western genre and the character's violent comic book storylines to explore themes of ageing and death. In portraying a grittier, downtrodden version of the character, **Logan** contains scenes of strong bloody violence and occasional strong language ('f*k*k'). Similar to 2016's **Deadpool**, the fantastical context of the violence, including Logan's superhuman healing abilities, mitigates the gorier moments and the film is classified 15 accordingly.

A large number of South Asian films are submitted to the BBFC every year

and strong violence is a recurrent category-defining issue. **Kaabil**, for instance, is a Hindi-language drama in which a blind man seeks revenge on the men who murdered his wife. The film contains numerous fistfights, beatings and use of bladed weapons with resulting bloody moments, and is therefore classified 15. In some cases distributors will ask for cuts to a film classified 15 in order to obtain a 12A classification instead. Wherever possible, the BBFC provides a Cuts List upon request. Fantasy action thriller **Baahubali 2: The Conclusion**, in which a son seeks vengeance for his father's death, was an unusual case in which the film was released in multiple versions. The Hindi-language release is classified 15, but following cuts to two scenes of stronger violence, the Telugu, Malayalam and Tamil versions are classified 12A.

The theatrical release of action thriller **John Wick: Chapter 2** is also classified 15 after receiving cuts.

1 *A Man Called Ove* (15)

2 *Moonlight* (15)

3 *Logan* (15)

The film, a sequel to 2014's *John Wick*, follows a former hitman as he fights a criminal gang. It features similar scenes of strong violence to its predecessor, including prolonged gunfights. The original submission of *John Wick: Chapter 2* was classified 18 because of the level of detail in a suicide scene, but the distributor chose to make cuts to this sequence in order to obtain a 15 classification. The cut material has been reinstated for the film's home media release, which is classified 18 for strong violence and gory images.

Suicide is a complex and difficult issue. The BBFC's classification decisions are informed by work with charities and researchers, including close collaboration with The Samaritans. At 15, suicide may be portrayed and described but should not dwell on details that could be copied. The darkly comic Swedish drama *A Man Called Ove*, for instance, explores suicide in a thought-provoking and sensitive manner. The film follows an elderly man as he considers taking his own life in order to be reunited with his deceased wife. However, as his attempts are unintentionally foiled he comes to build a better relationship with his neighbours and friends. The scenes of attempted suicide do



not contain graphic detail or novel techniques, and Ove's actions are not glamorised or condoned. The film is therefore classified 15 and carries the short form BBFCinsight 'suicide theme'.

A similarly difficult issue is sexual violence. At 15 BBFC Guidelines state that there may be detailed verbal references, but that 'depiction of sexual violence must be discreet and justified by context.' In making

decisions the BBFC considers the context, presentation, audience and the level of detail when classifying scenes of sexual violence. A recent example is the 2017 crime thriller *Wind River*. Set on a wintry Native American reservation in Wyoming, the film follows an FBI agent and a hunter as they investigate the death of a young woman. In flashback we see the woman being attacked by a group of men while her boyfriend desperately tries to protect her. The



sequence is a harrowing depiction of sexual violence, but it is also relatively limited in terms of visual detail, the viewer is never invited to sympathise with the attackers, and the event is crucial to the film's narrative. **Wind River** is classified 15 accordingly, with the BBFCinsight 'strong violence, injury detail, sexual violence, language'.

As well as fictionalised scenes of violence the BBFC also encounters occasionally graphic images in documentaries. **Ferrari: Race to Immortality** is a documentary exploring the dangers of motorsports in the 1950s and includes archive footage of a car crashing into a spectator stand. Subsequent shots reveal images of those killed by the crash, including brief injury detail on the bodies. Despite the documentary context these images exceed what audiences would expect from a 12A film. **Ferrari: Race to Immortality** is therefore classified 15, with BBFCinsight warning that it contains 'images of real dead bodies'.

2017 saw a number of high-profile documentaries and dramas exploring race in America. One such example is Kathryn Bigelow's **Detroit**, depicting an instance of police brutality during the 1960s race riots when a group of men and women were terrorised by law enforcement officers in a hotel. The film is classified 15 with the short BBFCinsight description 'strong threat, violence, language'. The long form BBFCinsight, available on the BBFC website and free apps, additionally notes that some, but by no means all, of the film's threat and violence features racial and racist overtones.

The BBFC's Classification Guidelines are informed by public consultation. One area in which the public have indicated that they prefer caution is in the classification of horror films. While works such as the horror thriller **Get Out** contain violence and language that place the film at 15, other films contain sustained scenes of supernatural threat. One example is 2017's **The Mummy**, starring Tom Cruise as a soldier who accidentally uncovers a cursed Egyptian tomb and releases an ancient evil spirit.

The film mixes action blockbuster tropes with those of the horror film, including a sequence in which the mummy drains the life force from a group of policemen and transforms them into zombie-like creatures. These moments exceed the allowance for threat and horror at 12A but are containable at 15. The film is classified accordingly, with the BBFCinsight 'sustained threat, horror, brief strong violence'.

A common issue that places works at 15 is use of strong language ('f**k', 'motherf**ker', 'c**ksucker') and very strong language ('c**t'). The latter is largely dependent on context, with BBFC Guidelines stating that the term 'may be permitted, 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 British comedy **The Death of Stalin**, for instance, contains a single comic use of very strong language and is therefore classified 15. The crime drama **Trespass Against Us**, however, contains eight uses of very strong language. As these are largely comic or even used affectionately in colloquial dialogue, the BBFC decided that the language is contextually justified at 15.

Strong language is often connected to other issues such as sex references. These can be verbal or visual and,

as with language, their context is an important factor in the classification process. In 2017 the lifeguard comedy **Baywatch**, based on the 1990s TV series of the same name, contained numerous sex references and some crude humour. In one sequence a young man obtains an erection after a woman performs the Heimlich manoeuvre on him. Although his penis is not shown, a bulge appears in his shorts which he then gets caught in the wooden slats of a beach recliner. While too crude for 12A, the comic nature of the scene and relative visual discretion does not exceed BBFC Guidelines at 15 and the film is classified accordingly.

At the 15 category scenes of sex rarely show strong detail. In the British drama **God's Own Country**, in which a young Yorkshire farmer falls in love with a Romanian migrant worker, there are scenes depicting vigorous thrusting, male buttock nudity and implied oral sex. As none of the scenes contain graphic detail the film is classified 15 for strong sex and language. Season One of the HBO drama series **Big Little Lies**, based on the book of the same name by Liane Moriarty, is collectively classified 15 for sexual violence, strong language and sex. In Episode 6, entitled 'Burning Love', there is very brief sexual detail when a woman touches a man's



1 *Trespass Against Us* (15)

2 *Baywatch* (15)



erect penis. The series explores the couple's relationship which includes themes of domestic abuse and female empowerment. This scene is important in marking a turning point in the woman's life as she finally rejects the man's aggressive and abusive behaviour. The sequence is therefore contextually justified, and 'Burning Love' is accordingly classified 15 and carries the individual episode BBFC insight 'strong language, sex references, nudity'.

Context was similarly important in classifying the Oscar-winning drama ***Moonlight***, which explores the impact of a young man's upbringing, relationships and surroundings across three periods of his life. Drug misuse is one of the film's category-defining issues. The protagonist's mother is a drug addict who uses 'crack' and marijuana, although the drama portrays the negative impact of drug misuse through her cruel and abusive behaviour. She eventually

comes to realise the effect her actions had on her life and on her son, which corresponds to the BBFC Guidelines at 15 which state 'the work as a whole must not promote or encourage drug misuse.' ***Moonlight*** is therefore classified 15 for strong language, sex, sex references and drug misuse.

