

BBFC Best Practice Age Labelling Guidelines for VOD: Data pack



March 2019

Overview

In September 2018, in response to a request from Margot James MP, Minister for Digital and the Creative Industries, the BBFC undertook research to ascertain the current state of age labelling and parental controls online on Video On Demand services that offer professional long form video content via Subscription, Transactional and Ad Funded models.

Pure catch-up TV services like iPlayer, ITV Hub, All4, My 5 and UKTV Player, are outside of the scope of these recommendations.

In addition the BBFC commissioned an independent quantitative study of public perceptions of VOD classification. Some of the results from the BBFC's 2018 Classification Guidelines research are also relevant and headlines from that are reproduced in this document.

These surveys were undertaken to establish where there are areas for improvement in current provision of age ratings online in order to better meet the Government's key commitment of making Britain the safest place in the world to be online.

This document collates our key findings from three studies:

- Study 1 – Survey of public perceptions of VOD classification (2018)
- Study 2 – BBFC snapshot of VOD services (2018)
- Study 3 – BBFC Classification Guidelines research (2018)

The data within this document informed the BBFC's new best practice guidance on age labelling for VOD published in March 2019.

Study 1: Public Perceptions of VOD Classification (2018)

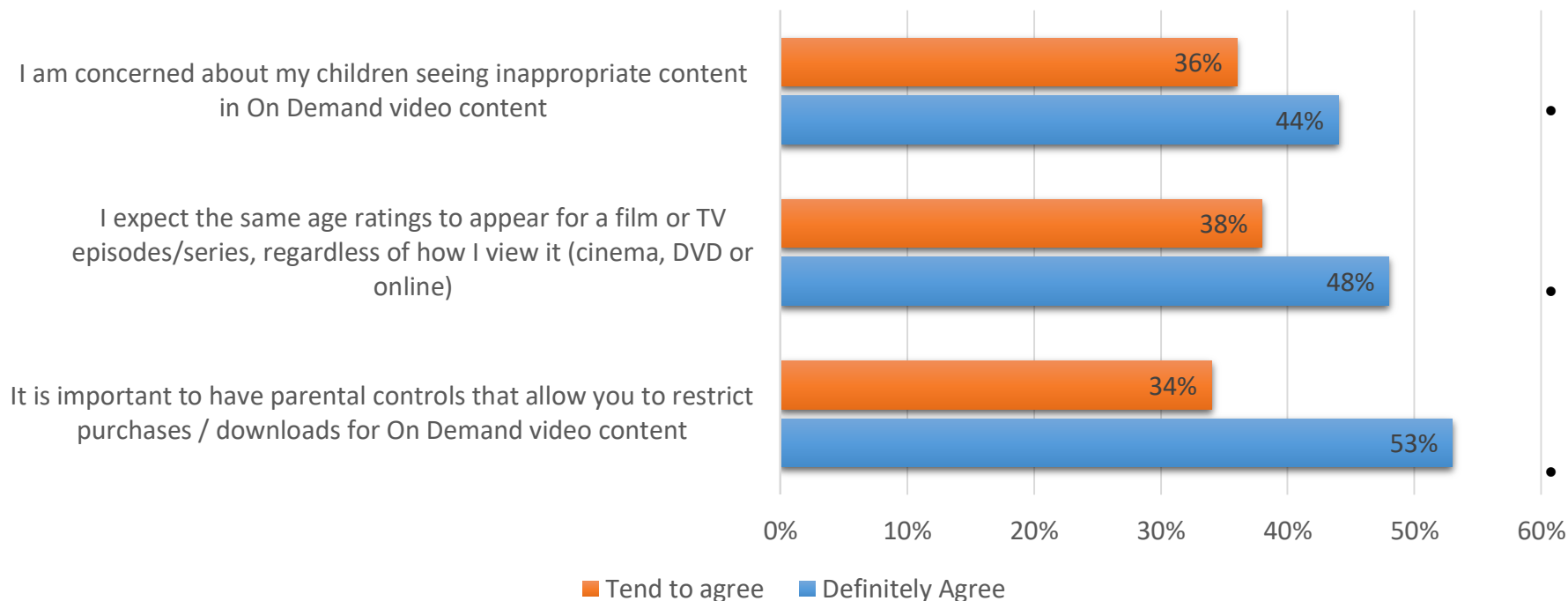
The first study was an independent piece of qualitative research into public perceptions of Video On Demand classification, carried out by Ashworth Research in September 2018.

A nationally representative sample of parents and children's views was obtained through a Public Knowledge online panel survey.

The sample was as follows:

- 1,420 parents of children aged 3-17
- 87% (1,229) of whom said they regularly use VOD.
- 718 children aged 10-17
- of whom 82% (587) said they regularly use VOD.

