

BBFC Board of Classification Meeting

Wednesday 24 November 2021

Present

Patrick Swaffer	President
Murphy Cobbing	Vice President
David Austin	Chief Executive
Dave Barrett	Deputy Chief Executive
Matt Tindall	Senior Policy Officer (minutes)
Faye Harcourt	Director of Marketing and Outreach (for items 2 and 3)
Sarah Peacock	Compliance and Education Manager (for items 3 and 4)
Chris Davies	Compliance Manager (for items 3 and 4)
Matthew Blakemore	Head of Product (for item 6)

Apologies

Kamlesh Patel	Vice President
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Minutes of the previous meeting

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Matters arising

2. There were no matters arising.

BBFC three year strategy

3. David presented a proposed update to the BBFC's strategy for the next three years to enable the organisation to fulfil its mission of helping families choose content well wherever they view - cinema, DVD/Blu-ray and VOD where there is a public expectation of consistent, trusted and well-understood BBFC age ratings and content advice. The Board agreed the strategy, which will next go before the Board of Directors.

Discrimination research

4. Chris and Sarah presented the findings from the recent discrimination research. The aims of the project were to assess public expectations of how

issues related to discrimination and racism should be classified, to identify key mitigating and aggravating factors, and to inform the BBFC's approach to describing instances of discrimination in ratings info.

5. The research, by We Are Family, found considerable public support for the BBFC's current approach towards classifying discrimination, with the majority of participants agreeing with age ratings across a variety of clips and full features.
6. Participants identified a number of aggravating and mitigating factors which the BBFC should consider when classifying content, many of which align with existing BBFC policy. Key aggravating factors included imitability, the use of stronger racist terms (e.g. the 'n word'), and any accompanying violence or threat. A documentary context was felt to be the most significant mitigating factor, alongside other factors including educational value, condemnation of discriminatory behaviour and a historical setting.
7. The findings were very clear about the value of content warnings, and will inform certain changes to the way the BBFC describes discrimination in ratings info. These include the use of the term 'racial language' to describe reclaimed, peer-to-peer or certain historical uses of racial terms, and the use of the term 'discriminatory stereotypes' to signal instances of stereotyping or assumed racial identities.

Classification: PLEASURE

8. The Board discussed the classification of PLEASURE, a US drama about a young woman working as a porn performer in Los Angeles. The film contains strong sex and sex references, including unsimulated masturbation and sight of semen on a character's face, and scenes of sexual violence and abuse. Given the strength of the material, the film was referred to the Board before the 18 without cuts recommended by the viewing team was confirmed. The Board unanimously agreed with the recommended category, noting that while the film was a challenging watch it did not breach precedent or policy at the adult category. A ratings info of 'sexually abusive behaviour, strong sex, nudity, sex references' was agreed.

A.I. update

9. Matthew provided an update on the BBFC's AI project to develop compliance tools to improve the service the BBFC offers to customers.

AOB

10. There was no other business.

Date of next meeting: 9 December 2021