Older films are sometimes resubmitted to the BBFC in order to obtain a contemporary classification. In 2017 this included a new release of 1991's ***Terminator 2: Judgment Day*** which had been converted into 3D. However, despite the new format, the category-defining issues had not altered and the film retained its 15 classification for strong violence and language.

Occasionally, 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. In 2017, one such example was the Young Vic's production of Tennessee

Williams' ***Cat on a Hot Tin Roof***, starring Sienna Miller and Jack O'Connell. Examining a couple's strained relationship on a hot Mississippi night, this production increases the use of strong language in the original text. ***National Theatre Live: Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*** is therefore classified 15 for strong language and sex references. ***National Theatre Live: Young Marx***, the inaugural production of the new Bridge Theatre, is also classified 15 for strong language. Starring Rory Kinnear in the title role, the play depicts the philosopher and writer's days in London, evading his debtors and the police while living in Soho.

As well as our statutory works, many Video on Demand services voluntarily choose to submit works to the BBFC in order to obtain a classification. In 2017 Amazon Studios launched ***The Marvellous Mrs. Maisel***, a comedy drama series following a young housewife in the 1950s who begins performing stand-



up comedy. The series is classified 15, with issues including language, sex, violence and drug misuse. Also on Amazon Video is the US comedy series **Comrade Detective**, which masquerades as a 'lost' 1980s Romanian crime thriller with contemporary stars providing English language dubbing. The series is classified 15 for strong language, sex, nudity, violence and suicide scenes.

In 2017 Netflix released the drama **Okja** theatrically as well as on its online service. In the film, a 'super-pig' is taken from Korea to New York but is followed by the girl who raised it and who is intent on stopping the animal being killed and eaten. **Okja** is classified 15 for strong language. Also released in 2017 is the Marvel team-up series **The Defenders**, which sees Daredevil, Jessica Jones, Luke Cage and Iron Fist come together to stop an evil organisation from destroying New York. The series contains strong violence, gore, sex and language and is classified 15 accordingly.

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 15 classification in 2017 are Tinie Tempah's 'Text From Your Ex' for strong sex references; The Script's 'Rain' for strong language and sexualised images; Glass Animals'

'Agnes' for drug references; and Circa Waves' 'Fire That Burns' for bloody images.



1 *Big Little Lies* (15)

2 *National Theatre Live: Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (15)

3 *T2 Trainspotting* (18)





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 2017 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 2017 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 were the key factors in the BBFC classifying several feature films at 18. **Elle**, a French psychological thriller in which a successful businesswoman tries to establish the identity of a man who raped her, showed rape scenes that included female breast and buttock nudity, accompanied in some cases by the delivery of punches, kicks and slaps. Elsewhere, there is gameplay footage from a violent fantasy

computer game which includes implied tentacular rape.

Strong sexual threat features in some 2017 releases. In **Suntan**, a Greek drama in which a middle-aged doctor on an island becomes infatuated with a young tourist, a woman is drugged, dragged along the ground, and then almost raped while unconscious during a prolonged scene. However, the film does not condone the actions of the attacker so, accordingly, the BBFC classified the film 18.

In **Hounds of Love**, an Australian crime thriller in which a teenager is abducted by a serial-killing couple, a kidnapped teenage girl is chained to a bed by serial killers who, it is implied, repeatedly rape their victims before murdering them. There is strong sexual threat throughout, including a sustained scene of attempted rape. The film is therefore classified 18, with BBFCinsight informing viewers of 'sustained sexual threat'.

Bridgend is a British drama in which a teenage girl and her father move to a town where a number of local teenagers have taken their own

1 *Gunpowder* (18)

2 *Suntan* (18)

3 *Mother!* (18)

lives. In a scene of strong sexual threat, a young man pins a young woman to a bed as he prepares to rape her. However, he stops himself before taking the sexual assault any further. The theme of teenage suicide also runs throughout the film as a group of friends deal with their grief in the aftermath of a series of deaths, and there are frequent verbal references to suicide and several people are seen dead with nooses round their necks after they have hanged themselves. The film also contains occasional uses of very strong language ('c**t'). Accordingly, the BBFC awarded the film an 18 classification.

The link between media effects and harm can be inconclusive and 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 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 2017, as in previous recent years, no cuts were made on the 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. In the US fantasy drama ***Mother!***, the relationship between a husband and wife is tested by the arrival of visitors to their home. Strong violence includes shootings and stabbings that result in bloody detail, and a woman is set upon by a crowd and beaten in a scene which also includes very strong language. There is also a scene in which a baby is killed and eaten. These scenes required the adult classification.

The Belko Experiment is a US thriller in which office employees

are ordered by an unknown voice over the company's intercom to take part in a deadly game. There is frequent strong, bloody violence in scenes in which people are shot, stabbed or beaten. In one scene, a woman repeatedly chops at a man's head with an axe, whilst in another scene a man repeatedly smashes a tape dispenser against a man's face. Both of these scenes are also accompanied by strong injury detail. Accordingly, the BBFC classified the film 18.

Blade Of The Immortal, a Japanese fantasy drama in which a samurai joins forces with an orphan, contains bloody swordfights involving dismemberment, and the violence is sometimes sadistic. The BBFC awarded the film an 18 classification.

Scenes of strong violence, torture and gory images also meant some television drama series submitted for video classification were classified 18. The period drama ***Taboo*** concerns a man waging war on those who have wronged him. In one episode, a scene of strong violence accompanied by gory images and involving the use of metal hooks and implied disembowelment was sufficiently sadistic to require the adult classification.

Gunpowder, based on the Gunpowder plot in London in 1605, also contains torture scenes. A





woman is stripped naked before being crushed to death by a stone slab, a man is hung, drawn and quartered, a man is attached to a device and tortured as his limbs are pulled apart, and another man's fingernails are ripped off. These scenes dwell on the infliction of pain and injury, feature strong gory images, and went beyond allowances under the BBFC's Classification Guidelines for a 15 classification.

Although torture-themed horror films are less common than in previous years, sadism was an aggravating consideration which contributed to the 18 classification of *Jigsaw*, the latest US horror film in the *Saw* series, and in which police investigate a series of gruesome murders. There are scenes in which people are forced to participate in murderous 'games', with bloody moments including shootings and neck stabbings, all of which are depicted with strong gory detail, and there is also strong injury detail. Accordingly, the film was classified 18.

Strong bloody violence meant the BBFC classified two of the year's South Asian releases at 18.

Bhoomi, a Hindi-language drama in which a young woman embarks on a campaign of revenge, features several brutal scenes with a sadistic edge, including one in which a man is chased and cornered before having his penis cut off. Sadism, as well as strong bloody violence, also features in *Toofan Singh*, a Punjabi-language drama, which includes a strong scene of torture in which a policeman gouges out a man's eye with a screwdriver.

There are strong images of real killings and dead bodies in the documentary *City of Ghosts*, in which a group of citizen journalists risk their lives to document and film Islamic State atrocities in their home city. The film includes several disturbing scenes in which groups of blindfolded or hooded men are shot in the head at close range. There is also footage showing decapitated bodies lying on a pavement, the heads having been placed on a fence. Accordingly, the BBFC classified the film 18.

In 2017, a number of films were classified at 18 for their depictions of more graphic or fetish sexual activity. *Fifty Shades Darker* is a drama

sequel, based on the novel by E.L. James, which concerns the relationship between a wealthy businessman and a young woman. There is strong sex and nudity, along with the portrayal of erotic roleplay based on domination, submission and sado-masochistic practices, and there are also strong verbal references to sexual activity. Accordingly, the BBFC classified the film 18.