Q. “Parents – How much do you agree or disagree with the statements?”



- Almost 80% of parents are concerned about children seeing inappropriate content on VOD.
- 87% of parents think it is important to have parental controls
- 86% of parents expect to see ratings regardless of how they view the content

Study 1: Survey of public perceptions of VOD classification (2018)

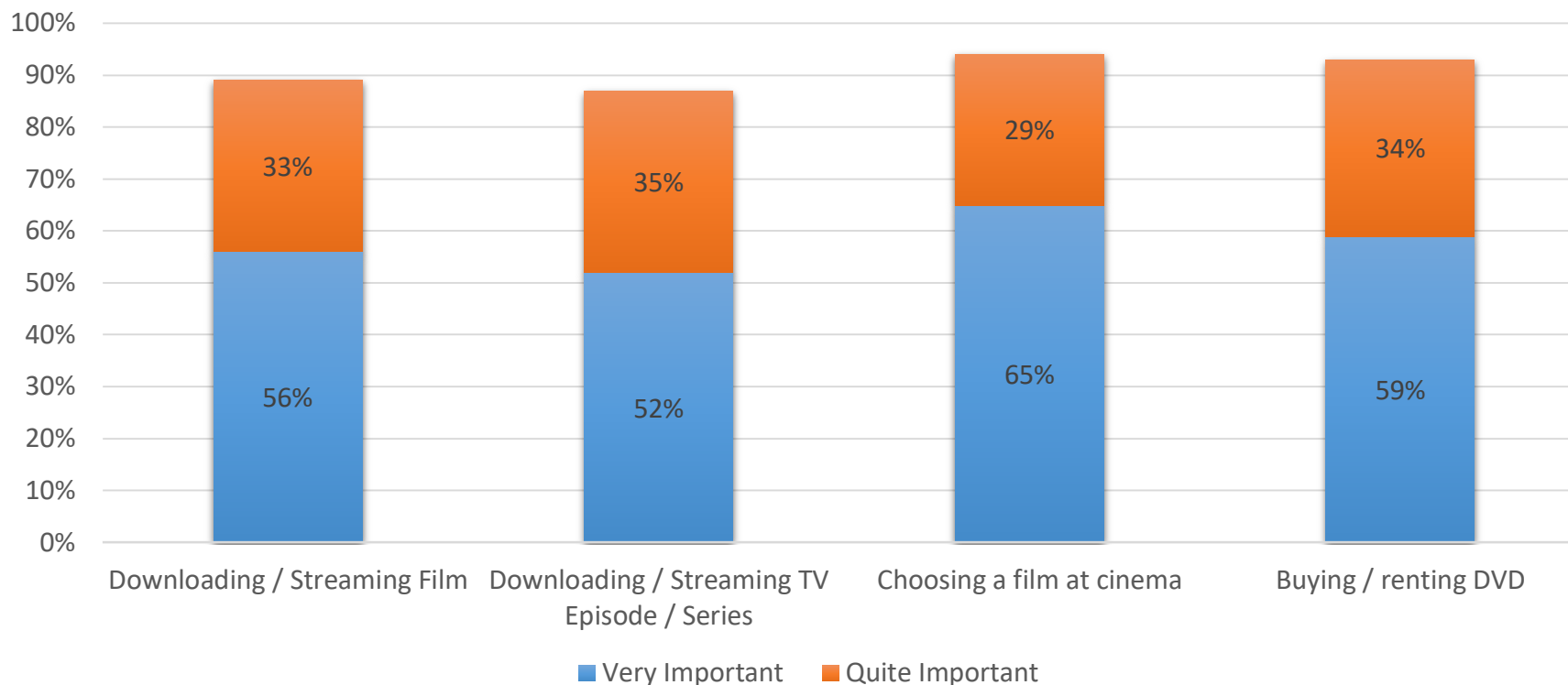
Q. How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?

Other responses available were: Neither agree nor disagree, Tend to disagree and Definitely disagree.

Base: Parents of 3-17 yr olds, who access VOD (1229)

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Q. “Parents – How important do you think it is to have age labelling when...?”



- 90% of parents believe that it is important to have access to age ratings when downloading or streaming a film online

Study 1: Survey of public perceptions of VOD classification (2018)

