

BBFC GUIDELINES 2014

RESEARCH REPORT

In its Vision Statement, the BBFC committed itself to “*respond to and reflect changing social attitudes towards media content through proactive public consultations and research*”.

In 2013, consumers are accessing media content in far more ways than fourteen years ago when the BBFC carried out its first major public consultation. Responding to this change, BBFC ratings are increasingly appearing online where according to 2011 research, 85% of consumers consider it important to have consistent BBFC classifications available for VOD content, rising to 90% of parents of children under 16.

So for the fourth time since 1999 the BBFC commissioned a major public consultation, involving over 10,000 respondents into attitudes towards film and video content and its classification. This will ensure that the BBFC’s standards and criteria for classifying films and videos, whether in cinemas; on disc in the home; or online on the move continue to be consistent with public expectations.

This consultation, the results of which are published today in the following comprehensive and detailed report, was carried out by well-respected and independent researchers using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. It is supplemented by other, more specific pieces of research with adults and teenagers which focus on more specific subjects, such as discriminatory language and behaviour and depictions of sexual and sadistic violence.

Bringing all this research together ensures that the BBFC is able to respond to social concerns and cultural changes and reflect these in its Guidelines, which are also published today.

DAVID COOKE

13 January 2014

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Methodology

The 2013 Guidelines consultation followed broadly the same methodology in its use of both qualitative and quantitative research as in 2009. However, it was different in a number of key respects:

- for the first time the research sought the views of teenagers;
- the quantitative research deliberately sought views on some of the most challenging films (in classification terms) of recent times rather than simply the 60 most recent releases;
- the research coincided with a debate, particularly involving BBFC website users, about the practice of distributors cutting works – in particular *A Good Day to Die Hard* - to secure a lower classification when a higher uncut BBFC classification was available.

These factors affected the results of the consultation and consequently it is not possible to compare directly the 2013 results with those from 2009.

Findings

There is clear parental concern around risks to vulnerable adolescents including self - harm, suicide, drug misuse and premature access to sexual content, including the normalisation of behaviours which parents consider inappropriate. They want the BBFC to pay attention to these issues in its decisions. However, parents recognise that they face a challenge in terms of their ability to control what their children watch from the age of 15.

The research found continuing strong public support for the principle of film and video classification. Most respondents consider that the BBFC is effective at using classification to protect children from unsuitable content.

- 76% of Recent Film Viewers consider the BBFC to be effective in its role
- 84% of parents with children aged 6-15 rate the BBFC as effective

It also found high levels of agreement with the classification of individual films; and parents in particular use BBFC ratings to help them make informed viewing decisions.

- 89% of Recent Film Viewers and 90% BBFC Website Visitors rate classification as important
- 76% of Teenagers – many of whom are frustrated that they cannot access all films – rate classification as important
- 95% of parents with children up to 14 usually check the BBFC classification
- 92% of Recent Film Viewers agreed with the classification of films they had seen recently
- Respondents who disagreed with a film or video classification were always in a minority. 11% of Recent Film Viewers and 18% of BBFC Website Visitors disagreed with the most complained about rating since the previous Guidelines consultation - *The Woman in Black*.

There are no significant regional differences regarding classification across the UK.

Some confusion remains about the 12A/12 classification with up to 27% of respondents not fully understanding its meaning.

Respondents find BBFCinsight helpful (but would like to see it in a more readily accessible form) and awareness of this service is low.

Whilst parents over children over 15 were the most relaxed group about classification, there was widespread recognition in the value and importance of the 18 category, especially for works such as *Shame*.

Lessons for the Guidelines

Although there is strong support for the standards already applied by the BBFC which are seen to reflect public attitudes, respondents made the following key

points:

- the theme and tone of a film or video are important and a particular issue around the 12A/12 and 15 level;
- the BBFC should take into account the psychological impact of horror as well as strong visual detail, such as gore;
- in relation to sexual content, concerns centre around the sexualisation of girls and pornography. The content of music videos and the ease of accessibility of online porn are particular worries. Sexual content is not always mitigated by humour;
- on language, the BBFC is urged to be stricter with mild language at U and more permissive about very strong language at 15. Context is key to how language is perceived;
- smoking is not a classification issue for most people;
- when classifying sex education videos, the BBFC should take into account both the educational needs of children and the classroom context in which such works are viewed.

II. PROJECT SET UP

1. Methodology and Sample Characteristics

1.1 Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative research was conducted prior to the quantitative phase of the study. The main objective was to provide detailed feedback on the Guidelines and to gauge whether the BBFC's thinking is in line with public opinion.

Prior to starting the focus groups, the researchers met with examiners and the BBFC management team to discuss films that had proven challenging to classify or about which they had received received complaints. Each focus group was preplaced with three to four of these works and clips were shown to respondents in the groups. A total of 29 films and 50 clips were shown to respondents across the sample as a whole.

Each focus group concentrated its discussions on one or two of the following areas:

- Drugs / alcohol and smoking
- Sex / sexualisation / sex references / nudity
- Violence / horror / threat
- Theme
- Language
- Discrimination
- Medical gore
- Sex education material
- Imitable behaviour
- Music videos
- Insight
- Trailers

All of the groups discussed perceptions of the BBFC and reviewed the Guidelines. (See Appendix for a copy of the discussion guide.)

A total of 26 focus groups were conducted in total with the broader public. These were split by age, class, lifestage and region. The decision to recruit parents in the sample was based on learnings from past BBFC studies. Parents have stronger views about film classification than those without children, particularly younger people without children. In addition, we have found that mothers are using classifications more than fathers and we conducted more focus groups with them as

a result.

A further four groups of teenagers and two groups of teachers were conducted as part of the research project.

The focus groups were conducted in different parts of the country to ensure that our findings were not London – centric. However it must be noted that few regional differences were found and the quantitative research is a better tool to explore any of these differences as it was nationally representative.

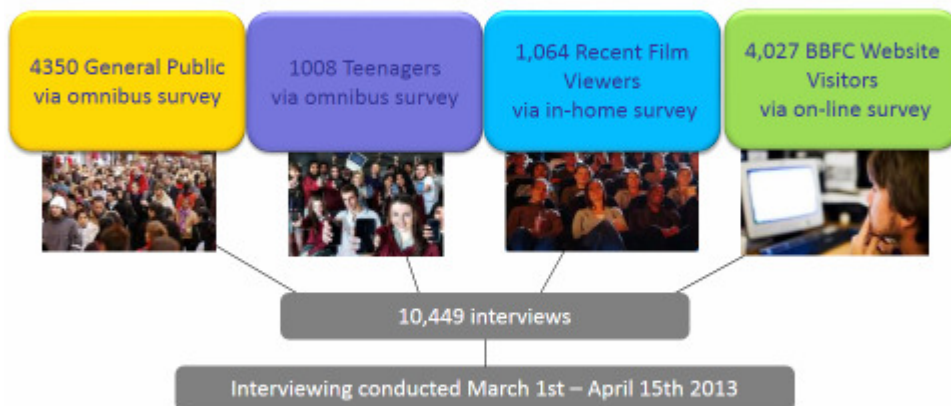
1.2 Quantitative Methodology

The primary objective of this phase of the project was to provide reliable and robust data that clearly indicates whether or not the BBFC guidelines are effective i.e. resulting in classifications that reflect public opinion on age appropriate viewing.

While most members of the general public are familiar with the BBFC and its classifications, few are aware of, or interested in paying detailed attention to, the written guidelines behind these classifications. Rather than force an artificial written guidelines evaluation process, the quantitative survey focused instead on measuring public opinion around the perceived effectiveness of the BBFC, and the considered appropriateness of classifications for films seen recently i.e. how often the BBFC gets classifications 'right' or 'wrong' in relation to public opinion.

This approach to evaluation has been proven to be a far more useful and relevant basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the BBFC than any feedback based on an isolated critique of the written guidelines content itself.

The scope of the survey



While the research methodology adopted in this 2013 consultation replicates that of the 2009 Guidelines Review, there are significant differences between the two surveys which limits the validity of any data comparison.

The main differences to be noted between the 2009 and 2013 surveys are:

- Teenagers were surveyed for the first time
- The website sample in 2013 comprised a broader demographic – more women, 45+ yr olds and individuals with a religious affiliation¹.

¹This is counter-trend, as according to the Office for National Statistics, there was a decrease between 2001 and 2011 in the proportion of people who identify as Christian (from 71.7% to 59.3%) and an increase in those reporting no religion (from 14.8% to 25.1%).

N.B. The profile of bbfc website survey participants has broadened since 2009

	2009	2013
➤ There are proportionally more women	23%	32%
➤ A higher proportion of 45+ yr olds	12%	23%
➤ More saying they actively practice a religion	17%	28%
➤ Proportion with children has not shifted	23%	24%

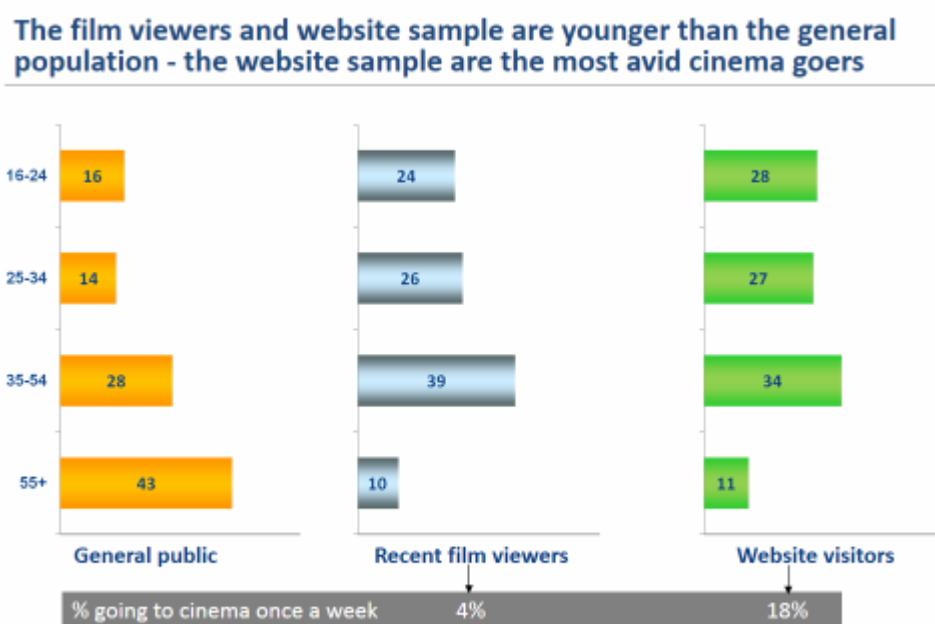
This broader demographic may be the result of the survey being more widely promoted via PR and social media in 2013. Those groups in the population that have stronger opinions around what constitutes 'age appropriate' viewing, might therefore have been attracted (by broader media promotion of the consultation process), to participate in the survey.

- The timing of fieldwork was later in the year in 2013 compared to 2009, which has an impact on the range of 'recently released films' that viewers will be referring to when completing the survey. In 2009, the January fieldwork period would have resulted in most film viewers commenting on films seen over the Christmas period (when there are a higher proportion of less contentious, family oriented film releases).
- The sample of films in 2013 deliberately included a proportion of contentious films.

For these reasons no statistical comparison has been made between the 2009 and 2013 survey data.

1.2.1 Sample Characteristics

The age profile and film viewing habits of the three adult samples surveyed are outlined below. As will be seen in the report findings, these demographic and film viewing frequency differences do have a significant impact on the attitudes expressed around the appropriateness of film classifications and the role of the BBFC.



The General Public sample is nationally representative by gender and age group, and so includes a relatively high proportion of respondents aged 55+. This age group is less likely than average to be visiting the cinema/renting DVDs and came across in our results as less knowledgeable about or interested in classifications.