In *The Handmaiden*, a Korean erotic mystery crime drama, a young woman raised as a thief infiltrates the household of a rich young Japanese heiress with a view to defrauding her. There are several strong sex scenes, and some scenes of BDSM activity in which male and female characters sustain, after being whipped, weal-like injuries to their buttocks. The BBFC classified the film 18, with BBFCinsight informing viewers of 'strong sex, sex references'.

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. **T2 Trainspotting** is a drama sequel in which a man returns home to Edinburgh 20 years after betraying his friends. As well as scenes of strong sex and drug misuse, there is also frequent very strong language ('c**t') so, accordingly, the BBFC classified the film 18 with BBFCinsight highlighting 'very strong language, strong sex, drug misuse'.

As in previous years, some older films which had previously been cut in order to gain an 18 classification were submitted for re-release on DVD and Blu-Ray, and were now acceptable at 18 with previously cut material restored. These films included *Showgirls*, *The Toolbox Murders*, and *Visiting Hours*.

The BBFC also classifies works for online distribution, and some of these presented challenging issues in 2017. **13 Reasons Why** is a Netflix drama series which concerns a teenage boy's attempts to discover why a female classmate took her own life. Some episodes

1 *Fifty Shades Darker* (18)

2 *Showgirls* (18)

were classified 18 by the BBFC, for a suicide scene and associated strong bloody images, and for scenes of sexual violence. The scenes of sexual violence, in which a young woman is raped by a man, go beyond the BBFC Classification Guidelines at 15 where sexual violence must be discreet, as they feature too many elements of stronger detail for them to be permitted below the adult level. Whilst the sexual violence is condemned, the male rapist's self-justificatory account of events was an aggravating factor so the BBFC classified these episodes 18.

In the fantasy drama series **American Gods**, a recently released ex-convict becomes involved in a conflict between the gods. Some episodes were classified 18 for strong bloody violence. One of the episodes contains strong sexualised nudity when a man searches through images on his dead wife's phone to find evidence of her infidelity and discovers photographs of an erect penis. There is also brief sight of a man with an erect penis in a later scene. These scenes meant that this episode is more appropriately placed at 18.

There are strong sexual images and sex references in some episodes of **Hot Girls Wanted: Turned On**, which examines sex and relationships in the age of the internet. One episode draws attention to the issue of abusive sex works and focuses on the rough and aggressive tendencies required during the production for a pornographic film, to the extent that one of the performers is shown to be uncomfortable with these demands. Accordingly, the BBFC classified this episode 18.

Marvel's The Punisher and **Marvel's Iron Fist** are television series based on Marvel Comics characters, and produced for broadcast via the internet. Both series contain some episodes which the BBFC classified 18 for online distribution as they contain scenes of strong bloody violence which dwell on the infliction of pain and injury.

In 2017 there was a decrease in the number of explicit pornographic works submitted to the BBFC. The 368 works in 2017 represent a 22% decrease on 2016, maintaining the downward trend in R18 submissions. The proportion of R18 works subject to cuts in 2017 was 15%, a decrease of 7% over the previous year. However, the cuts made to R18 works in 2017 continue 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 the 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, cuts made in 2017 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 has lain with the Video Standards Council (VSC), applying the PEGI system. The BBFC continues to be responsible for classifying any video game content attached to linear submissions. The VSC must send 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 2017, this included add-on material for four 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 2017, the BBFC advised a PG classification for one submission of linear content attached to a game: **Sudden Strike 4**. This is a tactical game set in World War II, and the material submitted to the BBFC comprised a collection of short video files of archive footage of various events that took place during the conflict (for example, D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge). The footage featured aerial shots of bombs dropped from planes, infantry and artillery action, explosions, images of bombed-out cities and so on. The narration in these clips referenced event such as the suicides of Hitler and Goebbels, and gave statistical information on the numbers of deaths

and casualties during the conflict. This all occurred in a documentary context without any graphic detail. However, some elements of the footage contained imagery that might potentially upset younger children, such as sight of a soldier with a dressing over one eye, a plaster on his cheek and lines of dried blood on his face. In another video, there is brief sight of the body of a fallen German soldier lying frozen in the snow. The BBFC considered that these images, depicting brief injury detail, were more appropriately placed at PG than U. PEGI gave the full game a 16 classification.

The BBFC classified linear content for the 'beat 'em up' game **Tekken 7** at 15. The content featured frequent sight of violence, including sight of punches, kicks, head-butts and neck breaks. The material also included some partial breast nudity during a sequence in which a female character takes a shower. PEGI gave the full game a 16 classification.

The BBFC advised 18 classifications for two submissions of linear material attached to two different video games in the Yakuza series. The first game, **Yakuza 6: The Song Of Life**, featured linear material consisting of staged sex chat lines (intended as a diversion from the main gameplay) in which women 'interact' with the gamer/viewer, asking questions about what they want (leaving

pauses so that the viewer/gamer can provide their own response), whilst appearing in various states of undress. As with previous games in the Yakuza series that have been subject to Determination of Suitability examination, the BBFC considered that there was a titillating intent in the material, both visually and verbally, and as such determined that it was most appropriate at the 18 category. PEGI gave the full game an 18 classification.

The second game, **Yakuza Kiwami**, was an HD remake of a 2005 game. The linear game material depicts the central character forming a relationship with a hostess. In doing so, the player can choose what happens at their various meetings, and whether or not they go out on dates. The dialogue exchanges between the two characters in these sequences include references to sexual activity and, in apparent rewards for the player's character choosing to go out on a date with the woman, there are several live-action sequences featuring women in bikinis, lingerie or sitting in baths with soap suds masking their breasts, as they pose and move in a suggestive manner. Although there was no depiction of full nudity, due to the titillating nature of the content the BBFC also considered this linear material most suitable at the 18 category. PEGI gave the full game an 18 classification.

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 2017 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 2017, 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 physical 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 2017 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 Canadian comedy drama *Prank* features a scene in which a family watch a home video of a children's dance show which is interrupted by a fetish pornographic film that has been recorded over it. The young daughter, who is clearly played by a child actor, watches the video with her family and although the scene was likely to have been filmed without the pornographic images on the television screen (which would have been added in post-production), the impression given of a child appearing in the same frame as a sex work was sufficient for cuts to be required under POCA legislation.