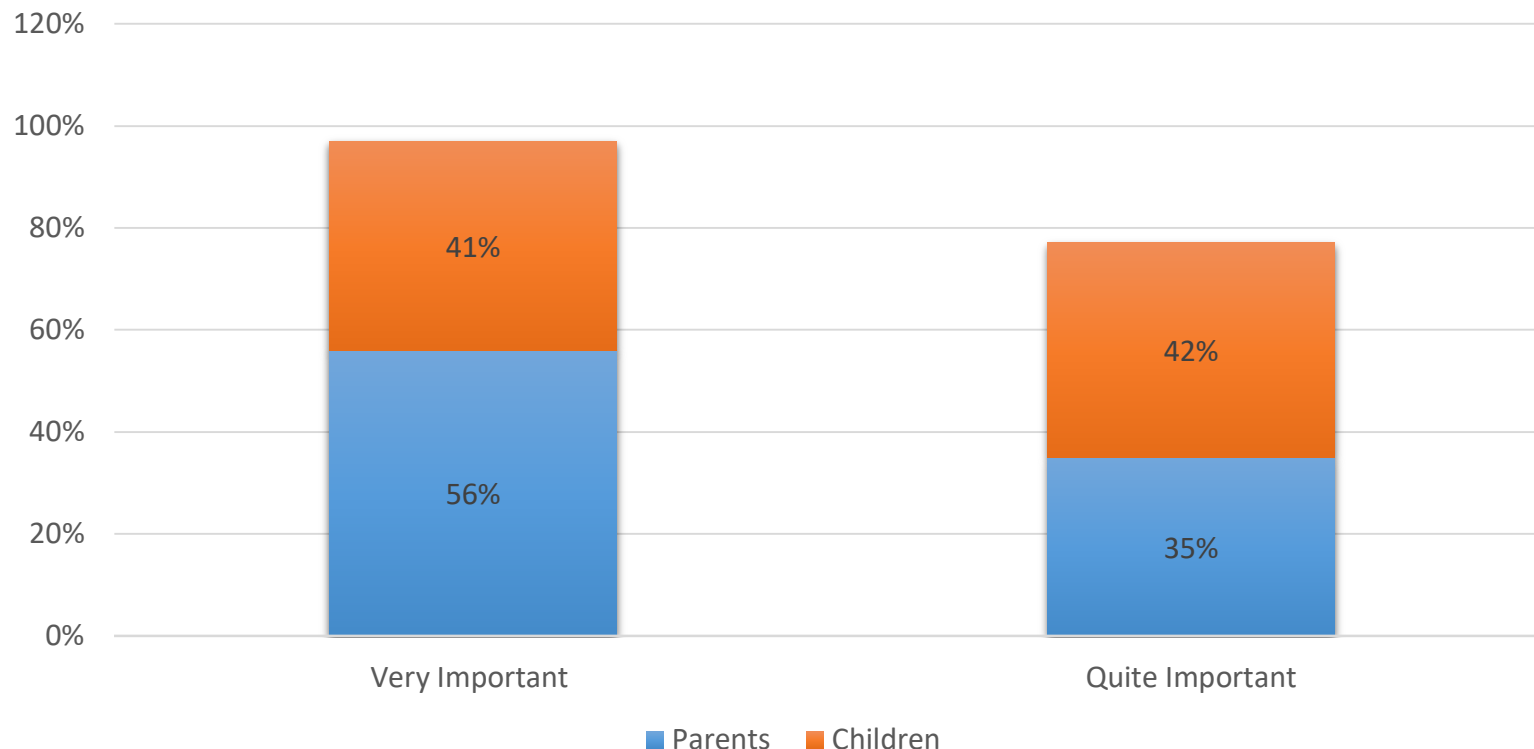
Q. “How important do you think it is to have age labelling when....”

Base1: Parents of 3-17 yr olds, who access VOD films (947) Base2: Parents of 3-17 yr olds, who access VOD TV (990)

Base3: Parents of 3-17 yr olds, who access any VOD and go to cinema (868) Base4: Parents of 3-17 yr olds, who access any VOD and buy/rent DVDs (725)

Other responses available were: Neither important nor unimportant, Not very important and Not at all important

Q. "To what extent do you think it is important for On Demand video content to always show the same age ratings as films in cinema and on DVD?"



- 92% of parents think is important for VOD to use the same age ratings as cinema/DVD

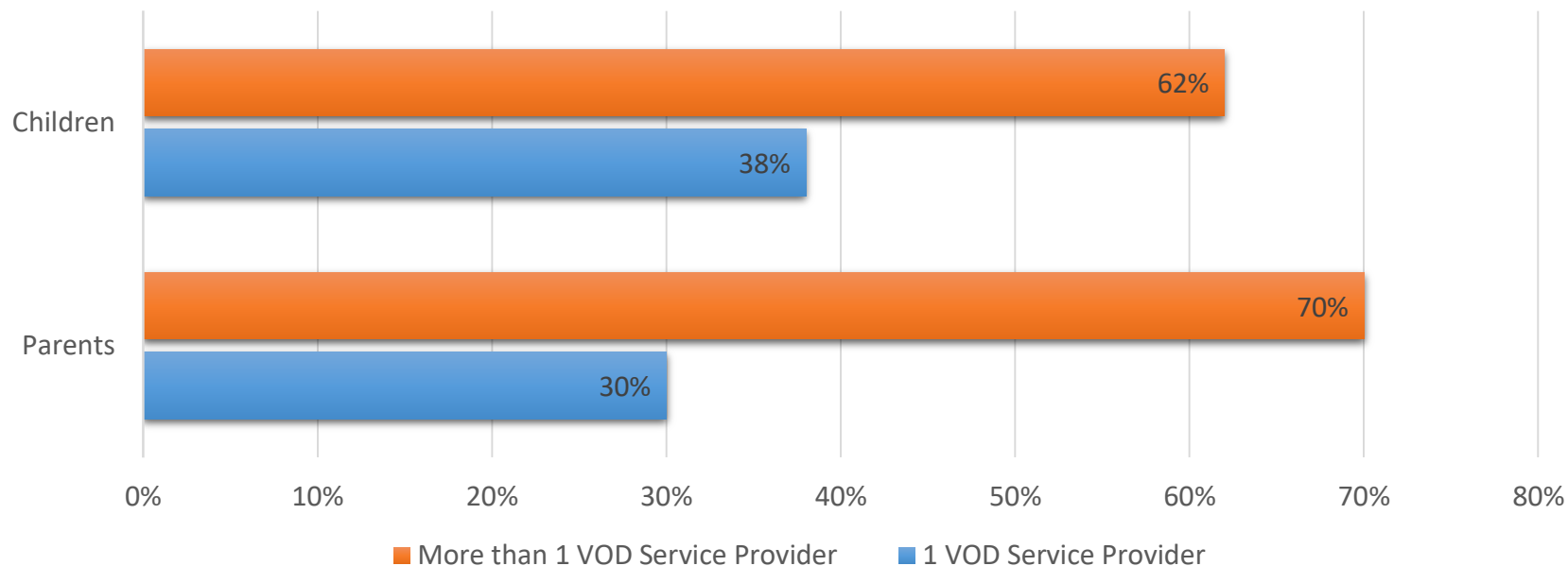
Study 1: Survey of public perceptions of VOD classification (2018)

Q. "To what extent do you think it is important for On Demand video content to always show the same age ratings as films in cinema and on DVD?"