The website audience is the youngest, more male biased and most avid in terms of cinema visiting. While relatively liberal in their attitude towards age appropriate viewing, the website sample is also radical in its opinions on film content and as a result emerges as the most critical group on the subject of film classifications.

The 35-54 yr olds in the both the Recent Film Viewers and 'Website visitors' samples are of course the most likely to be parents of children and younger teenagers, and therefore come across as the most concerned about what may be potentially harmful viewing for children.

Data relating to the overall effectiveness of the BBFC and agreement with classifications in general is presented for all samples surveyed in this report, as each provides a relevant perspective.

The General Public sample represents the view of the average person on the street, whether or not they regularly watch films. The BBFC Website Visitors sample represents the view of 'film fans' and those most concerned with classification. The Recent Film Viewers sample provides the opinion of the average cinema - goer or home film viewer, and is probably the most 'relevant and representative' audience for assessing classification appropriateness. The teenager sample represents the view of those who are 'emerging' solus decision-makers with regard to responsible film viewing, and the audience at the forefront in terms of new technology film viewing.

Ultimately though, it is the parents in each of our adult samples whose views are most pertinent, as they are the audience most reliant on film classifications to ensure appropriate viewing for their children.

Please note that throughout this report, chart data relating to each of the different samples surveyed has been consistently colour coded:

General Public Sample = Orange

Teenagers Sample = Purple

Recent Film Viewers Sample = Blue

Website Sample = Green

1.3 About the Researchers

Bernice Hardie is an independent Market Research Consultant with 30 years experience of designing and implementing quantitative communications evaluation, strategy and policy research.

Bernice specialised in marketing and market research as part of her honours degree in Management Sciences at Aston Business School, and worked for the British Steel Corporation before starting her research career at the then Unilever owned Research International. Since founding her own market research consultancy in 1993, Bernice has worked for a range of blue chip commercial clients, government agencies and NGO's and has undertaken research projects for the BBFC since 2008. Bernice is a Full Member of the Market Research Society and one of the founding members of the MRS's Independent Consultants Group.

Nicky Goldstone is an independent qualitative market researcher with over 20 qualitative years' research experience. After a degree from Manchester University in Social Sciences, Nicky began her market research career as a Graduate Trainee at The Harris Research Centre specialising in social and political research. Nicky then joined the UK's leading qualitative agency The Research Business to develop her understanding of qualitative consumer research. During her last five years at The Research Business, Nicky had particular responsibility for children, NPD and brand development research. She established Goldstone Perl Research in 1993. The company's philosophy is to offer high quality qualitative research, working in partnership with a select number of blue chip clients.

Deborah Slesenger has worked in qualitative research for more than 20 years, most of which as an independent market researcher. Deborah was a Science teacher before joining The Research Business as a Graduate Trainee specialising in Youth research and gaining wide experience in qualitative consumer research. Deborah then joined Context Research where she focused on social and medical research. Deborah established Slesenger Research in 2000 and has worked extensively for clients within Government, Media, Cosmetics, Pharmaceuticals and Retail.

IV. Main Findings

1. Salient Background Issues

1.1 The media and entertainment landscape in 2013

In conducting the Guidelines review every four years, the research offers a snapshot into the public's views about society and life in the UK and these thoughts and feelings frequently underpin attitudes to film classification. For many interviewed, the last four years have been economically turbulent and the shifts from the 2013 to 2009 review, compared to the 2009 to 2005 review seemed to reflect this.

The explosion of technology, the proliferation of porn sites online, the way in which content can be accessed and shared, has shaped a new media and entertainment landscape. For many parents, technology is in the hands of the young and the balance of power within the household has shifted as a result. Parents are working hard to maintain control, yet feel that the tide of information and challenging content can sometimes be against them.

The way in which the public views films has changed since the last Guidelines review in 2009. Film, previously the domain of cinema and DVDs / TVs, continues to extend its reach into different locations within the home. The plethora of multiple devices used in many homes has changed the dynamics of film viewing in terms of frequency, audience and impact. Viewing films can be an event – family nights in front of an in-home screen – yet it can also be a private, solus activity; a teenager watching alone in his or her bedroom unknown and undetected by parents.

“TV from when I was a kid, we probably had one in the bedroom between us three brothers and it was four channels. Now probably all kids have got a TV, there's one in every room”. (Male, with children 15 – 18, C2D)

“Yes, they watch them on the iPads now, in their rooms, most of the time on their iPads then on the telly in their room, DVD”. (Male, with children 3 - 6, BC1)

Multiple devices in the home was one shift and downloading film is perhaps the other significant trend since the last review. There was widespread usage of legal sites such as LoveFilm and Netflix amongst young adults and parents in particular.

“They've got TiVo and we've got the Xbox, Netflix, LOVEFiLM, and then

drawers full of DVDs. The tablet, as well, and laptop, and DVD player when we go camping, and things like that". (Male, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

"I don't go to the cinema a lot as it's so expensive, so watch more DVDs or films on TV. Also streaming films through Xbox and the computer". (Male, children 8 – 14, C2D)

The prevalence of illegal sites was also discussed, especially by the teenagers.

"I download and watch films on my laptop mostly. I use a website called Letmewatchthis – I think it's illegal". (Female, aged 16 – 17)

Unsurprisingly, these changes in film viewing patterns have had an impact on film classification. A number of parents commented that the explosion of technology around accessing film has left them feeling slightly lost and baffled. As with much technology in the home, parents feel that they cannot keep up and as a result cannot monitor their child's film viewing either. Rather than attempt to police the situation, it was interesting to observe that a number of parents seem to have resorted to another tactic – one of trust:

"She downloads film but what I don't know. But I trust them. We've got an open relationship in our family. I don't feel the need to police it. It depends on your children and I must say, she is an angel". (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

"You can't monitor them constantly. They can access anything on their phones now. I'm sure these guys here, their daughters or sons have got the most up to date phones. What do you do? Laptops in their bedroom and they're up until four o'clock in the morning. When you're going to bed at a normal time, they're still up. That's not a criticism. It's just how it is". (Male, with children 15 – 18, C2D)

"They don't care. They try not to care. They don't really want to know what we are watching." (Male, 18 years old)

"I am ashamed to say that I haven't got a clue what she is watching. When I walk in I hear f - ing and blinding but she's used to that." (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

However it would appear that this trust is occasionally misplaced and the experience of taking part in the research forced many parents to face up to the repercussions of this laissez – faire attitude:

“When I watched the Inbetweeners, he told me that he’d already seen it on his Xbox. There’s stuff there I don’t think that he should know about. I was horrified.” (Female, with children 8 – 14 C2D)

“Well, I thought I knew what he was watching, until I came to watch one of the DVDs and he’d already seen it. Yes, he’d already seen it, and then when I saw it I was mortified that he’d seen it.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Children can be exposed to challenging content outside of the home too and the trend for American – style sleepovers was commented on by a number of groups, especially amongst parents of girls. A movie can be central to the evening’s activities and teenagers discussed viewing their first horror movie in this situation.

“My daughter was having a sleepover. One of her first ever sleepovers, a group of girls, they were all the same age, and the girl whose house it was said, ‘Oh, bring some DVDs,’ and I went and picked her up the following day, and spoke to the dad, and had a little chat, and said, ‘What were they watching?’ He said, ‘I’ve hardly watched any of these things.’ So, you know, I went and had a check on it, and said, ‘So what did they watch, then?’ He said, ‘Oh, Big Daddy, and Waterboy.’ I said, ‘You’re joking.’” (Male, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“My eleven year old is having a lot of sleepovers now and a lot of her friends have older siblings so they end up watching what they’ve got.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“I don’t know, if you’re having a night in, say on a Friday night, if you’re not going out. Stay in, watch some films, and just watch them with everyone because I suppose when you’re together, you’re not alone so it’s more the experience together.” (Female, aged 16 – 17)

The loss of control about what is being viewed and with whom can exist in other situations. Interestingly, family breakdown can play a role too and a number of mothers discussed their disappointment and concern when their ex – partner watched inappropriate films with their child. As a very generalised trend, it would appear that these fathers can be less strict about film classification overall and

enjoying the bonding experience of shared viewing.

“Their dad is a big film buff but I am not with him so I don’t know what they are watching.” (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

“If you have got a household where the dad is in control then there may be less rules. Dads don’t care as much as mums do.” (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

Given that viewers are accessing and viewing films in a number of different ways, film classification can be lost in the mix and can also be diluted by different information from different platforms.

“What I found is that whereas before when you’d use DVD shops and you’d read a lot of what was on the pack, but nowadays so much is advertised on Virgin TV and Netflix and things like that, more often than not you are going to get a film that’s caught your eye on an advert and so you’re far less likely to be looking at the information on the pack.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

However one repercussion of parents feeling that they are losing control is that they are keen to maintain control where they can and film classification was recognised as a familiar and accessible way of achieving this.

1.2 TV, Internet and Video Games challenging boundaries

Whilst video games were not preplaced with respondents or initially included in the discussion guide as the BBFC is no longer responsible for their classification, they were spontaneously mentioned by all focus groups.

The debate around the impact of video games is still relevant to many but interestingly concern seems to have moved away from its potential impact on behaviour towards a more considered discussion about their impact on society as a whole. As per the last research, parents believe that a child who is likely to be negatively affected by video games, (in particular violent ones), is likely to have some underlying mental health issues; for the most part, parents trust their children and believe that they can differentiate between gaming and real violence and that playing these games will not change their behaviour.

Concerns revolve around desensitisation; a society that has grown up exposed to violent images via video games will have a different attitude to violence in

comparison with the generation before. There was a sense that seeing, feeling and playing with violent images must diminish a visceral response to screen violence. Whether this can or how this could cross over to real violence in the short or long term was thought to be an important question. No one claimed to know the answer but it clearly left respondents feeling concerned:

“Most worrying thing along with computer games is they can almost become desensitised to the effects of violence because all the killings and stabbings, they don’t really see any impact of that and you see a lot of younger kids with knives nowadays.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

“Me personally, I think they’re pretty much immune to it by fifteen, well certainly lads, I don’t know so much about girls. I am sure that by the time they get to fifteen, in most cases they will have played hours and hours of silly Call of Duty games where they’ve become immune to it.” (Male, with children 15 – 18, C2D)

“I think, that there should be people trying to classify these things, but unfortunately Pandora’s box is open, isn’t it? It’s like the Call of Duty games. That’s as bad, if not worse, than going to see an 18 porno film, in my opinion, if you were sixteen or seventeen. All these things are personal to how you perceive it, but I think the cat’s out of the bag.” (Male, with children 15 – 18, C2D)

The relationship between video games and films was also given as a reason for softening of attitudes towards screen violence. Seeing a child cope with video game violence was often a sign that he or she was mature enough to cope with violence in films and a number of parents used this rationale when explaining why they had allowed their child to view age inappropriate, violence based films. Clearly a number of children in the sample were playing with video games well beyond their age group and a more relaxed attitude to video games when compared to films was commented on by many:

“Whose mum and dads really care about games? I work at Tesco and you see a wee boy buying a game with his dad and you know who is going to play it.” (Male, 18 years old)

By comparison to the Internet, the film industry is perceived to be controlled and monitored; parents feel that they have the tools to police it when required.

“They can see anything on the Internet. It’s hard to know what they’re doing, they can type in anything and all sorts come up.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“I don’t think film is where it happens, they learn everything at school, talk with their friends, older siblings, the Internet – it’s not film that’s introducing them to things.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

The proliferation and accessibility of porn sites was discussed by all parents of teenagers and children as young as 12 in the sample were aware of these sites. The impact of these sites has changed attitudes to sex in film. This is not to say that sex is not an important classification issue but the boundaries are felt to be shifting. (See section 3.2.2)

Parents do not always understand the world of social media yet are aware of its importance in their child’s life. This can lead to concerns about the sharing and dissimulation of inappropriate content or personal information.