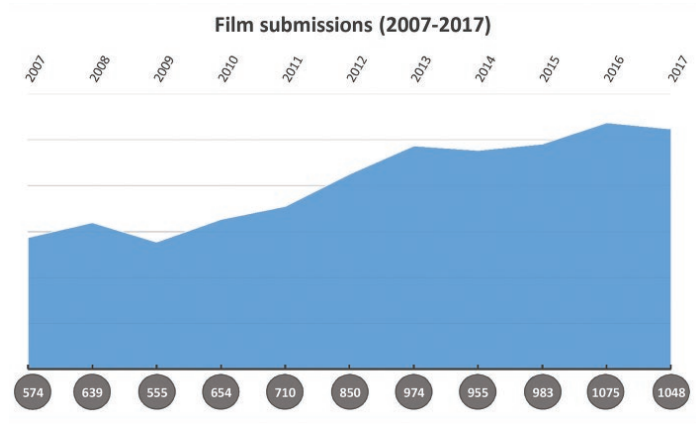
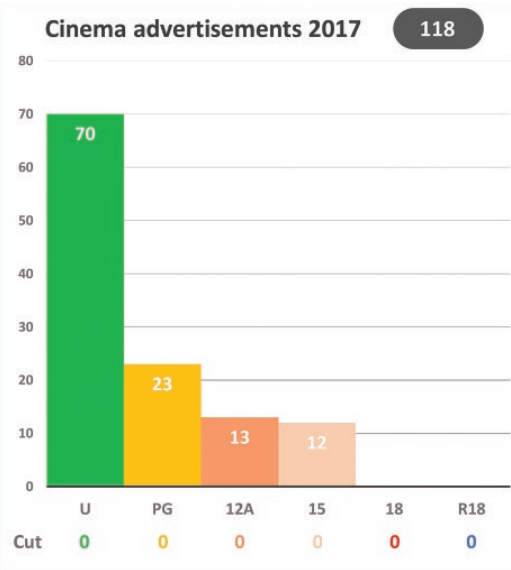
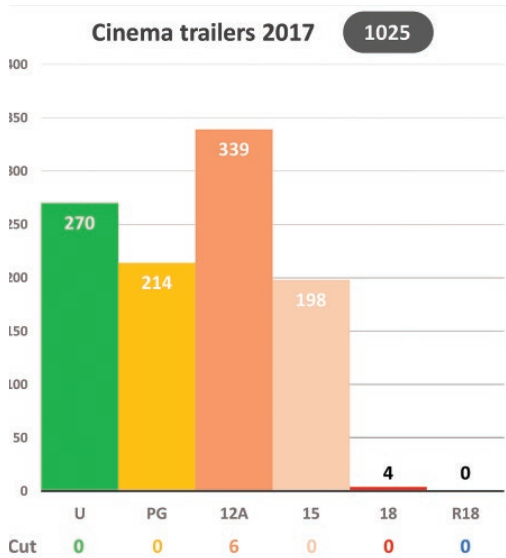
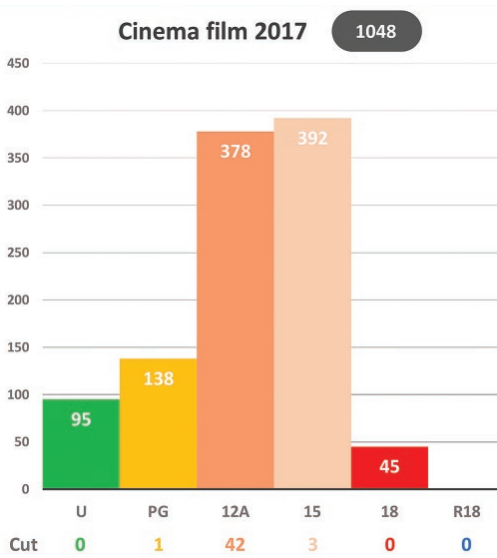
The Coroners and Justice Act 2009 introduced an offence of possessing a 'prohibited image of a child'. Under this legislation a prohibited image of a child covers non-photographic pornographic images of child abuse which must portray any of a specific range of acts. It strengthens the law on child pornography.

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 DVD release of the Chinese action drama *Brotherhood of Blades II: The Infernal Battlefield* features scenes in which horses fall in a potentially dangerous manner after appearing to be tripped. A number of other video submissions also required cuts to remove sight of real animal cruelty that appeared to be orchestrated and directed for the purposes of the film. These include *Ironmaster* (a boar being speared); *The Mountain of the Cannibal God* (a crocodile attacking other animals and a fight between a snake and a bird); *Cannibal Ferox* (a jaguar killing a monkey and a man stabbing a pig and a crocodile); *Navajo Joe* (cockfighting and horses being dangerously tripped); and *Massacre in Dinosaur Valley* (cockfighting).

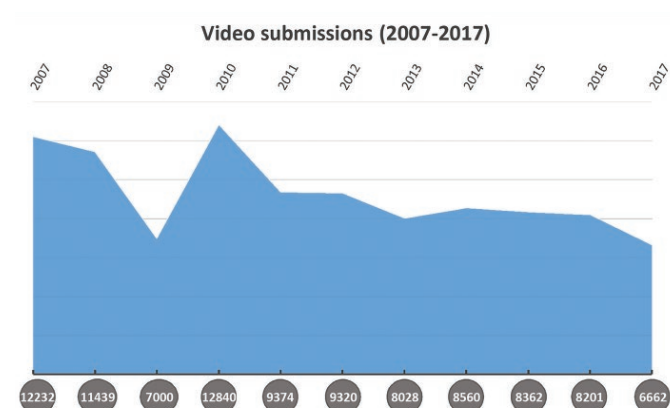
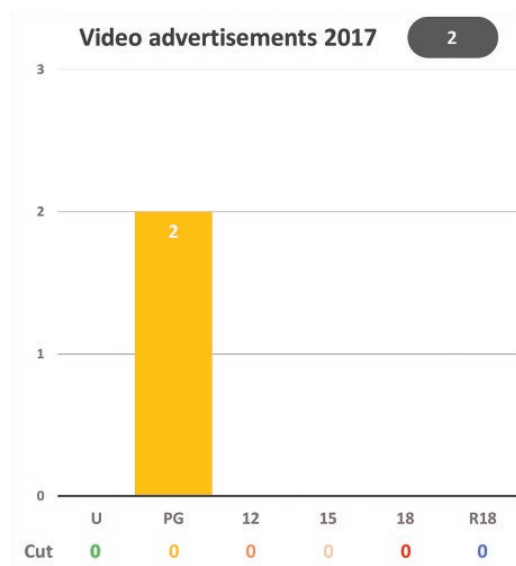
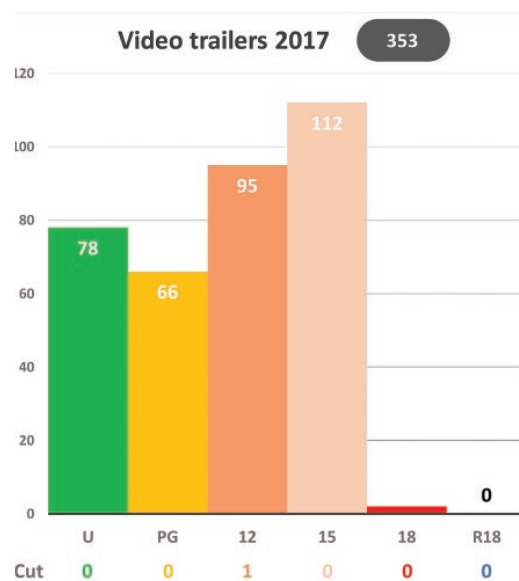
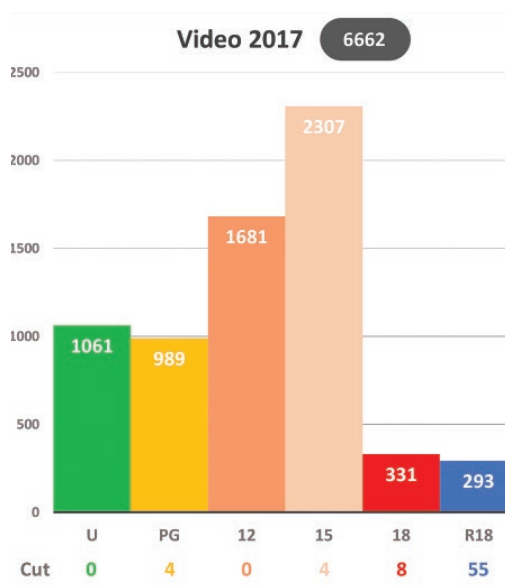
The Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 is relevant to the BBFC's work. A key feature of this legislation is the offence of the possession of extreme pornography. Material classified by the BBFC under the VRA is excluded from the definition of extreme pornography. In order for a work to be in breach 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 2007-2017