Bases: Parents of 3-17 yr olds, who access VOD (1229); Children aged 10-17, who access VOD (587)

Q. “Which of these services do you regularly download or stream On Demand video content from?”

Number of different VOD Service Providers used



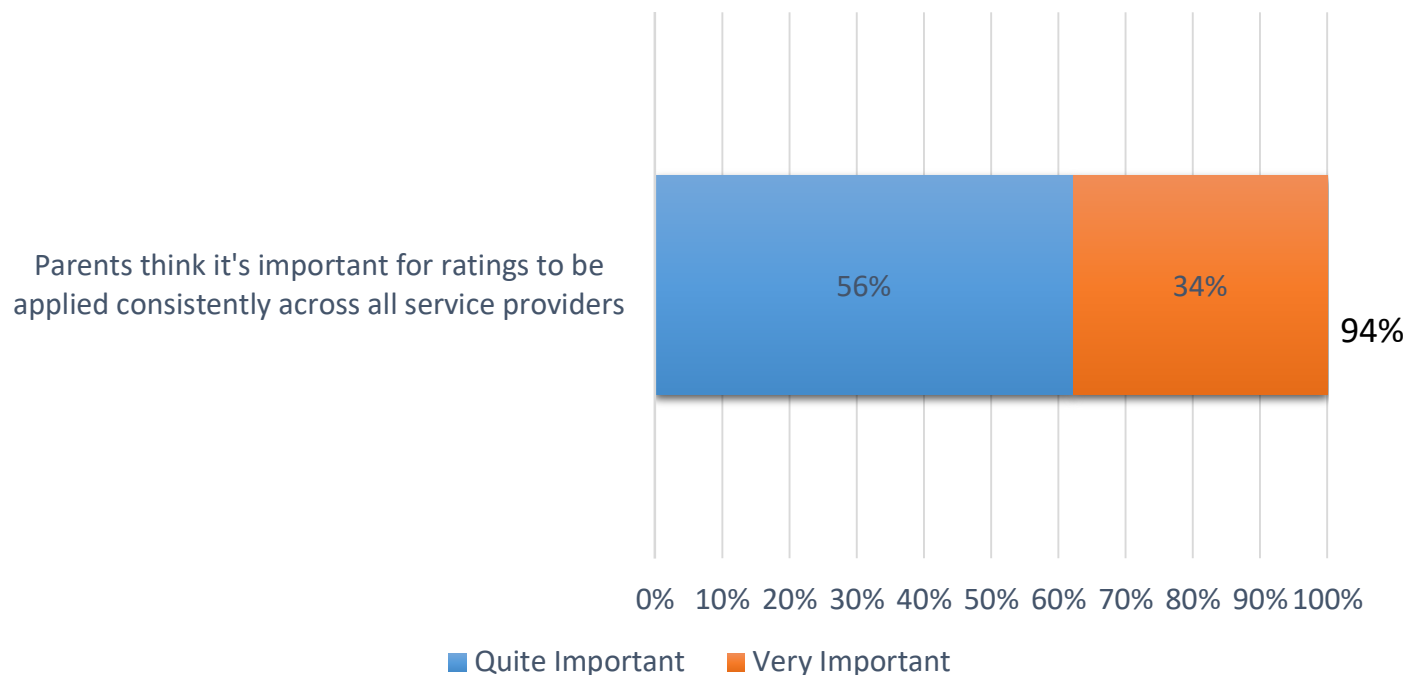
- Over 60% of children are accessing VOD content via more than one service – so a consistent age labelling and parental control experience is important across multiple services.

Study 1: Survey of public perceptions of VOD classification (2018)

Q. “Which of these services do you regularly download or stream On Demand video content from?”

Bases: Parents of 3-17 yr olds, who access VOD (1229); Children aged 10-17, who access VOD (587)

Q. “Parents – To what extent do you think it is important to always have the same age rating classification system used consistently across all services that you use to watch On Demand video content?”



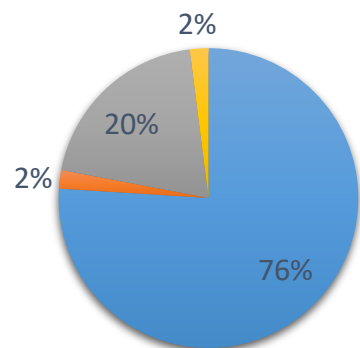
- 94% of parents think it's important to have consistent ratings across all VOD platforms, rather than a variety of bespoke ratings systems.

Study 1: Survey of public perceptions of VOD classification (2018)

Q “To what extent do you think it is important to always have the same age rating classification system used consistently across all services that you use to watch On Demand video content?”
Base: Parents of 3-17 yr olds, who access VOD (1229)

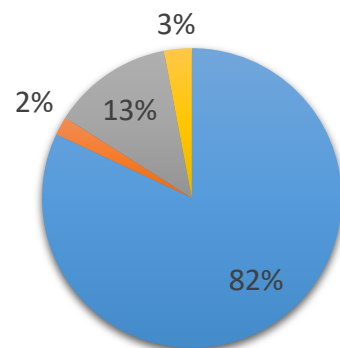
Q. "What style of age ratings displayed for On Demand video content, do you find most helpful in ensuring you trust and understand what is age appropriate for your children?"