There were also a number of comments about the changing content on TV which is felt to be becoming increasingly challenging, pushing against and creating new ‘boundaries’ and levels of acceptability. Swearing on shows like *Mrs Brown’s Boys* and controversial issues, such as suicide, being addressed in the soaps pre - watershed were discussed by many:

“It’s not just films, what’s on telly too. *Coronation Street* and *EastEnders*.” (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

“I think the goalposts have changed with language. Years ago, you would never hear any sort of swearing on the TV or in films. Now, certain swear words, bloody, etc. are almost acceptable, and you hear it, half nine, you’ll hear swearing.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“We were watching Sarah Millican and she said the C word. I was so – Jesus Christ - but my daughter just laughed at the joke.” (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

“There was a suicide on *Hollyoaks* last week. At half six at night it shouldn’t

have been on. I was shocked when I saw it. My daughter has psychological issues and I was terrified as she asked whether that was the way to kill yourself.” (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

These issues were further compounded by time shifted TV viewing. The 9pm watershed was thought to be rendered ineffective in a world dominated by catch up TV viewing and DVR recordings.

1.3 Being a parent in 2013

It was interesting to note that parents seemed to share more worries during the focus groups than they did in the 2009 review. For many, the last four years have been economically tough and parental anxiety in 2013 seemed to be heightened in general. Childhood years and their innocence are felt to be under threat with children being exposed to age inappropriate content via the Internet and their peer group at an earlier age than ever before. Whilst parents accept that children will learn about drugs, sex and strong bad language either formally through the education system or via the world around them, they are uneasy about how this information is being portrayed.

“You don’t want violence to become the norm do you? You don’t want kids to get blasé about it.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“You just don’t want to promote it as an everyday thing, as something acceptable.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

1.3.1 Normalisation

Normalisation is the prevalent theme of the 2013 Guidelines research. Parents accept that children are aware of potentially dangerous anti - social behaviour (from using strong bad language to drugs) but do not want this behaviour to be normalised. The hard work involved in maintaining values, a moral centre and a sense of discipline at home needs to be consolidated, not eroded by the world around them. Films that are perceived to normalise ‘bad’ behaviour are not thought to be supporting these endeavours.

Normalisation was often discussed in terms of bad language. Bad language was felt to be increasingly common parlance for many groups in society (in particular teenagers) and only the most sheltered child would reach secondary school without being exposed to these words. The shock value of bad language is felt to be diminishing with each generation and a number of respondents lamented how

things have changed:

“It’s how it’s used. In conversation where every other word is the f - word. They don’t see it as offensive, it’s normal.” (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

“A normal way of talking and expressing yourself. You only have to get on a bus with them when they’re on it to hear swearing all the time. It’s not the norm. Not for our generation.” (Male, with children 15 – 18, C2D)

The interplay between the individual and society was also commented on. Whilst the start point for many parents was their own child, the broader implication of these issues on society was also mentioned with many parents feeling that societal norms have shifted as a result.

1.3.2 Sexualisation

For many parents, issues surrounding normalisation and sexualisation went hand in hand and pointed to a society where children are under significant pressure to grow up at a faster pace than ever before. Mothers of girls were particularly sensitive to the increasingly sexual and sexualised culture that their daughters are growing up in and worry about the long - term impact on their emotional and social development. The Bailey review discussed how sexualisation forms the ‘wallpaper of children’s lives’ and this research supports that position. Parents argued that sexualised images and references were pervading the national psyche in an insidious way and that it was hard to separate the potentially damaging from the norm. Whilst film was undoubtedly seen by many parents as contributing to this culture on occasion, it is a part of the ‘wall paper’ and is rarely seen as the main culprit.

Revealing clothing, make up and high heels were not thought to be appropriate attire for primary school aged children or young teenagers, yet parents recognised that their interest to young girls and this fashion is fast becoming the norm. The music, fashion and cosmetics industry were blamed for creating these desires.

“It’s not sex per se, it’s the way it is actually portrayed. Like the Beyonce video, the way she was doing her sexual stuff.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“Some of them are so explicit about that’s how a girl should look and how they should behave.” (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

“I’m concerned about what they watch on music videos and young girls thinking that this is the norm and I try to have discussions about that.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

The degree to which films create or reflect sexualisation of society was a moot point. Interestingly, when considering sexualisation in film, many respondents focused more on the way in which sex is depicted in film than the sexualising and gender – stereotyping per se. Casual sex and violent sex were problem areas for a number of parents. The way in which men treated women was another area of concern.

“Sex – I worry about it being the wrong idea. Films where sex isn’t about a relationship. One night stands, abusive.” (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

“I don’t like the explicit sex and I think certain themes and behaviours that are seen as acceptable, the promiscuity and treating people in a bad way – and what they think may be acceptable and normal which doesn’t really match our attitudes.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

“I have got a son who expects his bird to be fit and he has attitudes how girls should look.” (Female, with children 10 - 15, C2D)

“For me, with a daughter, I think it’s the violence with half of these films that’s attached with sexual content, and for her as a woman, or a young teenager, looking at that, and, actually, dealing with that and seeing another side of love and emotions and stuff. I think that she’s not at an age to understand all of that. I don’t want her to be scared of life, in general, and when she has a boyfriend, ‘Gosh, is that going to happen?’” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

1.3.3 The mental wellbeing of young people

Clearly there is a lot for parents to worry about in 2013 – employment, the economy, the Internet – and high on this list is a very genuine and real concern about children’s mental stability and confidence. It is hard to know the source of this concern and whether it is a projection of parent’s own heightened anxiety or is an outcome of a more intensely pressurised society. However it was a theme of the research and all parents were extremely open about how raising mentally stable children could not be taken for granted any more. Every group, including those with

teenagers themselves, were aware of young people who are suffering from depression, eating disorders, self - harm and low self esteem and nearly every respondent had been touched by suicide.

“I went to a lecture the other week about parenting girls and something like one in five has mental issues up to twenty which is 20% which is shocking. It’s all about love and pressure of the clothes, image and weight and everything rather than just being kids and not have to worry about all of these other issues.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“I was a self - harmer in my teens and it’s a fear that I have that my children who are brought up in a loving environment, end up self - harming.” (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

Parents often linked this issue with normalisation, arguing that they wanted their child to grow up having absorbed their own values and moral centre, rather than being swayed by the world around them:

“If you don’t want them to think that this is okay, to be treated this way in life. It’s not okay. There’s no such thing as normal in life but you’d hope that they’d have, you know, a good life, and a stable life. It doesn’t really show, you know, I don’t know, just to make it known that it’s not okay for this to happen.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

These concerns underpinned how respondents viewed self - harm and suicide in film and will be discussed in a later section of this report.

1.3.4 Knives versus guns

Concerns about knife culture in the UK were still in evidence (Guidelines research 2009) and it was interesting to note how respondents differentiated between knife and gun violence in film. Knife violence was thought to provoke a more visceral response, where the viewer ‘felt’ the violence. The accessibility of knives was another concern, particularly within the context of self - harming.

Gun crime, by comparison, was easier for many to dismiss as ‘American’ based and not part of UK life for most respondents.

“Knife violence is probably more common than guns in this country. You can get hold of knives.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“There are guns in the video games all the time. Not so much with knives.”
(Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

2. Attitudes to the BBFC and Classification

2.1 The Role of Classification

Respondents felt that the primary role of film classification is to protect the viewer, especially more vulnerable young people, from harm. Harm was defined in a number of different ways and many parents were able to separate their concerns about harm inflicted on their own child versus what is perceived to be harmful to society as a whole.

Whilst children were believed to be growing up at a faster rate than ever before, they are still children and parents of younger children in particular were keen to preserve the innocence of childhood for their children. Works that exposed them to new information was an area of concern, be it a new word or expression or a new concept.

“I don’t want them growing up too quickly. I don’t want them asking questions about things I don’t want to tell them about yet.” (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

“Things that take away their innocence. Things that change what they think is wrong and right.” (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

“My take on it is, you know, and my daughter, she is eight. My son is eleven. Why can’t they still be eight, and eleven? You know, there is no reason why, you know, they can have their childhood taken away through excessive graphical images of drug taking, violence. You know, harming others just for the sake of it.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

Parents were keen that films should not precipitate an awkward conversation about something that their child would learn about in time but had not yet been exposed to – sex or drugs – or concepts that could shatter their world view. Suicide and self-harm fell into the latter category.

Another area of harm that parents worried about was the psychological impact of a film and what exactly it would leave a younger child dwelling on, especially at night time.

“He knows when he will cross the line and if he crosses the line, he will have nightmares.” (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

“Horror I think is more of a problem, as I don’t want my child to be scared or have nightmares.” (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

“Horror as they are unaware that that can have an effect on them in the middle of the night and I’m quite strict about what they see as I fear when they are at sleepovers that she’ll watch some horror movie – which will prey on their subconscious.” (Female, with children 3 – 6, C2D)

“It’s a mind game really. It’s something that if they went to bed a few hours later, could be running round their heads.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

Films could also cause harm if they presented a world view that was at odds with parent’s own, depicting the ‘wrong’ values or morality.

“I think if I can just go back to your other question, what are we trying to protect them from, I don’t know whether it is protection, or whether it is, as parents, we are trying to give them good moral values, and it is certain things, like the nudity or the sex, the drug taking, the thieving, whatever it is, we don’t want them to like, be encouraged to do that if it is glorified in a particular way in a film. So it’s more about us raising them in a good way, you know.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

Likewise parents did not want their children to see something that would change their perception of the world as being a benevolent and happy place, leaving them anxious and unable to leave their homes. Maintaining a child’s confidence and emotional wellbeing was discussed by many groups of parents and this objective was felt to be increasingly hard to achieve given the complexity and pace of the society around them.

“It was a disturbing film (*The Lovely Bones*) especially for girls who, being a 12 classification may only just be starting to go to senior school on their own, walking in a dark night. Watching that could freak them out. This is the real world.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“He could be walking to school thinking that he might get beaten up.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“It’s whether kids can take anything from it that will change their lives. It’s whether it’s damaging their confidence in their life.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

More enlightened parents discussed the potential for harm in more general terms. Viewers, they argued, should be protected from content that would change the nature of the society by contributing to the debate about desensitisation, violence or shifting the balance between the unacceptable and less acceptable in terms of language and behaviour.

Unsurprisingly, parents of different aged children had different concerns. Those with children aged three to six, worried more about imitable behaviour. At a time when they were keen to teach their child how to behave, films that undermined their endeavours by depicting inappropriate behaviour, even in a comedic way, were frequently disliked. Whilst these parents accepted that very young children would miss a lot of verbal information, they may pick up on new, 'bad' language if emphasised by repetition or humour. Watching something 'scary' could also lead to nightmares and frequently the source of this was somewhat innocuous and hard to predict. However children this age were thought to be sensitive to tone and theme and the line between acceptably scary and terrifying was easy to cross.

"It's about behaviour, you don't want them copying things. With violence when it's real people they copy that and go and hit each other and think it's funny because it's funny on the film." (Female, with children, 3 – 6, BC1)

"My son is very sensitive to other people and a very sensitive soul and he put that scene with the burning toys in to a real life situation and that scared him." (Female, with children 3 – 6, C2D)

Parents felt that children aged six to ten were growing increasingly aware of the world around them but were still thought to be innocent. There was still felt to be a need to protect these children from sex references, drugs and language and the positive outcome of a film was felt to be important and could mitigate against more 'scary' content.

The main concerns of parents of 10 – 15 year olds revolved around normalisation and this was recognised as being a particularly vulnerable group. Parents feel that they are losing control of their child's viewing at a time when they want to protect their children from anything that contributes to the turbulence of teenage years.