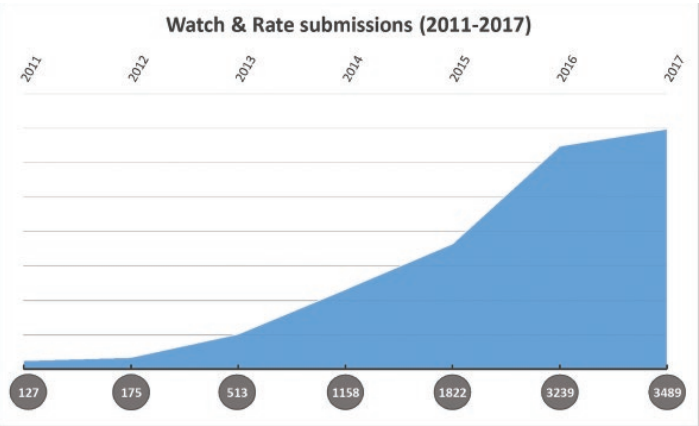
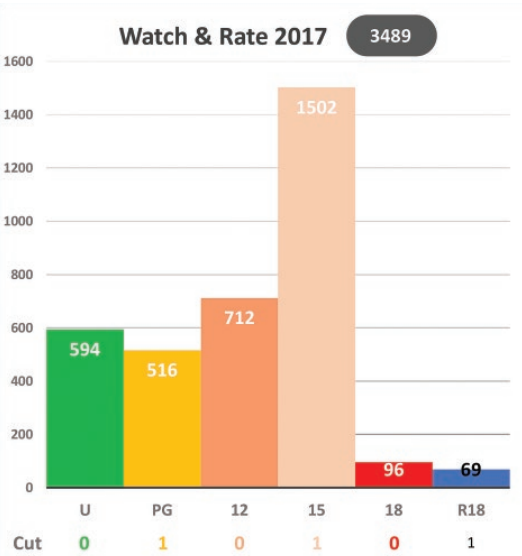
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
U	36	69	53	81	102	87	127	128	81	110	95
PG	104	117	83	110	98	150	145	147	137	153	138
12A	159	178	143	174	215	234	321	275	321	369	378
15	222	227	226	226	239	315	313	372	383	401	392
18	53	48	50	63	56	64	68	33	61	42	45
R18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Video statistics 2007-2017

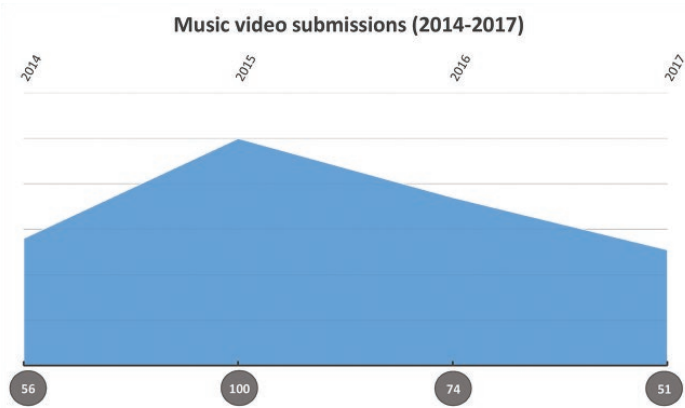
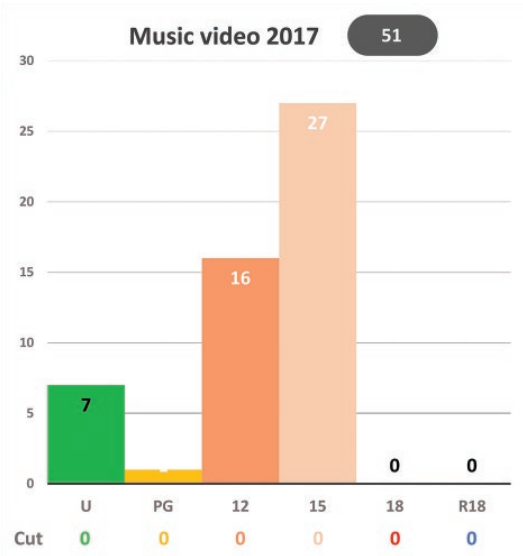
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Uc	12	15	7								
U	2482	1967	981	2190	2127	1798	1387	1333	1303	1525	1061
PG	2722	2609	1502	2567	1538	1520	1307	1433	1191	1230	989
12	2563	2613	1768	2963	2250	2284	1992	2283	2199	1998	1681
15	2343	2432	1728	3204	2327	2739	2454	2590	2716	2682	2307
18	950	904	456	790	507	424	368	379	416	364	331
R18	1159	897	555	1125	623	555	520	542	537	402	293
Rejected	1	2	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

Statistics



Watch & Rate statistics 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
U	19	30	112	481	602	754	594
PG	29	54	89	145	119	372	516
12	22	47	85	225	300	579	712
15	48	42	192	266	688	1351	1502
18	9	2	32	38	67	110	96
R18	0	0	3	3	45	73	69
Rejected	0	0	0	0	1	0	0



Music video statistics 2014-2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017
U	6	3	1	7
PG	10	4	4	1
12	17	48	29	16
15	22	43	38	27
18	1	2	2	0
R18	0	0	0	0
Rejected	0	0	0	0

Video Appeals Committee

During 2017, 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 2017, 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

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

Judy Clements: Former Director of the Independent Police Complaints Commission. Now Adjudicator for HM Revenue and Customs.

Valerie Owen OBE: Managing Director, Le Vaillant Owen. Former Managing Director of London First and Director of Jones Lang LaSalle. Non-Executive Director of the Dover Harbour Board, Church Buildings Council and East Kent Hospitals University Foundation NHS Trust.

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

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 2017, the Council contributed to discussions on the depiction of sexual violence across the BBFC categories, the Digital Economy Act and the research process for the next set of BBFC Guidelines, which are due for publication in early 2019.

In February, the Council discussed the film *Elle*, a psychological thriller in which a successful business woman tries to establish the identity of the man who raped her. It was classified 18 for sexual violence. Council members discussed the

ambiguity of the sexual violence portrayed in the film, and noted that this, in combination with the visual detail portrayed in some of the scenes, meant that the subject matter was not suitable for audiences below the age of 18.

The Council were in universal agreement with the BBFC's 18 classification of the film.

In June, the Council viewed the film *The Mummy*, in which the evil spirit of a betrayed Egyptian Princess is released into the world after her tomb is unearthed. It contained sustained threat, horror and brief strong violence, and was classified 15 as a result. Council members discussed the apparent appeal of the film at the 12A level, while noting that the violence and intensity of some of the sequences, such as when the titular character consumes her victims in a churchyard, were not suitable below the 15 category according to BBFC Guidelines. However, some members considered the tone to be suitably light-hearted overall to make the film suitable at 12A.

There was general agreement among the Council with the 15 classification.

The Council viewed the film *Mother!* in October. It was classified 18 for strong violence, which included depiction of the shooting or stabbing of victims. Council members discussed the film, with several the

view was that the tone and impact of the work as a whole was too strong for a classification category lower than 18. Members agreed that the violence was difficult to contextualise within the narrative and that the film had no obvious appeal or merit for younger teenagers.