Parents



- BBFC Symbols or Plain Text
- [CAUTION] or [GUIDANCE]
- Don't mind as long as rating shown
- Don't know

Children



- BBFC Symbols or Plain Text
- [CAUTION] or [GUIDANCE]
- Don't mind as long as rating shown
- Don't know

- 76% of parents preferred BBFC age ratings as the most helpful age labelling system.
- Only 2% felt binary age labels such as 'Caution' or 'Guidance' were of use.

Study 1: Survey of public perceptions of VOD classification (2018)

Q. "What style of age ratings displayed for On Demand video content, do you find most helpful in ensuring you trust and understand what is age appropriate for your children?"

Bases: Parents of 3-17 yr olds, who access VOD (1229); Children aged 10-17, who access VOD (587)

Q. “Of the services you use, which of these have parental controls available to restrict your child’s viewing (even if you don’t use them)?”

- 58% of parents were aware of parental controls on the services they used.

Q. “On which of these services have you activated parental controls to restrict your child’s viewing?”

- Only 41% of parents had activated the parental controls.

Services which respondents were asked about:

SVOD

Amazon, Disneylife, HayU, Netflix, Now TV, Shudder.com, YouTube Premium

TVOD

BFI Player, BT TV Store, Curzon Home Cinema, Google Play Store, iTunes Film Store, Microsoft Video, Mubi, Rakuten TV, Sky Store, Sony Entertainment Network, Virgin Media

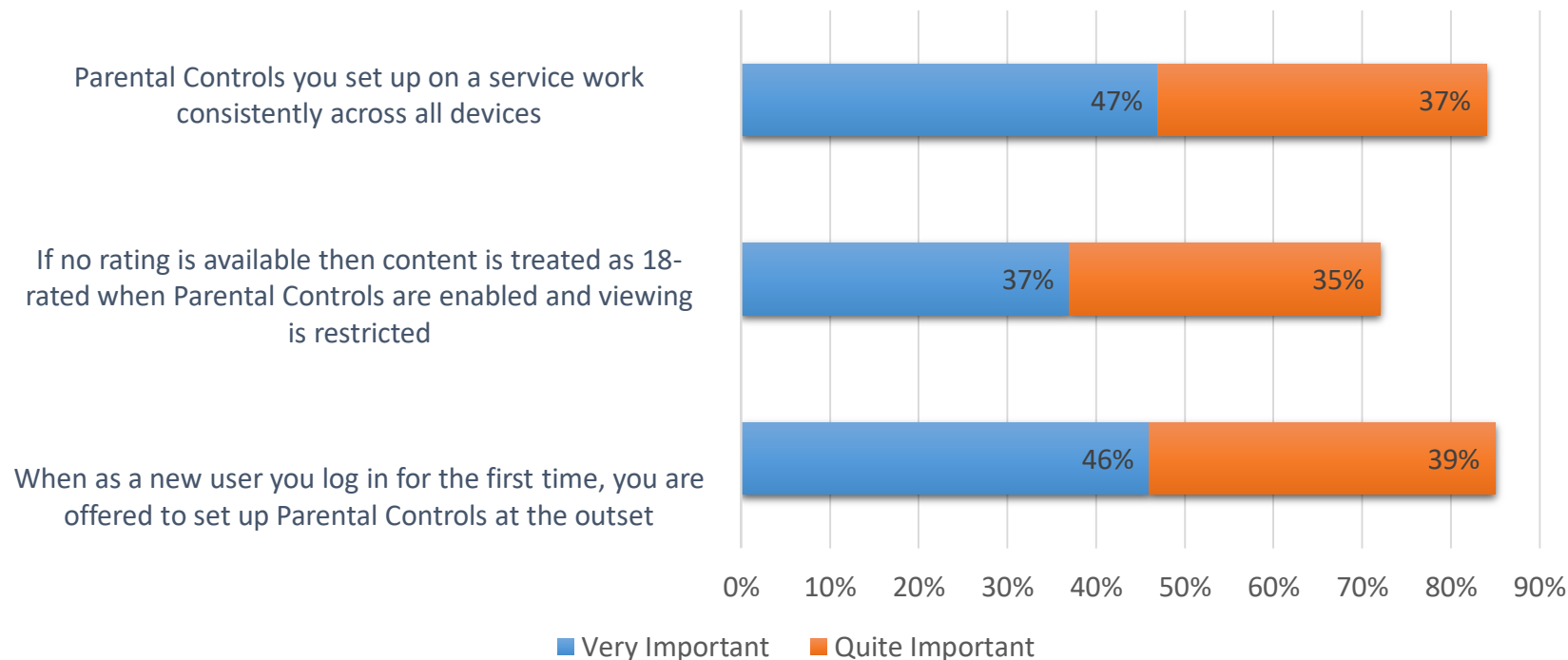
Study 1: Survey of public perceptions of VOD classification (2018)

Q. “Which of these do you know has parental controls available to restrict your child’s viewing (even if you don’t use them)?”