By aged 15, most parents argued that it was 'game over' and they could no longer control their child's viewing. Film classification was fairly low on the list of things to worry about regarding their child. This is not to say that parents did not recognise the importance of differentiating between an 18 and 15 classification as these categories were felt to be very different, but they were fairly pragmatic about the

way in which their children were viewing films – online, at friends, illegally downloading.

“At 15, kids know about drugs and if you see it in a movie, at school even primary school, it’s a good thing.” (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

“At 15 she knows so much more, she’s progressed more and she’s more streetwise and aware of the world around her. You can’t watch them all the time, she has a boyfriend, she goes out by herself, it’s really hard. (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

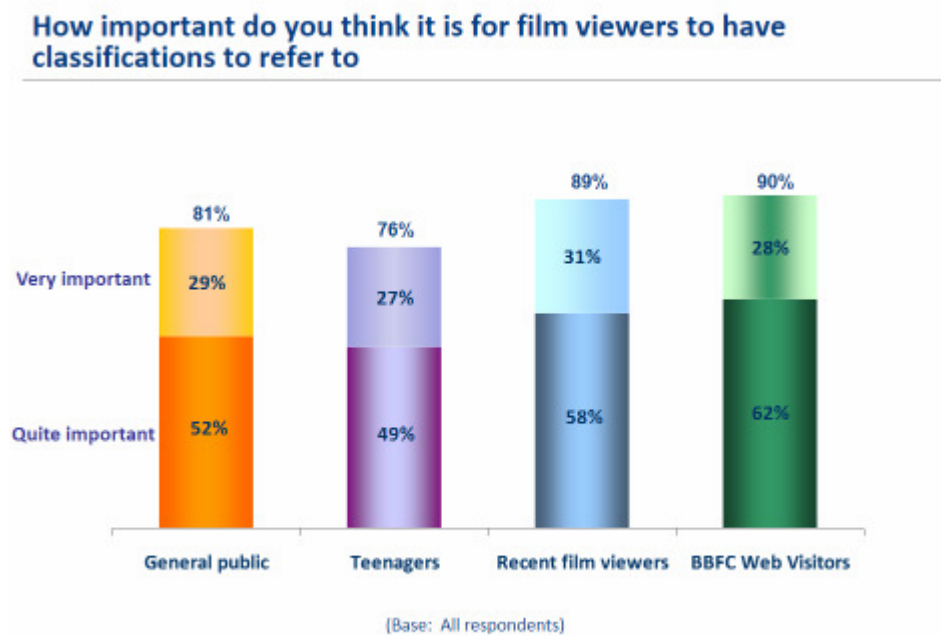
“I think, for me, my daughter’s fifteen, she’s nearly sixteen. I don’t think there’s probably much that could be on a film that she isn’t probably aware of. I think she’s probably aware of it when she’s with her friends. So any type of language, she’d have heard. I don’t think there’s much that would shock me to know that she probably hasn’t seen or heard before.” (Male, with children 15 – 18, C2D)

“At 15 they are a year away from getting married. You are nearly an adult and know right from wrong. They are not stupid and if they are going to do it, they are going to do it.” (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

2.2 The Need for Classification

Film classification is an expected and accepted feature of film viewing in the UK. 85% of the General Public say that they usually notice the classification on films when viewing.

Between 76% and 90% of the audiences surveyed consider it important to have film classifications to refer to when selecting a film (over 90% of parents rate classifications as important).



Even among our teenage sample of 13-18 year olds - many of whom are frustrated by the fact that they cannot see certain films because of age restrictions - more than 3 in 4 say that it's either very or quite important to have film classifications.

This recognition of the need for film classification is evident despite the change towards more solus film viewing channels:

- 49% of Teenagers say they watch films regularly via PC/ipad
- 27% watch films regularly via a games console
- 12% watch films regularly via a smart phone.

Interestingly, respondents in the qualitative sample, were keen to stress that film classification is needed more than ever and is a constant in a changing world.

Parents' decisions and controls are frequently being undermined by technology and the fact that families are now being flooded by information by so many different sources can lead to a certain confusion about the suitability of content. The BBFC symbols are well known and, for the most part, are well understood and have the potential to help parents navigate through the decision making process.

"We tend to be careful what we watch and we wouldn't let the seven year old watch certain things. We look at the back of DVDs to get information."
(Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

"I think it is really important for me and I look at the back for the information and what the film contains." (Female, with children, 3 – 6, BC1)

"When the films come home and you need to decide whether your child can deal with it or not, so it's very helpful and valuable then. It's down to you as a parent to decide whether your own child, and they are all different, can cope with the film." (Female, with children 8 -14, C2D)

"With the children growing up it is the first thing that you look at when you're taking kids to the cinema and probably booking online." (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

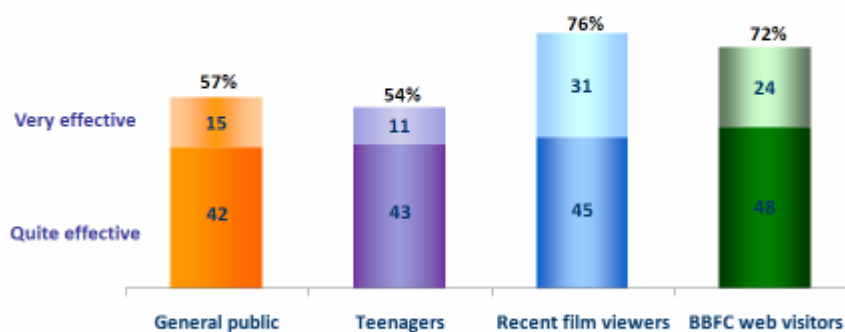
"It gives you a guidance. If you didn't have that, it would be hit and miss."
(Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

2.3 Opinion of the BBFC

The majority of all audiences rate the BBFC as effective in its role of giving reliable film classifications and advice to film viewers. As would be expected, parents are the most appreciative of the BBFC - 84% of parents of children aged 6-15 years rate the BBFC as effective.

Most interestingly, it is the more knowledgeable sample of BBFC Website Visitors who are most appreciative of the BBFC's effectiveness (probably because they are most knowledgeable about the BBFC's role and as visitors to the BBFC website, are the most aware of all the information provided).

How effective do you feel the BBFC is in its role of providing reliable film classifications and advice



There are lower effectiveness ratings for the BBFC among the General Public sample (because this sample includes a large proportion of older adults who are less frequent film viewers and therefore less familiar with the work of the BBFC) and also among Teenagers (probably because they dislike the fact that classifications often prevent them from seeing films that are popular but rated 15 or 18).

Whilst the quantitative research confirms that the BBFC is seen to be effective, the qualitative focus groups discussed the organisation in more depth. The BBFC was thought to be doing a difficult job well and whilst members of the public may not always agree with its decisions, the BBFC is thought to be a trustworthy and credible organisation. There was a recognition that the BBFC represents the interests of the British public rather than the film industry and is an independent organisation. This stance was appreciated.

“They have to do a good job because they’re releasing the film to the public, and if they don’t set standards then people get upset.” (Female, aged 16 – 17)

“I think that the BBFC are getting it right more often than not.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“I’ve rarely disagreed with a classification. I can’t even think of anything off the top of my head where I’ve come out and thought, ‘Cor, that was a bit strong.’” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“I’ve always trusted the classifications. I trust them.” (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

The fact that the BBFC was conducting this review was of interest to respondents, many of whom felt that it was a necessary part of staying in touch with the public and remaining credible and effective. It was deemed important that the BBFC reflected any shifts in public attitudes regarding classification issues however, the degree to which the BBFC needed to mirror these shifts provoked an interesting debate. Clearly the organisation and public do not have a purely symbiotic relationship and there was a concern that the BBFC remained the ‘adult’ / ‘parent’ in the relationship and was potentially slightly stricter than society.

“The BBFC has to be tougher than parents. Parents have to take responsibility for their own children.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

The pace at which the BBFC responded to these shifts was also explored and once again, those interviewed introduced a note of caution as they felt that being measured, considered and slow to change was the recommended approach.

“They should be slow to act. They should not be ahead of the game at all. I wouldn’t bet on Quentin Tarantino being the judge of society in regards to film classifications.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“Listen to people without a doubt but gather all evidence before you make any changes. Don’t be complacent. Don’t take anything for granted on your watch.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“It is hard but they have to move with us, with society but be sort of, held back by one bit. How they guess that one bit I don’t know.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

There was widespread recognition that the BBFC would have to make some difficult decisions and that these decisions would occasionally not be popular with the film industry but those interviewed wanted the BBFC to have confidence to stand strong and to err on the side of caution where necessary.

“If in doubt, play it safe. It’s the adult’s choice then. You’re the parent at the end of the day.” (Female, with children 6 -10, BC1)

2.3.1 Regional Differences in attitudes toward the BBFC

The research sample for the quantitative consultation was designed to be geographically representative, and so Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were covered proportionally in the research.

This resulted in the following regional sample sizes.

	GENERAL PUBLIC	RECENT FILM VIEWERS	BBFC WEBSITE VISITORS	TEENAGERS
Scotland	397	94	283	86
Wales	207	64	146	49
Northern Ireland	Not covered by omnibus	40	68	29

The sample sizes in Northern Ireland are not sufficiently large to allow for statistically valid analysis, however we can draw some conclusions on regional differences in Scotland and Wales when looking at overall attitudes towards classification in general and the BBFC.

Scotland

The views of the General Public sample in Scotland are identical to those of the General Public in the rest of the UK. There are though some differences seen among BBFC Website Visitors in Scotland versus the rest of the UK.

Scottish Website Visitors are:

- more frequent cinema goers

- more likely to be watching 18 certificate films – which may explain why Scottish respondents are marginally less likely to be checking classifications overall and less likely to be rating classifications as important. We know there's less checking of classifications among those viewing higher certificate films

The sample is too small to quote percentages on what prompts disagreement with films seen recently, but qualitative indications are that respondents in Scotland are more concerned about drug use and racist/homophobic language, and less concerned about bad language, violence, sexual and horror content.

Attitudes toward the BBFC are equally positive in Scotland as in the rest of the UK – 55% of the General Public and 75% of Website visitors in Scotland consider the BBFC to be effective.

Wales

Respondents in the General Public sample in Wales are:

- more likely to consider it 'very important' for film viewers to have classifications to refer to
- more likely to rate the BBFC as effective in its role

Overall film viewers in Wales appear to be more appreciative of the BBFC's film classification role.

2.4 Usage of classifications

The perceived importance of classifications is reflected in claimed behaviour, with at least half of those who watch films saying that they check classifications 'all or some' of the time.

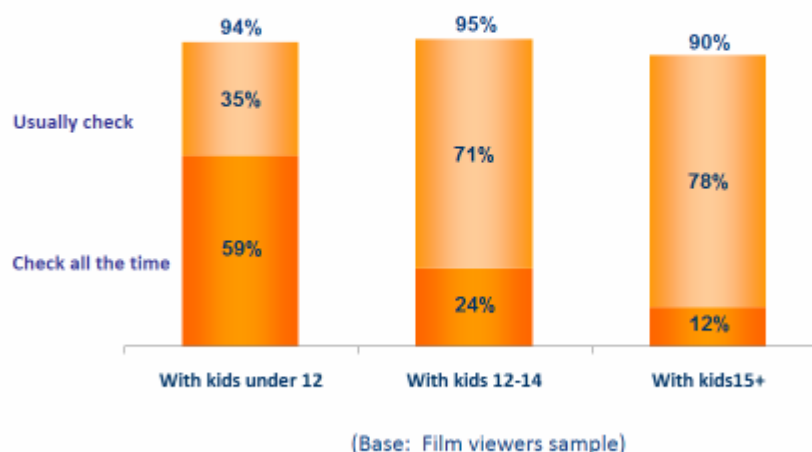
Of the 59% of recent film viewers who say they ever check classifications, 29% are checking classifications irrespective of whether or not they are watching with a child.