The Council unanimously agreed with the BBFC's 18 classification.

We would like to thank the members of the Consultative Council for their continued contributions to discussions on BBFC classification policy and associated matters. In 2017, we welcomed Alderman Alan McDowell to the Consultative Council. We would like to thank Councillor Manjinder Shergill and Melissa Dring for their valued work as part of the Council. Both stepped down in 2017. We would also like to pay tribute to Councillor Mervyn Jones, of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, for his valued input to the discussions of the Consultative Council. He sadly passed away in Summer 2017.

Finally, we would like to note that in October 2017 we began a consultation with Consultative Council members on the future role of the Council. In particular, whether the Council best met both its stated purpose and the needs of its members in terms of their relationship with the BBFC. These discussions were ongoing into 2018.



1 *Elle* (18)

2 *The Mummy* (18)

Membership of the Council in 2017

Councillor Faye Abbott

LGA Culture, Tourism and Sport Board Representative

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

Ian Rice

Director General, Video Standards Council

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

Alderman Alan McDowell

Ards and North Down Borough Council



Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing

The Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing (APCV) benefits the work of the BBFC by providing a wide range of skills and expertise connected with child welfare and development. Its members feed into the development of BBFC policy and, in turn, classification.

During 2017, the APCV brought their collective expertise to discussions on the issue of bereavement in children's films, the Digital Economy Act and sexualisation in anime works.

In March, the Panel discussed the film *A Monster Calls*, a fantasy drama about a bereaved boy who encounters a monster in the form of a tree that helps him through his grieving process. It was classified 12A for moderate threat and scenes of emotional distress. Those present discussed various classification considerations, including the depiction of the boy's stages of grief, some scenes of bullying and the likely audience for the film. Members of the Panel considered that the

film's defining issues were more appropriate at the 12A category than for younger audiences, despite what they saw as the sensitive handling of a challenging subject.

Panel members were in full agreement with the BBFC's 12A classification of the film.

In July, the Panel viewed *My Life As A Courgette*, an animated drama about a boy who moves to a care home after his mother dies. It was classified PG for mild sex references and references to traumatic childhood experiences. The Panel considered that the film depicted many types of childhood trauma, and in doing so presented them in a manner that was both sensitive and appropriate for the likely audience for a PG film (i.e. around eight years old). Members also commented on the film's highlighting of universal issues such as interpersonal relationships and the importance of positive relationships, between both children and children and adults.

However, some Panel members considered some of the sex references to be more appropriate at 12A than PG.

Overall, Panel members were in general agreement with the film's PG certificate.

In November, the APCV viewed *To The Bone*, a Netflix Original film classified 15 for its anorexia theme, suicide and self-harm references, and strong language. The Panel members discussed various issues presented in the film, such as its representation of eating disorders and mental illness, and the attempts of characters in the film to help those suffering from such conditions.

The Panel agreed with the BBFC's 15 classification.

The membership of the Advisory Panel on Children's Viewing was unaltered in 2017 in comparison to 2016.

Membership of the Panel in 2017

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



1 Goodbye Christopher Robin (PG)

**The principal officers of
the British Board of Film
Classification in 2017***President*

Patrick Swaffer

Vice Presidents

Alison Hastings

Gerard Lemos

Chief Executive Officer

David Austin

Chief Operating Officer

Dave Barrett

Policy Director

David Miles

Finance Director

Siobhan Smedley-Wild

Compliance Managers

Craig Lapper

Ian Machiah

Head of the DEA

(Digital Economy Act)

Murray Perkins

Head of Business Services

Tom Cairns

Head of Communications

Catherine Anderson

Head of Education

Lucy Brett

Council of Management*Chair*

Maggie Carver

Finance Committee Chair

Jon Teckman

Remuneration Committee Chair

Sonita Alleyne

Members

Merion Alcock – appointed 5 April 2017

Sonita Alleyne

Alison Hastings

Steve Jaggs – resigned 5 April 2017

Graham Lee – resigned 5 April 2017

Gerard Lemos

Lesley Mackenzie – appointed 5 April 2017

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

Bird & Bird LLP

12 New Fetter Lane

London

EC4A 1JP

Registered Office

3 Soho Square

London

W1D 3HD

Registered number

117289

Strategic report for the year ended 31 December 2017

The Directors present their strategic report with the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2017.

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. In addition, in 2018 the Government designated the BBFC as the Age-Verification Regulator under the Digital Economy Act 2017 (DEA). Its revenue is derived principally from fees charged to distributors for the classification of their product. Funding for the BBFC's DEA work comes from the Government.

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 the level of cash generated from operations. 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.

Turnover for the year has remained steady with a 2% rise to £5.6m (2016: £5.5m). There has been a 16% decline in income from DVD classification, which was expected. This decline as seen in the previous ten years is predicted to continue, as the demand for online product increases.

Online submissions rose by 22% but the current rate of increase is not expected to offset further declines in DVD income and the cost base of the Company is being managed accordingly.

Film submissions remain steady and it is anticipated that the current level of submissions will continue to be maintained.

Turnaround times for DVD home entertainment works to be processed were maintained at 7.5 days (2016: 7.4 days) beating the BBFC's eight-day business target.

The BBFC works 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 12% (2016:10%) of turnover, this represents an increase of 24% on the previous year and the BBFC expects demand for self-regulation services to rise.

The Company has been saving over a number of years for an anticipated major investment in the IT infrastructure. Over 2018 and 2019 we will be investing substantially in the BBFC's IT systems and workflow infrastructure. Consequently, we will be able to provide a more cost-efficient and speedy service, including to those operating in a self-regulatory landscape.

Financial instruments

The company's financial instruments at the balance sheet date comprised of 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 31 December 2017, the company had undrawn committed borrowing facilities of £26,877 (2016: £36,000).

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

David Austin

Chief Executive Officer

20 April 2018

Report of the Directors for the year ended 31 December 2017

Results

The profit for the year, after taxation, amounted to £1,179,948 (2016: £1,173,270).

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:

M Carver
Chair

J S P Teckman
Chair of the Finance Committee

S Alleyne
Chair of the Remuneration Committee

M Alcock
(Appointed 5 April 2017)

D J R Austin
Chief Executive Officer

A Hastings
Vice President

S R Jaggs
(Resigned 5 April 2017)

K G Lee
(Resigned 5 April 2017)

G Lemos
Vice President

L A Mackenzie
(Appointed 5 April 2017)

P L Swaffer
President
(Reappointed 17 October 2017)

The Council of Management would like to record their thanks to Graham Lee and Steve Jaggs, who retired in 2017, for their long and dedicated service as Directors and Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively.

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 United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law, including FRS 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 they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs and surplus of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements 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.

The Directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

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.

Disclosure of information to auditor

The Directors confirm that:

- so far as each director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Company's auditor is unaware, and
- the Directors have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as Directors in order to make themselves 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.

M Carver
Director

20 April 2018

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

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the British Board of Film Classification for the year ended 31 December 2017, which comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Statement of Changes in Equity and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Company's affairs as at 31 December 2017 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.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Who we are reporting to

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.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Directors have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The Directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Auditor's Report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent

with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions 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 the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the Directors' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matter on which we are required to report by the Companies Act 2006

In the light of the 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 or the Directors' report.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which 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

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

- 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.

Responsibilities of Directors for the financial statements

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, and for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. The description forms part of our auditor's report.