Q. “Which of these do you have parental controls activated to restrict your child’s viewing?”

Base: volumetric analysis based on 3337 instances of service/platform usage across the sample of 1229 parents. Parents of 3-17 yr olds, using each service

Q. “Thinking about parental control filters on services that provide On Demand video content, how important or not are each of these features to you personally?”



- 84% think it is important that parental controls should be consistent across all devices
- 72% of users think unrated content should be restricted to adults only by use of parental controls
- 85% think it is important that services should prompt users to configure parental controls during the first login

Study 1: Survey of public perceptions of VOD classification (2018)

Q. “Thinking about parental control filters on services that provide On Demand video content, how important or not are each of these features to you?”

Base: Parents of 3-17 yr olds, who access VOD (1229)

Study 2: BBFC snapshot of VOD services (2018)

A snapshot of Video On Demand providers was undertaken by the BBFC to understand how services offering content via subscription and transactional payment models approach age labelling and parental controls. Providers were invited to fill in an online survey and provide data about their own services.

This survey was carried out in September 2018. It included both services licensed to use BBFC age ratings, and some that are currently unlicensed.

The following 18 services were surveyed about age labelling and how that interacts with parental control features:

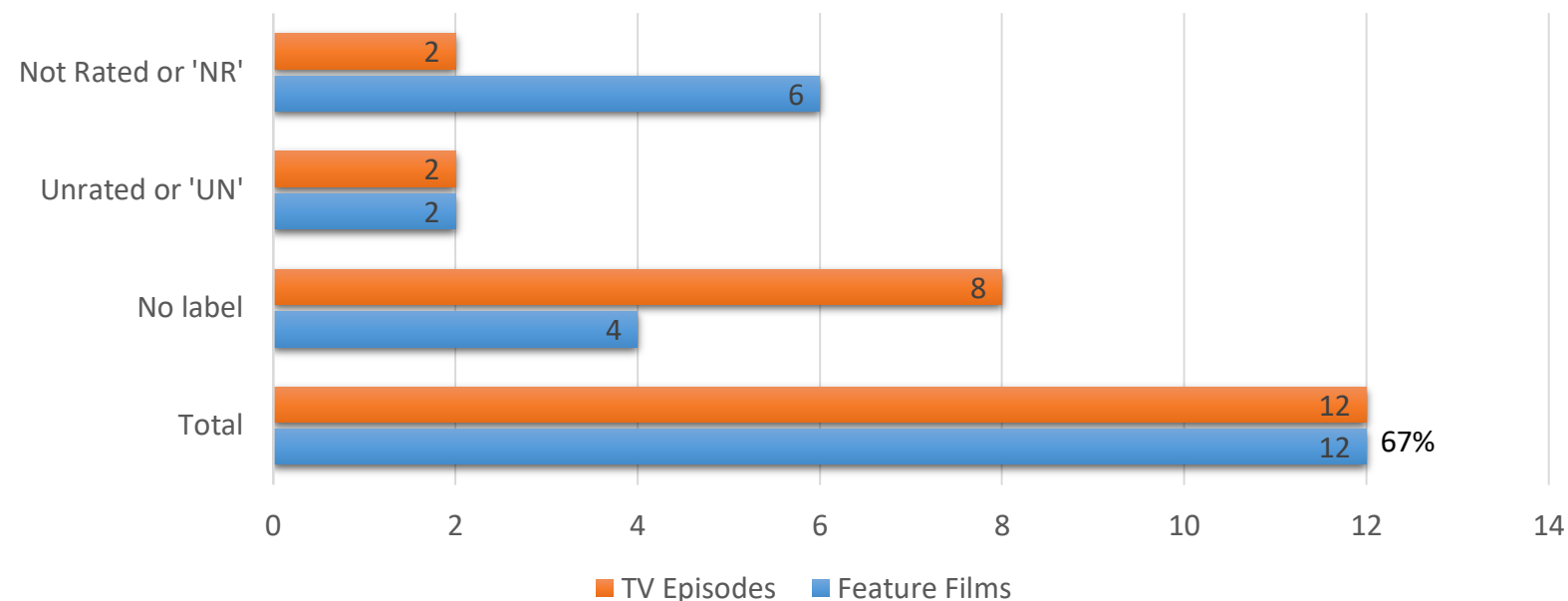
Amazon Prime Video	Microsoft Video
Apple iTunes	Mubi
BFI Player	Netflix
British Airways	Now TV
BT TV	Rakuten TV
Curzon Home Cinema	Shudder
Disney Life	Sky Store
Google Play	Virgin Media
Hayu	YouTube Premium

The accuracy of answers submitted by companies was checked by the BBFC.

Where a service was unable to provide all the requested information, the BBFC audited the service to aid completion of the snapshot.