Not surprisingly, BBFC Website Visitors (particularly those who are parents) are the most likely to be checking film classifications regularly - 82% of website visitors with children under 12 say that they always check film classifications.

While 50% of Teenagers are checking classifications, this does not necessarily mean that they are adhering to the advice! 57% of Teenagers are watching certificates that are higher than appropriate for their age – 15% of 13 year olds claim to be watching 18 certificate films regularly.

Parents are still concerned about what their children are watching, with 90%+ claiming to usually check classifications for them.

To what extent do you check the classification of films that your children watch in cinema or on DVD?



It seems though that the age of 12 years is pivotal in terms of film viewing supervision – classification checking by parents is less consistent once kids reach the age of 15. As might be expected, BBFC website visitors are more conscientious, with 64% still always checking classifications for their 12-14 year old

children, and 39% still always checking for their 15+ year olds.

A film's classification is an important part of the decision making process but it is not the only source of information. As per previous research studies, the classification is operating within a broader context and the viewer, especially a parent, will look at the film's overall 'packaging' (DVD cover, 'blurb' about the film, cast and director) to glean additional information and clues about a film's suitability. Interestingly in 2013, we find more discussion about making a judgement by looking at a trailer on line or visiting film related websites such as IMDb.

"I would see the trailer and would probably go with that." (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

"I used IMDb all the time. You can go on it and see the synopsis. You can read users reviews." (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

Ultimately parents feel that the classification is a guideline and that they, as parents, can overrule it on occasion and it is fair to say that most parents had exercised this right. The decision to allow their child to view an age inappropriate film can be based on real knowledge about the film's content; especially if the parent has already viewed it and feels that their child can cope with the issues in question. Parents, especially of younger children, do understand their child's emotional threshold and what they can and cannot cope with. Content that can easily be rationalised away, in particular if its source is fantasy or comedic violence, is an example of where parents believe that the classification may not be applicable to their child.

"We often watch the film ourselves before allowing our kids to watch and something like Men in Black where I've seen the first two films. I wouldn't be allowing my seven year old to watch the third film." (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

"I would look things up, get feedback from older cousins who have watched the films first, they recommend to me and so I feel fairly safe as to what I'm going to see." (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

Parents can feel under pressure to allow their child to watch age inappropriate films. Pressure from the child; especially when other parents and peers are involved and pressure too from family members if, for example, a movie night is planned.

Sometimes the simple reason why parents ignore the classification is that they want to watch the film themselves! The film *Ted* is a case in point. Many respondents in our sample purchased this film as a Christmas treat for the family, driven by their own interest in viewing it. The marketing machine, the cast and creators' heritage had also generated a lot of interest amongst parents and children and the 15 classification was ignored or rationalised as referring to a few bits of bad language. The drugs, sex reference and overall tone of the film came as a huge shock to many:

"I am shocked at the language. I thought it was a kids' film!" (Female, with children 8 - 14, C2D)

"No, but we bought it for the kids, without looking at the classification." (Male, with children 3 - 6, BC1)

"I hadn't seen it and it wasn't what I was expecting, because of the title I was expecting it to be funny, cute, more childish with some humour for adults. It's all because of the bear!" (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

"I thought it was a film about a teddy bear. He's watched that with his dad." (Female, with children 8 - 14, C2D)

2.5 Effectiveness of the Guidelines

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Guidelines is measured in this consultation by the extent to which audiences:

- i) agree with film classifications in general (see Q6 in the Recent Film Viewers' questionnaire appended)
- ii) agree with the classification of specific films they have seen (see Q8 in the Recent Film Viewers' questionnaire appended)

The first measure provides an overall 'sense' of whether respondents feel that film classifications are appropriate in general. This measure is not related to any specific films, and so is a more abstract measure that can be influenced by prevailing hype or media stories relating to films (e.g. at the time of research, there was much concern around the need for control of images of child abuse).

The latter measure is a more reliable evaluation of classification appropriateness, as it focuses on individual films seen recently and whether the classification of

known films seen recently falls in line with personal expectation around age appropriate viewing.

2.5.1 Agreement with classifications in general

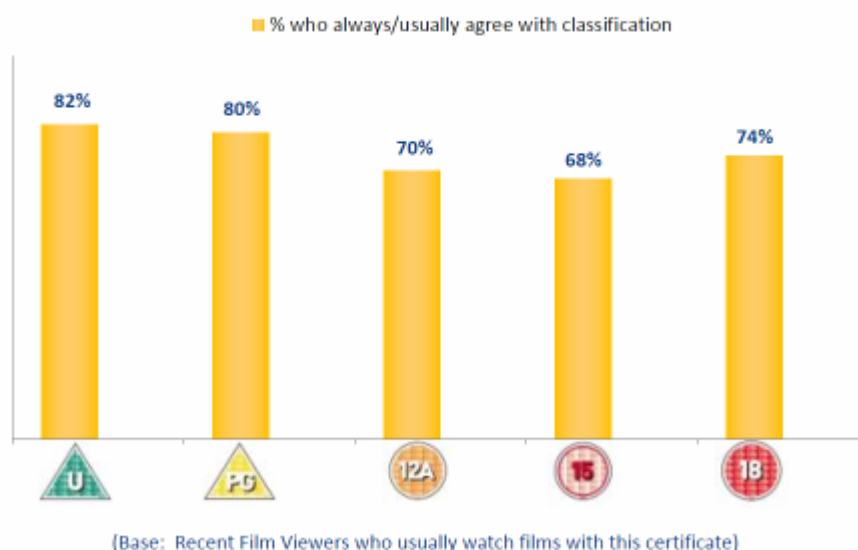
The majority of the General Public (an average 73%) claim that they always or usually agree with the classification of U, PG and 18 certificate films in general.

There are lower levels of agreement for the 12A/12 and 15 certificates (average 62%) – this mainly being prompted by the General Public considering that these classifications may sometimes be too low.

It should be borne in mind that classification agreement measures will be influenced by the frequency of film viewing, attention paid to classifications and the types of films most viewed by each audience. As our General Public sample comprised a high proportion of infrequent film viewers, it is likely that their rating on the appropriateness of classifications will be based on limited personal experience of films seen at each category recently.

The most representative and knowledgeable audience for assessment of the effectiveness of classifications is the Recent Film Viewers sample (average frequency cinema goers, mainly watching mainstream films, paying moderate attention to classifications).

How often do you agree or disagree with the classification of films you usually watch



N.B. An average 16% do not express an opinion on each classification because they do not pay attention to/notice classifications.

The majority (68% - 82%) of Recent Film Viewers say that they always or usually agree with the classification of films they watch.

Lower agreement levels are seen for the 12A/12 and 15 certificates than for others. This is to be expected, as these are the classifications most likely to affect 'impressionable' teenagers and younger viewers. Parents of children under 15 are possibly most anxious and likely to be concerned about, or negotiating with, their children over film viewing - hence the 12A/12 certificate prompting mixed response in terms of classification agreement.

These two classifications are also the most likely to prompt debate, comment and even concerted campaigns among BBFC Website Visitors – with 45% saying they sometimes disagree with a 12A/12 certificate and 39% expressing disagreement with 15 certificate films. At the time of the current consultation, the BBFC had received a number of complaints regarding the 12A certification of *A Good Day to Die Hard*. A number of website visitors were of the opinion that the film should have been distributed uncut under a 15 certificate.

In the case of the 15 certificate, there is a 35% classification disagreement level among Teenagers. This probably reflects individual frustration (among those who have been prevented from seeing certain films), rather than a genuine concern over the failure of the BBFC to classify 15 films appropriately. Evidence to support this argument lies in the fact that among those Teenagers disagreeing with the 15 classification, views as to the reason for disagreement are polarised – with half considering the classification is often too high (mainly those under the age of 15), and half considering the classification is often too low (mainly those over the age of 15).

Teenagers were also less likely than average to agree with the appropriateness of '12' and 15 classification films they usually watch.

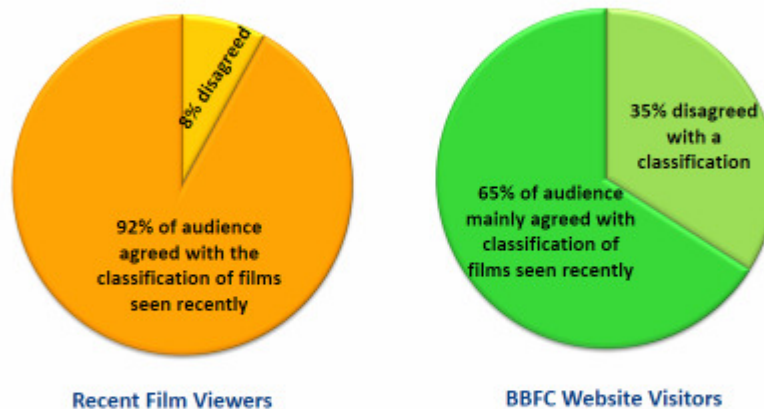
In the case of the 12A/12 certificate, it's a minority (26%) of Teenagers who ever disagree with this classification and in most cases it is because they consider films they have seen with this certificate to be suitable only for those over age 12.

2.5.2 Effectiveness - agreement with individual film classifications

Recent Film Viewers and website visitors were asked whether or not they agreed with the classification of specific films they had seen recently. The films selected for evaluation deliberately included a selection of films that were controversial on release or considered to be borderline decisions by BBFC examiners.

The pie charts below show the proportion of each sample that agreed with the classification of all of the films they had seen from the list presented.

Overall agreement with the classification of films (specific list appended) seen recently



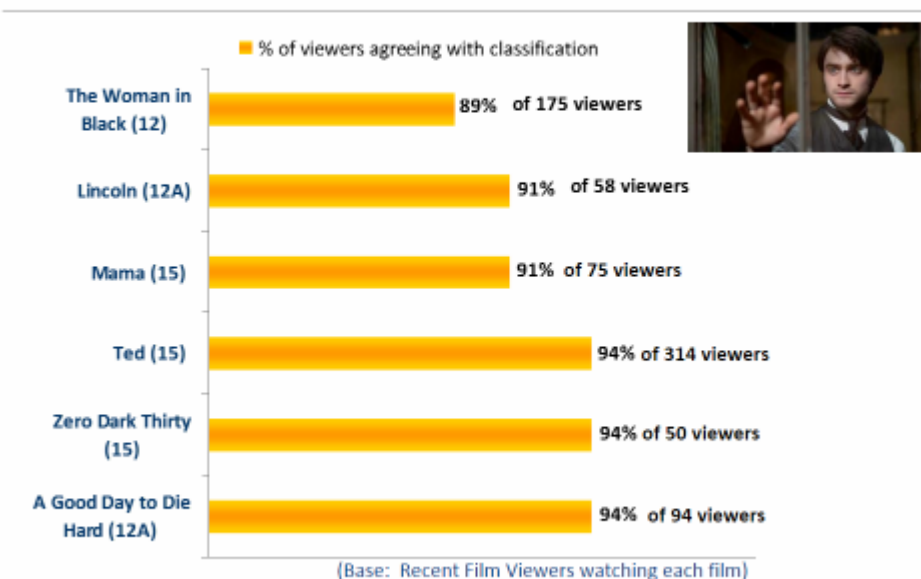
For the vast majority of the 61 films assessed, the BBFC was considered to have awarded an appropriate classification i.e. one that reflected broad public opinion.

BBFC Website Visitors (who are high frequency film viewers, knowledgeable about film classification and probably watching a wide variety of genres) appear to have a 'love / hate' relationship with the BBFC - they are the most appreciative of the BBFC's role, but also more likely to disagree with individual film classifications.

Even for the recent films that prompted complaints and media attention regarding their classification, it is clear that the majority of the Recent Film Viewers' sample had no issue with their classification.