Sergio Cardoso

(Senior statutory auditor)
for and on behalf of
Grant Thornton UK LLP
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
London

20 April 2018

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 December 2017

	Note	2017	2016
		£	£
Turnover	4	5,554,457	5,456,941
Operating costs		(4,817,733)	(4,924,810)
Gross profit		736,724	532,131
Other operating income	5	150,113	140,359
Fair value loss on investment property		-	(49,302)
Operating profit	10	886,837	623,188
Gain on financial assets at fair value		420,477	575,454
Interest receivable and similar income	6	222,669	209,324
Interest payable and charges	7	(14,750)	(25,450)
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation		1,515,233	1,382,516
Taxation on profit on ordinary activities	11	(335,285)	(209,246)
Profit for the financial year		1,179,948	1,173,270
Total comprehensive income for the year		1,179,948	1,173,270

There were no recognised gains and losses for 2017 or 2016 other than those included in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

The notes on pages 60 to 71 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2017

	Note	2017	2016
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	12	3,025,695	3,111,842
Investments	14	7,358,057	6,984,340
Investment property	13	3,540,030	3,540,030
		<u>13,923,782</u>	<u>13,636,212</u>
Current assets			
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	15	863,956	542,578
Cash at bank and in hand	16	2,659,390	2,358,303
		<u>3,523,346</u>	<u>2,900,881</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(1,340,338)	(1,546,464)
Net current assets		<u>2,183,008</u>	<u>1,354,417</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		16,106,790	14,990,629
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18	-	(112,970)
Provisions for liabilities			
Deferred tax		(317,971)	(268,788)
		<u>(317,971)</u>	<u>(268,788)</u>
Net assets		<u>15,788,819</u>	<u>14,608,871</u>
Capital and reserves			
Profit and loss account	21	15,788,819	14,608,871
		<u>15,788,819</u>	<u>14,608,871</u>

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board and were signed on its behalf on 20 April 2018.

M Carver - Director

J S P Teckman - Director

The notes on pages 60 to 71 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended 31 December 2017

	Profit and loss account	Total equity
	£	£
At 1 January 2017	14,608,871	14,608,871
Comprehensive income for the year		
Surplus for the year	1,179,948	1,179,948
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total comprehensive income for the year	1,179,948	1,179,948
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2017	15,788,819	15,788,819
	<hr/>	<hr/>

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/>
At 31 December 2016	14,608,871	14,608,871
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The notes on pages 60 to 71 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 December 2017

	2017	2016
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities		
Profit for the financial year after tax	1,179,948	1,173,270
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of tangible assets	133,128	161,257
Interest paid	14,750	29,257
Interest received	(222,669)	(209,324)
Taxation charge	335,285	209,246
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(339,660)	206,976
(Decrease) in creditors	(155,305)	(240,221)
Corporation tax (paid)	(147,613)	(56,082)
Gain on assets	(421,007)	(575,454)
Net cash generated from operating activities	376,857	698,925
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(46,982)	(276,187)
Sale of tangible fixed assets	530	(36,650)
Purchase of listed investments	(3,475,826)	(300,000)
Sale of listed investments	3,522,578	-
Interest received	17,949	209,324
Dividends received	204,720	203,691
Net cash from investing activities	222,969	(199,822)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment of loans	(283,989)	(268,255)
Interest paid	(14,750)	(29,257)
Net cash used in financing activities	(298,739)	(297,512)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	301,087	201,591
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	2,358,303	2,156,712
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of year	2,659,390	2,358,303
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of year comprise:		
Cash at bank and in hand	2,659,390	2,358,303
	2,659,390	2,358,303

The notes on pages 60 to 71 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

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, W1D 3HD.

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 judgement 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:

Fixtures and fittings	- 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 2017

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 of the recoverable amount, 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.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

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.

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. Management consider bad debt provision to not be necessary. See note 13.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

	2017	2016
	£	£
4. Turnover		
An analysis of turnover by class of business is as follows:		
Classification income	4,967,158	5,456,941
DEA income	587,299	-
	5,554,457	5,456,941
The turnover and operating surplus are attributable to the principal activities of the company. The entire turnover in both periods is attributable to geographical areas within the United Kingdom.		
	2017	2016
	£	£
5. Other operating income		
Income from education seminars	3,931	4,250
Rents receivable and service charge income	145,652	136,109
Other	530	-
	150,113	140,359
6. Interest receivable		
Other interest and similar income	222,669	209,324
7. Interest payable and similar charges		
Interest on loan repayable	14,750	25,450

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

	2017	2016
	£	£
8. Employees		
Staff costs, including Directors' remuneration, were as follows:		
Wages and salaries (including severance pay)	2,468,997	3,027,732
Social security costs	259,845	287,093
Cost of defined contribution scheme	164,444	190,888
	2,893,286	3,505,713

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

	2017	2016
	No.	No.
Non-executive directors	8	8
Management	4	5
Administration	12	8
Operations	27	31
	51	52
	2017	2016
	£	£

9. Directors' remuneration

Directors' emoluments	336,947	335,092
Company contributions to defined contribution pension schemes	28,094	40,893
	365,041	375,985

During the year retirement benefits were accruing to 4 Directors (2016: 4) in respect of defined contribution pension schemes.

The highest paid Directors received remuneration of £171,565 (2016: £116,405).

The value of the company's contributions paid to a defined contribution pension scheme in respect of the highest paid Directors amounted to £17,073 (2016: £Nil).

Details of the highest paid Director in 2017 and 2016 relate to separate individuals. The awards have accrued over different periods of time and are not directly comparable.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

	2017	2016
	£	£
10. Operating profit		
The operating surplus is stated after charging:		
Directors' remuneration	365,041	375,985
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	128,016	161,256
Audit remuneration - audit	16,550	16,250
Audit remuneration - non-audit	25,100	17,200
	2017	2016
	£	£
11. Taxation		
Corporation tax		
Current tax on profits for the year	267,822	147,613
Adjustments in respect of previous periods	-	(12,809)
Total current tax	267,822	134,804
Deferred tax		
Origination and reversal of timing differences	67,463	82,412
Adjustments in respect of prior periods	-	(7,970)
Total deferred tax	67,463	74,442
Taxation on surplus on ordinary activities	335,285	209,246

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

11. Taxation (continued)

Factors affecting tax charge for the year

The tax assessed for the year is higher than (2016: lower than) the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 19.25% (2016: 20%). The differences are explained below:

	2017	2016
	£	£
Profit on ordinary activities before tax	<u>1,515,233</u>	<u>1,382,516</u>
Profit on ordinary activities multiplied by standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 19.25% (2016: 20%)	291,630	276,503
Effects of:		
Expenses not deductible for tax purposes	5,534	8,321
Depreciation on ineligible assets	21,742	28,868
Marginal relief	(8,915)	-
Adjustments to tax charge in respect of previous periods	(72,466)	(20,779)
Investment gains/losses not taxable	55,638	(19,590)
Other timing differences	70,602	(13,201)
Non-taxable income	(28,480)	(28,267)
Differences in tax rates	-	(22,609)
Total tax charge for the year	<u>335,285</u>	<u>209,246</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

12. Tangible fixed assets

	Long leasehold property	Computer equipment	Long leasehold property expenditure	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost or valuation					
At 1 January 2017	3,137,264	76,729	241,151	2,434,898	5,890,042
Additions	-	42,691	-	5,106	47,797
Disposals	-	-	(815)	(1,699,500)	(1,700,315)
At 31 December 2017	3,137,264	119,420	240,336	740,504	4,237,524
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2017	343,007	69,767	43,729	2,321,697	2,778,200
Charge for the year on owned assets	25,098	31,561	47,905	28,565	133,129
Disposals	-	(17,196)	-	(1,682,304)	(1,699,500)
At 31 December 2017	368,105	84,132	91,634	667,958	1,211,829
Net book value					
At 31 December 2017	2,769,159	35,288	148,702	72,546	3,025,695
At 31 December 2016	2,794,257	6,962	197,422	113,201	3,111,842

During the year the Company wrote off its Digital Archive Equipment which had a cost of £1,698,164 (2016: £1,698,164), and a net book value of £Nil (2016: £Nil) which had reached the end of its useful life.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

13. Investment property	Long term leasehold investment property
	£
Valuation	
At 1 January 2017	3,540,030
	<hr/>
At 31 December 2017	3,540,030
	<hr/>

The 2017 valuations were made by Reid Rose Gregory Limited, on an open market value for existing use basis.