Q. "How do you indicate the age appropriateness of each type of content?"

**Number of services using each label type
for any unrated content:**



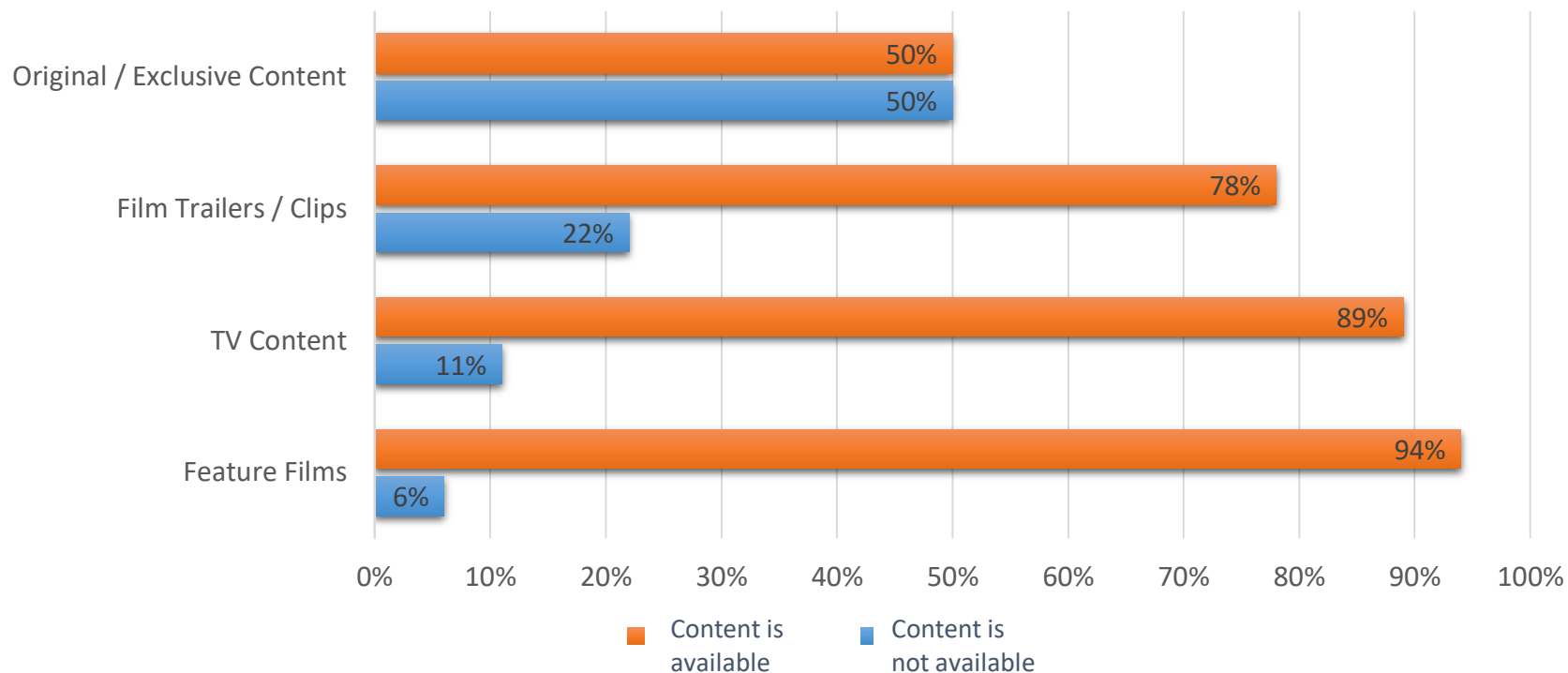
- 12 out of 18 services (67%) of VOD services permit content with no age rating at all.

Study 2 - BBFC snapshot of VOD services (2018)

Q. "How do you indicate the age appropriateness of each type of content?"

Base: 100% response rate from 18 surveyed services

Q. "What kinds of content is available on your service?"



- 50% of VOD services have exclusive 'original' content available

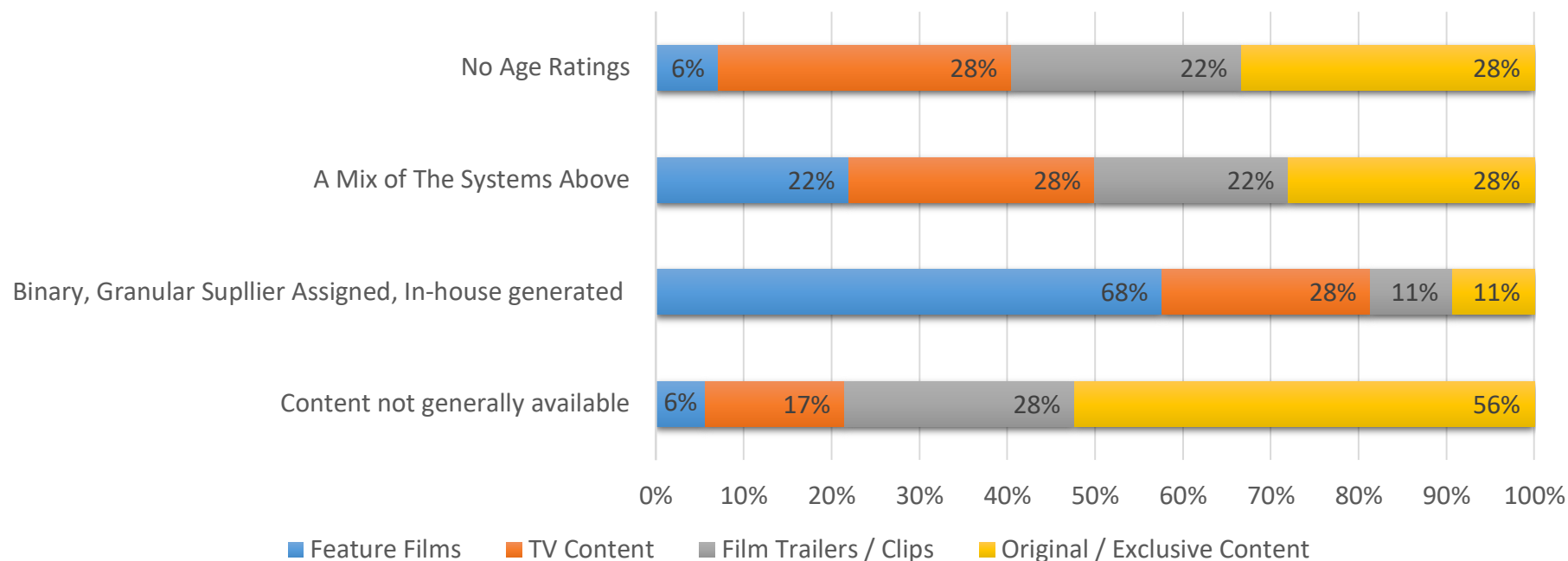
Study 2 - BBFC snapshot of VOD services (2018)