89% of Recent Film Viewers agreed with the classification of *The Woman in Black* and 94% agreed with the classification of a *Good Day to Die Hard*. Only one person in the Recent Film Viewers' sample disagreed with the classification of *Skyfall* or *The Dark Knight Rises*.

The majority Recent Film Viewers agree with the classification of even the most contentious films



Four out of the six films least likely to be agreed with by Recent Film Viewers generated polarised views as to whether their classification was ‘too high’ or ‘too low’, which suggests that on balance, the classifications were probably fair.

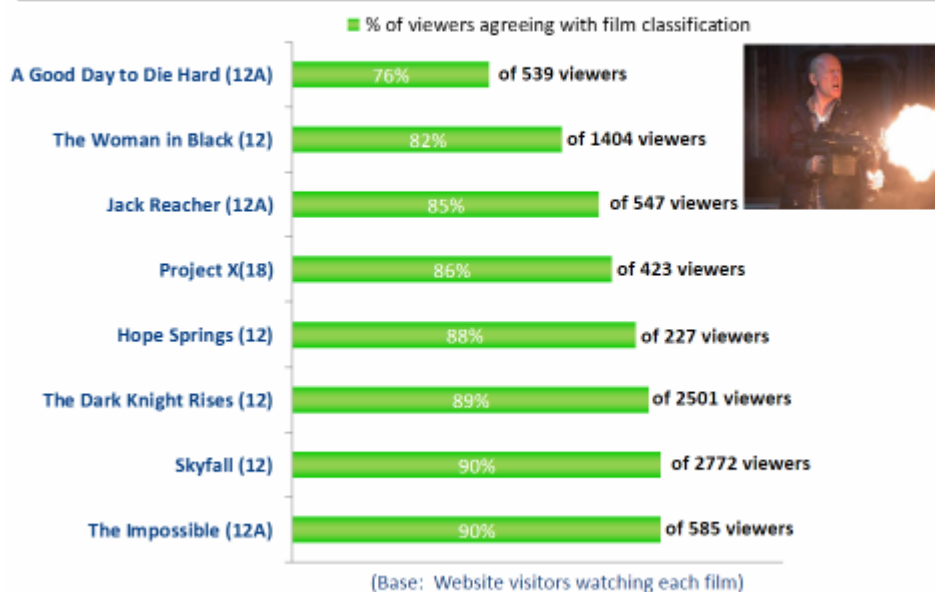
The Woman in Black and *Ted* were the only two films where those disagreeing with the classification were unanimous in their feeling that the classification should have been higher.

In the case of *Ted*, this probably represents a knee jerk reaction to the fact that parents paid more attention to the ‘*implied*’ theme and tone of the film (generated by publicity showing the inclusion of a friendly teddy character) than to the actual 15 classification, which was in fact appropriate for the film’s content.

For *The Woman in Black* the 11% disagreement level reflects a genuine concern that the disturbing content and tone of the film, was too intense for younger children.

There are marginally lower levels of agreement with individual film classifications amongst BBFC Website Visitors overall, with seven films generating less than a 90% agreement level.

BBFC website visitors are the least likely group to agree with classifications, but disagreeers are still in the minority



The issue around the cut version release of *A Good Day to Die Hard* has already been covered and the distributor's decision to cut the film for a 12A classification was clearly not welcomed.

There were strong feelings around the classification of *Jack Reacher*, which BBFC Website Visitors identified as also having been cut from a 15 to a 12A, despite what was considered to be unsuitable levels of (cruel) violence remaining in the cut version.

As seen among the Recent Film Viewers' sample, *The Woman in Black* prompted lower levels of agreement predominantly because of the theme (infanticide) and tone (threatening) of the film, which were considered too disturbing for a young audience.

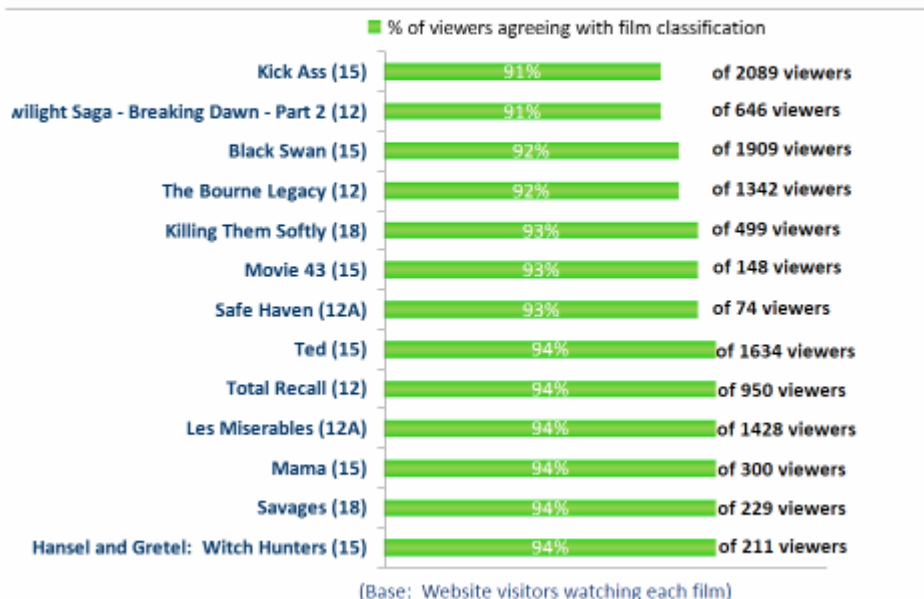
When considering the total number of people disagreeing with a classification (rather than proportion of viewers), *The Dark Knight Rises* and *Skyfall* stand out as the most contentious films for BBFC Website Visitors. Viewers felt that despite the comic book heritage of *The Dark Knight Rises*, the tone, violence and threat (terrifying villain) contained in the film justified a higher classification. Comments suggested that *Skyfall's* rating was too low because of the sexual suggestion and dark, oppressive tone of the film.

In fact, it's clear from the comments expressed that viewers are particularly concerned about these 12A classifications because of the very young age of children they see around them when watching these films in a cinema. The issue of parents potentially misunderstanding the age suitability of films with this

classification is affecting the perceived appropriateness of these classifications for cinema - goers (i.e. viewers feel uncomfortable watching classification appropriate sexual or violent content when sitting alongside children as young as 6 or 8, for whom the content is clearly not appropriate).

A further thirteen films generated relatively lower agreement levels than average among BBFC Website Visitors.

Other films prompting minor levels of disagreement among BBFC Website Visitors



Project X and *Killing Them Softly* were the only films that BBFC Website Visitors considered to be 'over' classified. In the case of *Project X* (18) viewers felt that the content (drug use) was not stronger than that usually seen in 15 classified films, and at a level that would be familiar to most 15 year olds through other TV programme and film viewing.

Those disagreeing with *Jack Reacher*, *Hope Springs*, *Total Recall* and *Safe Haven* were unanimous in considering these 12A classifications to be too low. For all of the other films with low agreement levels, there were a small number where the classifications were considered too high (including a minority who simply object to classification in principle) - the predominant reason for disagreement was because the classification was considered too low.

2.5.3 Reasons for disagreement with classifications

The main spontaneous reason given for disagreement with classifications in general is the level of violence portrayed in films.

Responses will of course be influenced by the range of films that Recent Film Viewers and Website Visitors have viewed in the run up to the consultation process. The most popular movies watched in cinema or on DVD among our samples were *Skyfall*; *The Hobbit*; *The Dark Knight Rises*; *Bourne Legacy*; *Les Miserables*; *Life of Pi*; *Avengers Assemble* and *Kick Ass*. All but one or two of these 12A/15 certificate movies feature scenes that viewers consider to show substantial violence. Irrespective of the realism of the violence (i.e. blood and pain shown), there is some concern over the impression and impact of violent scenes on younger viewers.

What mainly makes you disagree with classifications – verbatim responses

Total sample	(5091)
	%
Too much violence	18%
12A/12 films are under classified	12%
Bad language/swearing	13%
Sexual content/explicit	11%
Inappropriate content	10%
15 films are under classified	7%
Scary/frightening content	3%
Sexual language/suggestions	3%
Theme/context	2%
Drug use/taking	1%
Some PG's should be higher	1%



(Base: Recent film Viewers and BBFC Website Visitors)

Bad language emerges as being of equal, if not as great a concern as sexual content for those viewers who say that they have disagreed with any film classification recently.

Classification of language is an area that the BBFC was keen to explore further in this consultation. The 'Views on Guideline Areas' section of this report covers the specific findings around language.

It is interesting that respondents do not spontaneously mention 'theme' or 'tone' when asked for general reasons for classification disagreement; however it is clear

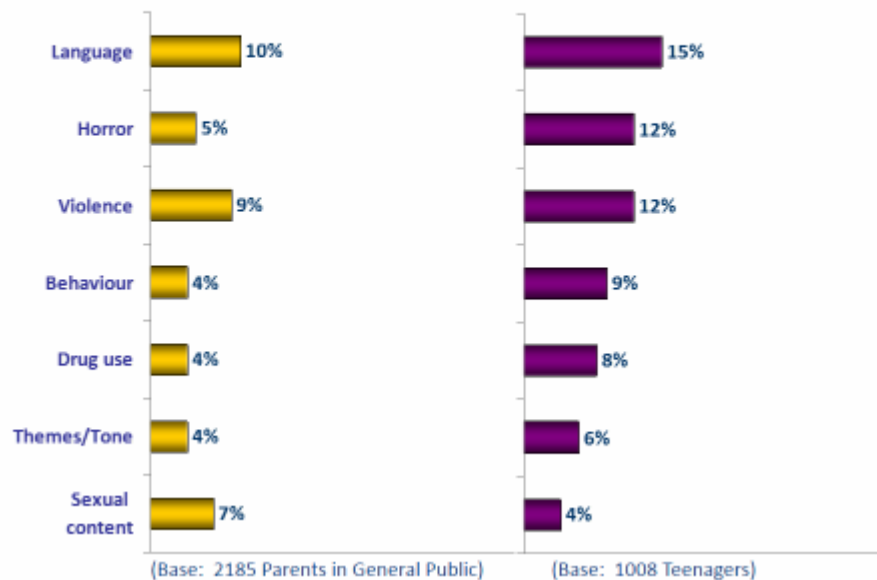
from the comments made when explaining reasons for disagreement with individual film classifications that tone and theme are highly influential factors, particularly at 12A/12, where there may be no overt controversial content or language, but the dark, menacing tone or inappropriate theme of the film is considered sufficient to justify a higher classification rating.

There is no notable spontaneous mention of smoking or alcohol as areas of concern in film classification.

The Teenager and General Public samples were presented with a prompted list of potential reasons for considering classifications to be too low.

The prompted list of reasons for film classification disagreement included factors relating to the main Guideline areas. This data shows how well the Guideline areas are working. High levels of mentions for any area would suggest that the Guidelines are not addressing public concern in this area adequately. As can be seen, there is little classification disagreement being prompted by issues within any of these Guideline areas.