14. Fixed asset investments	Listed investments
	£
Cost or valuation	
At 1 January 2017	6,984,341
Additions	3,475,826
Disposals	(3,508,879)
Revaluations	406,769
	<hr/>
At 31 December 2017	7,358,057
	<hr/>
Net book value	
At 31 December 2017	7,358,057
	<hr/>
At 31 December 2016	6,984,341
	<hr/>

	2017	2016
	£	£
15. Debtors		
Trade debtors	347,833	310,057
Other debtors	19,985	74,126
Prepayments and accrued income	451,448	95,422
Deferred taxation	44,690	62,970
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	863,956	542,575
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

	2017	2016
	£	£
16. Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>2,659,390</u>	<u>2,358,303</u>
	2017	2016
	£	£
17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year		
Bank loans	105,174	276,193
Trade creditors	77,878	54,320
Corporation tax	267,822	147,613
Other taxation and social security	133,649	213,933
Other creditors	9,255	20,530
Accruals and deferred income	746,560	833,875
	<u>1,340,338</u>	<u>1,546,464</u>
	2017	2016
	£	£
18. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year		
Bank loans	<u>-</u>	<u>112,970</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

	2017	2016
	£	£
19. Bank loans		
Analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:		
Amounts falling due within one year		
Bank loans	105,174	276,193
	<u>105,174</u>	<u>276,193</u>
Amounts falling due 1-2 years		
Bank loans	-	112,970
	<u>-</u>	<u>112,970</u>
	2017	2016
	£	£
20. Deferred taxation		
At beginning of year	(205,818)	(131,376)
Charged to the profit or loss	(67,463)	(74,442)
At end of year	<u>(273,281)</u>	<u>(205,818)</u>
The provision for deferred taxation is made up as follows:		
Provisions b/fwd	(205,818)	(131,376)
Prior year deferred tax adjustment	-	7,970
Current year charge at 17% (PY 17 %)	(67,463)	(82,412)
	<u>(273,281)</u>	<u>(205,818)</u>
Comprising:		
Asset	44,690	62,970
Liability	(317,971)	(268,788)
	<u>(273,281)</u>	<u>(205,818)</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

21. Reserves

Profit and loss account

Includes all current and prior period retained surplus and losses.

22. Capital commitments

The company has no capital commitments at 31 December 2017 (2016: £Nil), however there are plans in place to update the software system.

23. Pension commitments

The company operates a defined contribution scheme to provide retirement benefits for staff. The total pension charge for the year was £164,444 (2016: £190,888). There are no balances outstanding in relation to pensions at year end.

24. Commitments under operating leases

At 31 December 2017 the Company had future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2017	2016
	£	£
Operating leases which expire:		
Property		
Not later than 1 year	37,500	37,500
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	150,000	150,000
Later than 5 years	37,500	37,500
	<u>225,000</u>	<u>225,000</u>
Equipment		
Not later than 1 year	4,048	4,277
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	4,611	-
	<u>8,659</u>	<u>4,277</u>

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 (2016: £Nil).

Photographic credits

The BBFC would like to give special thanks to all the distributors supplying images to the BBFC Annual Report & Accounts 2017.

20th Century Fox Film Co Ltd

Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul © 2018 Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment LLC. All Rights Reserved.

Goodbye Christopher Robin © 2018 Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment LLC. All Rights Reserved.

Kingsman: The Golden Circle © 2018 Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment LLC. All Rights Reserved.

Logan © 2018 Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment LLC. All Rights Reserved.

My Cousin Rachel © 2018 Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment LLC. All Rights Reserved.

War for the Planet of the Apes © 2018 Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment LLC. All Rights Reserved.

Altitude Film Distribution

Moonlight © Altitude Film Distribution.

BFI Films

Hotel Salvation © Courtesy of BFI Distribution.

Entertainment

The Space Between Us © 2015 STX Productions, LLC.

Eureka Entertainment Ltd

Suntan © Eureka Entertainment Ltd.

Lionsgate UK Ltd

Trespass Against Us Lionsgate - © BFI, Channel Four Television Corporation and Trespass Against Us Limited 2015.

Moonlake Entertainment

The Green Hell © by Moonlake Entertainment Rights Ltd.

National Theatre

Hedda Gabler

Ruth Wilson and Rafe Spall in Hedda Gabler © Jan Versweyveld.

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

Hayley Squires (Mae) - Cat on a Hot Tin Roof © Johan Persson.

Paramount Pictures Ltd

Baywatch © 2018 Paramount Pictures. All Rights Reserved on all images.

Mother! © 2018 Paramount Pictures. All Rights Reserved on all images.

Ghost in the Shell © 2018 Paramount Pictures. All Rights Reserved on all images.

Padmaavat © 2017 Paramount Pictures. All Rights Reserved on all images.

Pathe Productions Ltd

Showgirls © Pathe Productions Limited.

Science Museum Group Enterprises

Dream Big: Engineering Our World © MacGillivray Freeman Films.

Sony DADC/Columbia Pictures

The Emoji Movie © 2017 Sony Pictures Animation Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle © 2017 Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

T2 Trainspotting © 2017 TriStar Pictures, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Spirit Entertainment

Gunpowder © Spirit Entertainment Ltd.

Studio Canal

Paddington 2 © Courtesy of STUDIOCANAL.

Taboo © Courtesy of STUDIOCANAL.

Thunderbird Releasing Ltd

A Man Called Ove © Courtesy of Thunderbird Releasing.

A Quiet Passion © Courtesy of Thunderbird Releasing.

Trafalgar Releasing Ltd

Elle © Trafalgar Releasing Ltd.

Universal Pictures UK

Atomic Blonde © 2017 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.

Darkest Hour © 2017 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.

Despicable Me 3 © 2017 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.

Fast & Furious 8 © 2017 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.

Fifty Shades Darker © 2017 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.

Get Out © 2017 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.

The Mummy © 2017 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.

Victoria and Abdul © 2017 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.

Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures (UK) WDSMP

Coco © 2017 Disney/Pixar.

Star Wars: The Last Jedi © 2017 TM Lucasfilm Ltd.

Warner Brothers Entertainment UK Ltd

Dunkirk © 2018 Warner Bros. Ent. All Rights Reserved.

Big Little Lies © 2018 Home Box Office, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

John Wick: Chapter 2 © 2018 Artwork & Supplementary Materials™ & © 2018 Summit Entertainment, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

Kong: Skull Island © 2018 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved.

The Lego Batman Movie © 2018 WBEI & DC Comics © 2017 The LEGO Group.

Cover design: All designs
© Hanna Benjamin
www.hannabenjamin.com

Design and production:
All design and production
© GNB Communications
www.gnbcommunications.com



www.bbfc.co.uk
www.cbbfc.co.uk

Olivia age 11