Q. "At the present time, what kinds of content, and how much of it, is available on your service?"

Base: 100% response rate from 18 surveyed services

Q. "How do you indicate the age appropriateness of each type of content?"

Age Labelling systems used on different content types



- 22% of VOD services use a mixture of different age labelling systems for film feature films and 28% for TV content.
- 28% of services do not carry age ratings for original content

Study 2 - BBFC snapshot of VOD services (2018)

Q. "How do you indicate the age appropriateness of each type of content?"

Base: 100% response rate from 18 surveyed services

Q. “What kind of age appropriateness labels are displayed on your service?”

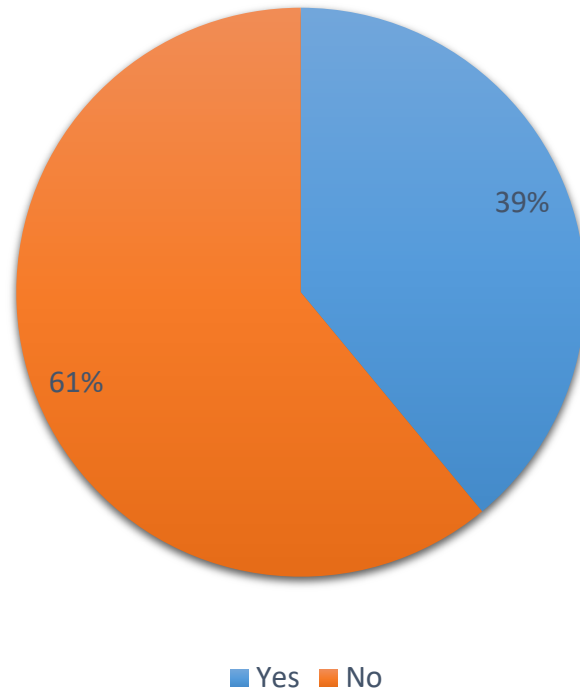
- 61% of providers use plain text labelling, which doesn't permit users to identify the source of those ratings
- 72% of services do not use official BBFC symbols, even though many are using BBFC ratings.

Study 2 - BBFC snapshot of VOD services (2018)

Q. “What kind of age appropriateness labels are displayed on your service?”

Base: 100% response rate from 18 surveyed services

Q. "Do you supply additional labelling information to supplement age ratings?"



- 61% of services don't offer any additional content advice beyond the rating.

(e.g. info advice such as 'strong violence, language').

Study 2 - BBFC snapshot of VOD services (2018)

Q. "Do you supply additional labelling information to supplement age ratings?"

Base: 100% response rate from 18 surveyed services

Study 3: BBFC Classification Guidelines

– 2018 public research

The BBFC's 2018 Classification Guidelines research is a survey of the views of over 10,000 members of the UK public.

The research is designed to gather understanding in the following areas:

- The role of the BBFC in 2018, particularly in the light of increased viewing via VOD platforms.
- Levels of awareness and engagement with BBFC age ratings, ratings info and other resources.
- Agreement with recent classification decisions.
- Any emerging areas of concern that need to be addressed by the BBFC and its Classification Guidelines.

Qualitative survey breakdown:

- 22 focus groups with adults
- 6 focus groups with teenagers
- 4 focus groups with viewers of South Asian films
- Independent research undertaken by Goldstone Perl

Quantitative Survey Breakdown:

- 5454 interviews with the general public
- 1854 interviews with adults who are regular film viewers
- 1044 interviews with teenagers
- 347 teachers also identified and asked for their views during survey.
- Independent research undertaken by Bernice Hardie

BBFC Classification Guidelines Research (2018)

Key Findings

“The BBFC's main purpose is to help everyone in the UK choose age-appropriate films, videos and websites, wherever and however they watch or use them.” David Austin

- 91% of the public say it is important for online platforms to carry age ratings consistent with those used in cinema and on packaged media.
- 95% of teenagers say it is important for online platforms to carry age ratings consistent with those used in cinema and on packaged media.
- 83% of parents trust BBFC age ratings all or most of the time.
- 78% of adults said they trust BBFC ratings all or most of the time

The BBFC Guidelines are being applied effectively in practice - 92% of film viewers agree with the age rating of films that they have seen recently.

Study 3 – BBFC Classification Guidelines Research (2018)

Classification Guidelines Report 2019: http://www.bbfc.co.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Classification_Guidelines_Public_Consultation_2019.pdf

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