Areas that cause respondents to consider a film under classified – % selecting factors from prompted list



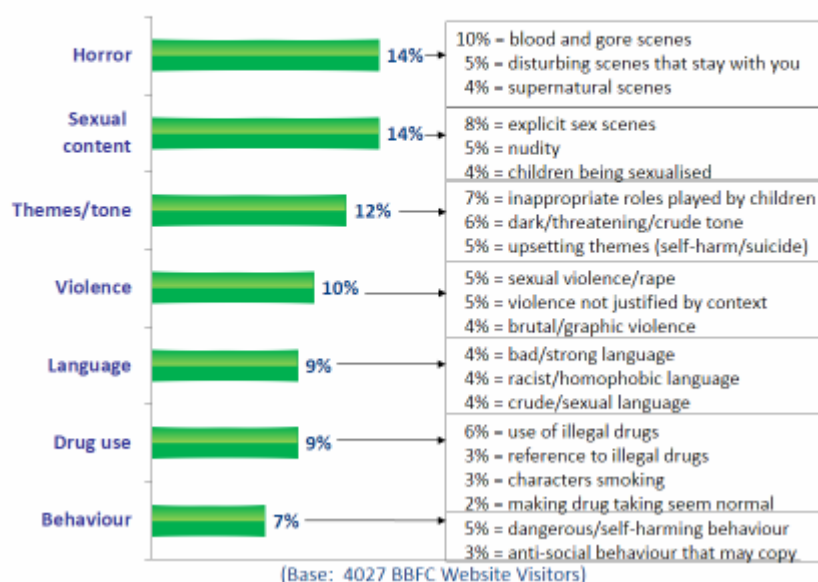
Language is the main prompted area of concern. It is interesting to see that Teenagers are significantly more likely than parents in the General Public to select language, horror and behaviour (dangerous/self-harming behaviour in particular) as reasons for disagreement. In contrast, parents are more likely than teenagers to

identify sexual content as a reason for disagreement with classification.

Respondents in the BBFC Website Visitors' sample who disagreed with an individual film classification, were presented with the same prompted list of potential reasons for disagreement. The data shown indicates their level of concern around these factors².

There is a noteworthy difference in the hierarchy of areas of concern. BBFC Website Visitors are much more likely than other film viewers to disagree with a film classification because of the sexual content and the themes/tone portrayed, but are less likely to be concerned over language (this may be a reflection of the bias toward younger adults and toward men in the BBFC Website Visitors sample).

Areas that cause respondents to consider a film under classified – % selecting factors from prompted list



Given the range of films evaluated (*The Woman in Black*, *The Impossible*) it is not surprising that horror content emerges as a factor of equal concern to that of sexual content.

We found that 17% of BBFC Website Visitors and 5% of Recent Film Viewers found recent 12A/12 horror films watched to have stronger horror and threat content than they would have expected. A small minority (7% of Website Visitors and 1% of

² Data on this question is not shown for the Recent Film Viewers sample because there was an insufficiently valid sample base of respondents (fewer than 100) who disagreed with any individual film classification.

Recent Film Viewers) say that they know children who have been particularly disturbed by horror/threat in a 12A/12 film.

Overall, these findings on effectiveness of the Guidelines suggest that in the vast majority of cases the BBFC is classifying films in line with public opinion.

2.6. The 12A/12 Certificate

The '12A/12' theatrical classification is the most likely to prompt disagreement among the audiences surveyed. This disagreement level partly reflects the fact that the most controversial recent films watched by our audiences (*The Woman in Black*; *A Good Day To Die Hard*; *Skyfall*; *The Dark Knight Rises*; *The Impossible*) were all under this classification.

There is evidence to suggest that many film viewers still do not fully understand the meaning of the 12A classification, and the misunderstanding around age suitability is what gives rise to the feeling that content is often inappropriate.

Encouragingly, 78% of BBFC Website Visitors are able to correctly identify that a 12A/12 film is '*suitable for children aged 12+, but parents have discretion to take younger children*' – the fact that they are on the BBFC website indicates that they are more informed/knowledgeable film viewers. However, among the general audience of Recent Film Viewers there is less clarity - 10% admit they do not know the meaning of this certificate and 17% believe that the certificate means a film is suitable for all children, provided they are accompanied by an adult.

Respondents in the qualitative research sample echoed this confusion and every focus group needed to have the certificate explained to them by the moderator; not *all* respondents were puzzled but there was enough confusion to merit a more detailed explanation. In delving into this issue, it was apparent that the '12' part of the rating had been lost. Whilst many understood that a child needed to be accompanied by an adult, the content of the film itself was often thought to be suitable for a child younger than 12. For many, the end usage of 12A is therefore similar to PG.

"I'm not 100% on what it is, is it that they've got to be twelve and if they're younger, they've got to be with an adult?" (Male, with children 15 – 18, C2D)

"I keep getting confused with 12 and 12A and I've never really been able to figure out what 12 and 12A is?" (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“I would have thought they’re very similar, 12A and PG.” (Male, with children 15 – 18, C2D)

The reality of many 12A films is that they are broader than anticipated and at the higher end, can expose the viewer to challenging content. Given these low levels of awareness, there is clearly a need for the BBFC to work in partnership with the film industry to elevate these levels of understanding.

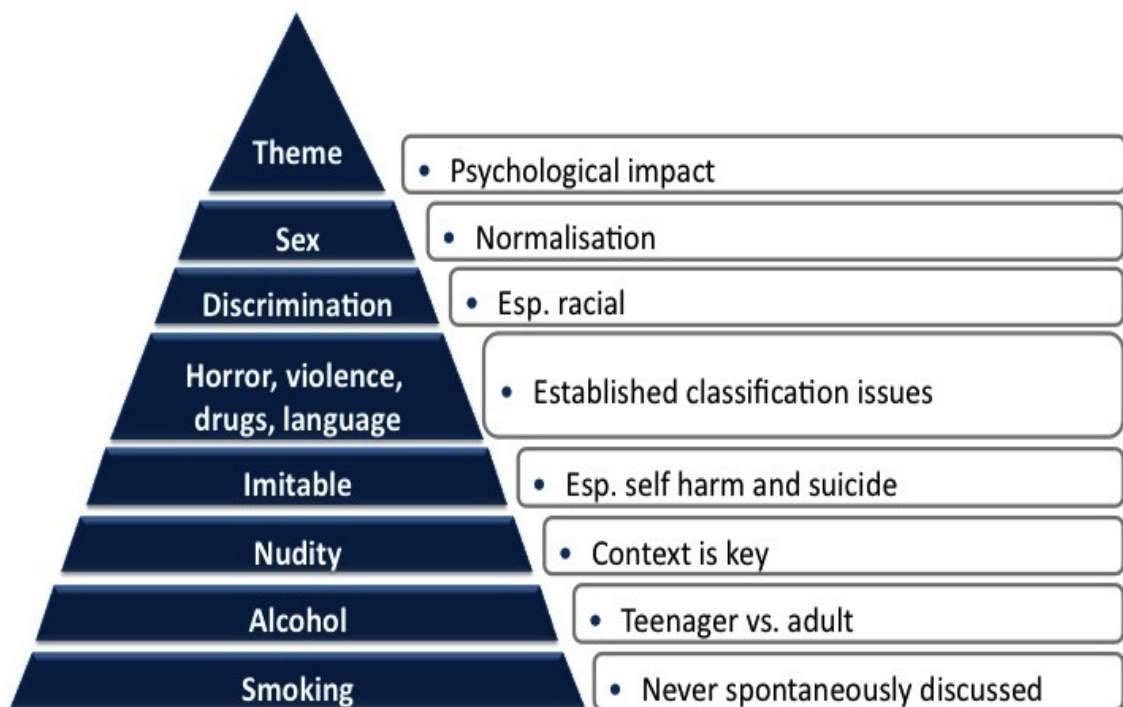
“If it’s a 12A you think it can’t be anything that bad. I took my eight year old to *Batman* because he loves all that and you think “aagh....”, and just hope all the bad stuff goes over his head.” (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

Interestingly, once respondents understood the classification, they could see how it could be useful. There was widespread recognition that ‘tweens’ developed at different times and varied in terms of their maturity and confidence. Parents supported the 12A classification, arguing that it enabled parents to make a sensible decision about their own child.

3. The classification categories

3.1 Spontaneous thoughts about key classification categories

Respondents were invited to discuss key classification issues and to prioritise them from most to least important. There was a great deal of consistency across the focus groups and previous discussions about the trials and tribulations of being a parent provided an interesting context for this exercise. The following diagram illustrates these findings.



For the first time in BBFC Guidelines' research, theme is spontaneously mentioned as a classification issue, reflecting the importance of the psychological impact of a film. Interestingly, theme has traditionally been something that respondents have struggled to talk about in BBFC research but in 2013, we found that most respondents had a fairly sophisticated understanding of this issue. Understanding theme has moved away from the subject matter of a film, to the cumulative effect and psychological impact of the subject. In this respect, we find that theme and tone are closely intertwined and how a film leaves the viewer, rather than specific content, is key. There was a great deal of support for the BBFC paying attention to this important issue.

Interestingly the paranormal or supernatural was felt to be a problematic theme for many children, especially as it was something that could not easily be explained away by parents.

“Yes, I think it’s, like, you’ve got *The Hunger Games*, they know that’s not really going to happen and stuff but there’s all this supernatural, religion, ghosts, spirits, they’re not sure. When they see that they think, ‘Oh my god, this could be what could happen,’ and they go to bed and they hear the door creaking and they panic.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“It is what plays on people’s minds, the unknown. You are classifying films for children whose minds are, you know, really affected by these things.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“I think, the difference in reality where they can actually understand something in their head they’ll accept it. Where they don’t understand something in their head, which a lot of us don’t with the supernatural and there’s all this air of mystery and whatever, the mind is very, very strong, it’s a very powerful tool and it will affect them. I mean it did affect me. I’ve been shaking ever since!” (Male, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“When you bring in supernatural, where you can’t explain it away, then you have got problems.” (Female, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

“Yes. I think it’s more like the paranormal sort of movies, they scare me more because you don’t really know about that. It’s like I don’t really get scared about gory stuff like *Saw* because you can see what’s happening, but with ghosts and stuff, you don’t know about it.” (Female, aged 16 – 17)

Sex or sex references in film have always been a concern for parents, but the perceived prevalence of porn has had an impact on this issue. Parents, especially of teenagers, were resigned to the fact that film could be relatively tame by comparison. Parents were undoubtedly concerned by strong sexual content but found the way in which sex was depicted equally worrying. Concerns revolving around sexualisation and normalisation underpinned these feelings, with many parents commenting on the casualness of sex and the way in which women were treated and portrayed being of particular relevance in this respect.

“I know they know about sex and they understand what sex is but does an eleven year old really need to see it? They don’t need to.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“If you’ve got 12 and 13 year old boys watching porn, the boy is going to expect a girl to be doing things that they shouldn’t be doing.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

Respondents were very positive about sex and relationship education in school, arguing that it was becoming an increasingly important way of counterbalancing the way sex is currently depicted by films and the Internet. This will be discussed in more detail in section 7 of this document.

One of the key findings of the 2009 Guidelines research was that the public believed that discrimination, especially racial discrimination, should be higher up the classification agenda. This was spontaneously discussed by the 2013 research sample who supported the BBFC’s decision to create a ‘peg’ for this issue in the Guidelines by including Discrimination as a category. Younger people were particularly concerned about racist language, arguing that it was as offensive as more traditional swear words:

“Bad language doesn’t bother me unless they are being racist.” (Female aged 12 – 13)

“If you said ‘black cunt’ that is properly horrible but the word ‘cunt’ is fine by itself.” (Male, 18 years old)

Horror, violence, drugs, sex / nudity and language were felt to be the mainstay of classification and established classification categories; well understood, well used and familiar.

Parents have always been concerned about imitability, but it would appear that this subject has a different focus in 2013, and is less about the impact of cartoon – like fighting in film on younger children and more about content that depicted self - harm and suicide. Again, this reflects concerns about the potentially fragile mental state of young people and anything that may be seen to trigger these feelings was extremely worrying. Film content that was perceived to be instructional was of real concern and those interviewed were relieved that the BBFC was paying attention to this important issue.

“At fifteen as well, you probably do know what self - harm is, but you might not know how to do it or anything. Then if you saw it, it would be like, ‘I know what that is now.’ I think as a fifteen year old, you don’t really want to be thinking about things like that.” (Female, aged 16 – 17)

“They should definitely pay attention to it. It’s a strong message. Even if it’s only a brief thing.” (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

“Self - harm is an in thing. It’s out there, like drugs. (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

If your kids got into drugs or alcohol you could do something about it, but self - harm, there in the bathroom, it’s instant.” (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

“With violence, kids know that it is fiction. Self - harm is reality. It is happening.” (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

Alcohol was never raised as a spontaneous concern regarding film classification and was fairly low down on the list of parental worries when compared to sex and drugs. This is not to say that it was not a problem area at all, as any film condoning teenage binge drinking is likely to be an issue, however the depiction of alcohol was seemingly easy to rationalise as being something that young people would likely be exposed to in their every day lives and was not illegal.

“No, if you go to a family party you will see people drinking.” (Male, 18 years old)

Likewise smoking was not regarded as a classification issue and was never spontaneously mentioned across all of the groups. A number of parents and indeed the teenagers themselves felt that starting smoking was linked more to peer pressure than films and that young people were well aware of the dangers of smoking.

3.2 Learning from the Clips and Films - Implications for the Guidelines

It is worth noting that all the films and clips preplaced or shown to respondents in the research groups were chosen as being content that the BBFC Examiners, for one reason or another, had found difficult to classify.

Across all research groups, learning was fairly consistent from the pre – placed films respondents had viewed prior to attending the groups and the clips they were shown in the focus groups.

Where the main differences did emerge was, not surprisingly, between the adult and teenage sample. As detailed in section 6, the focus of teenagers' concerns in films deviated somewhat from adults; with less consideration given to language, soft drugs, fantasy violence and teenagers behaving badly!

Responses to the films and clips prompted much lively discussion. It was this feedback that was often insightful and valuable in identifying areas of opportunity to make tweaks to the current Guidelines and demonstrated potential for shifts in policy decisions.

Respondents were also given the opportunity as part of the research to review the current Guidelines. It is worth noting that the Guidelines were seen as a guide for the Examiners to reference for classification and not for the General Public's consumption. Nonetheless, overall the Guidelines were mostly felt to be comprehensive, were well understood and considered to be mostly in – line with opinion.

From responses to the Guidelines it was evident that there was a preference for clear, unambiguous statements.

In the context of an ascending scale from U through to 18 classification, terms of 'mild', moderate' and 'strong' are clearly differentiated and well understood

There were a number of terms and references that were used by respondents throughout the research to describe relevant classification aspects of films.

Respondents suggested there was an opportunity to include these terms in the revised Guidelines to help with understanding of some of the key issues. Words identified included, 'graphic', disturbing' and 'psychological impact'.

The following section looks at each category of the Guidelines in detail highlighting learning from the research and making recommendations where appropriate for review of the Guidelines.

3.2.1 Theme

As described in detail earlier in the report, the mental wellbeing of young people was felt to be of genuine concern amongst parents, especially the mental wellbeing of teenagers. When discussing 'theme' with parents this issue was very much at the forefront of people's minds.

A film's theme emerged as a key and salient classification issue. The theme of a film; the subject matter combined with the overall tone, was considered important to pay attention to. Films that prompted a strong emotional response and were felt to have a psychological impact on the viewer were seen as potentially problematic. In these instances the viewing experience was described as 'disturbing' or 'scary', 'with the feeling staying with you' not only throughout the film, but also for sometime after.

"Theme very much matters and you know what impression that could have on them and you know other children who may be even more impressionable." (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

A number of film titles viewed for the research demonstrated where 'theme' was an issue and of concern to respondents:

The Woman in Black (12A); respondents described that from the outset there was a strong sense of threat and danger which continued and was constant throughout the film. The theme of child killing and child deaths contributed to the film's overall darkness.

“In *Woman in Black* there were more adult themes in there and my son couldn’t really sleep after watching that and he’d been jumping out of his skin. So worry about the psychological impact and he’d never experienced that before.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

Few expected the main actor Daniel Radcliffe to be playing such a dark role, being more synonymous with Harry Potter the well know, well loved children’s character. A 12A classification together with Daniel Radcliffe as the key protagonist was perceived to communicate a film that was both suitable and enjoyable for the relevant age group.

“Because it was a 12, I thought it wouldn’t be that scary and because of Daniel Radcliffe as well. I was wrong and he was physically jumping up and he was up twice in the night and needed the hall light on.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

The cumulative effect of theme and tone and Daniel Radcliffe’s unexpected role left viewers’ feeling ‘disturbed’. These parents in the research groups suggested a 15 rather than a 12A classification would have been more appropriate.

“My daughter watched *Woman in Black* and she said there’s no way that should have been a 12 as it was far too scary. He dug up a dead child from the grave and how can that be a 12 and it was something that stayed with her. It’s all darkness.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“*Woman in Black* is in a pretty dark and dusty house, it’s the sort of film that would make children want to keep their lights on at night. It’s the woman that’s making the child commit suicide, pretty horrible. 15 I think.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

From the quantitative study *The Woman in Black* achieved the lowest level of agreement with classification, but this was still at 89% amongst Recent Film Viewers and 82% amongst BBFC Website Visitors.

Black Swan (15); Because of the film’s title and marketing, this was expected to be a film all about ballet, similar to *Swan Lake*, but it was not experienced as anything

like that! Rather, it was seen as a raw depiction of a young girl's mental breakdown, including some graphic and disturbing scenes of self - harm. The intense theme and unexpected storyline was felt to potentially tap into difficult territory for teenagers.

"They're at a very impressionable age, you're watching someone who is psychologically disturbed and there's nothing humorous about that." (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

"*Black Swan* was extremely violent with self - harming. If you did have a daughter going through this it might be a bit much and in any case you wouldn't want to encourage and influence young people in that way." (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

"Getting ideas from films and things that you don't want them to know and to start looking that up and then thinking about it - like my daughter with self - harming who hasn't come across that before and starting to worry about why someone would want to do that? It makes it seem normal which just isn't right." (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

From the quantitative study 98% of Recent Film Viewers and 92% of website visitors who had seen the DVD agreed with the classification of *Black Swan*.

The Lovely Bones (12A); the scenario of a young girl, abducted and murdered by a neighbour followed by the devastating fallout to her family was seen by parents in the group discussions as a storyline that could easily headline the news.

"I think the subject matter in *Lovely Bones* was a bit heavy for a 12. I know it can bring up discussions but it's also something that may put fear in them and there is a lot of that in the news and it's often reported, so a heavy subject to be put down as a 12." (Female, with children 8 -14, C2D)

"There is nothing nice about *Lovely Bones*, they hear about these sorts of things on the news and this is going to scare the hell out of them." (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

It was felt to be an example of a theme where young people could readily identify with the subject matter, viewing it as 'real', believable and something that could actually happen to them. If dwelt upon respondents suggested viewers would be left with a sense of unease, fear and anxiety.

"With *Lovely Bones* this is something that could happen now and is more real because it was a girl going home from school and something he could relate to, so definitely a 15." (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

"It's the story, it's too real and the girl is similar in age and watching a girl go through that and also how the adults cope with everything and the falling apart of the family - just too much for them and could be very upsetting." (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"It's difficult for children to distance themselves from things that are real and feel close to home and where they would go themselves, like crossing the field and being caught by the man – leaves them with strong images in their heads." (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

The verbatims illustrate how the theme of *The Lovely Bones* was felt to be disturbing and likely to have a psychological impact on the viewer. Hence, there was support from some for a 15 rather than a 12A classification.

It is worth noting respondents' reaction to the film *Shame*, classified 18. All readily identified the theme of sexual addiction together with self - harm, sex and incest; all considered to be potentially disturbing aspects of the film. Respondents spontaneously commented that a 15 classification would not have been appropriate and in this instance drew a clear distinction between a 15 and 18 classification. At 18, the themes and their treatment in *Shame* were viewed as acceptable and were appreciative that an 18 classification was available.

"Prostitution, all pretty unpleasant - porn, gay clubs, he was a sex addict, everything really, there was self - harm, also made reference to their upbringing, all rather sinister. 18 is the correct classification." (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

“That was almost porn, definitely 18. The content was very dark, a complicated theme, incest or abuse. I wouldn’t particularly want them to watch with those themes, so 18 is right and not lower.” (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

Research also identified that a film’s theme can be problematic even for younger children at a lower classification. *Coraline* (PG) caused much concern amongst parents of primary aged school children. Here, the film’s theme of abduction, being trapped and unable to get home and being in constant fear of a cruel mother, was considered too intense and too dark for children eleven years and under. Parents were concerned children would perceive the storyline as ‘real’ and identify with the child’s plight, leaving them feeling unsettled and anxious.

“My daughter said *Coraline* was horrible and wouldn’t discuss it and that’s a problem and you worry about it playing on their mind and it certainly played on my mind! You’ve little ghosts trapped that can’t go back home and it’s sad and disturbing.” (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

“It’s quite dark and I couldn’t get over the fact that the mother cuts their eyes out and sewed buttons on the little boy and he talks too much so she sewed his mouth together.” (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

“It’s all to do with family at that age and family has to be a safe environment and I don’t want my children’s heads being played with.” (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

Interestingly, there were considered to be few mitigators in place that could override the intensity and impact that can be felt when a film’s tone and subject matter were of concern. This highlighted the importance of paying attention to theme as a classification issue.

There were however, examples of films looked at in the research where theme was not felt to be an issue or indeed something to focus on. Notably, aspects of the films being considered were described as a one – off scenes, versus a constant

theme, running throughout the film. This was the case in *The Artist* (PG) where the one - off 'suicide scene' was mitigated by humour and was readily resolved. Similarly in *Cars* (U) the 'torture scene' was also viewed as a one – off and mitigated by both humour and the cartoon animation.

“A U is right for *Cars*. They do blow up a car but it's not like that when you watch the film and it doesn't register. It's cars and not humans, even though they are depicting gangsters it's not harmful to children.” (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

Theme: Implications for the Guidelines

Respondents appreciated the inclusion of theme as an important classification issue in the Guidelines. To enhance understanding, parents suggested that describing in more detail the concerns around theme and tone, including 'psychological impact' would be a valuable addition to the revised Guidelines, reflecting the public's opinion and views.

3.2.2 Sex

As identified sex was a key classification issue for parents, and genuine concern existed around areas of normalisation, sexualisation and pornography, which were a feature of much of the discussion.

At the lower classification categories of U and PG research explored whether innuendo and verbal references were a concern for parents of younger children. There was general agreement that references of this nature were typically missed by young children and consequently, not a source of worry; their inclusion was felt to be for the entertainment of adults.

“That whole innuendo thing is no problem, the only thing a kid would get is that he tries to put his arm around her but that would be as far as it goes. You don't see anything and it's innocent and sweet from a child's point of view, just trying to get a sneaky cuddle, nothing else.” (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

Within an appropriate context the word 'sexy' was considered acceptable at U and

PG classification categories.

The film *Sucker Punch* (12A) triggered a strong reaction from some parents highlighting their dislike and disquiet of these issues. Several respondents were alarmed at the sexualisation, brothel imagery as well as the violence towards women. These themes were seen to be depicted throughout the film and could not be dismissed as a one – off scene or mention.

“The whole degradation of women that they are just disposable and for men to look at and having to wear that stuff so men can see. All that nasty leery, lechy stuff at the beginning, there’s no way I was going to let my twelve year old watch that.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“It’s suggesting that sex and violence against women is acceptable and goes on. It seems to be saying that this is how it is which is a terrible message to our daughters and wrong that boys should see women being treated in such an awful way.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“Institutionalised girls kept in a brothel walking round in skimpy clothes - what was all that about - sexualising women – the theme was totally unsuitable for 12 year olds.” (Female, with children 8 -14, C2D)

The differing response of teenagers and some of their parents to *Sucker Punch* is reflected more broadly in the discussion around normalisation. None of the teenage girls we spoke to (aged 16 – 17 years) felt they were likely to be disturbed by the themes in *Sucker Punch*. Indeed, they argued that the BBFC should be more lenient when classifying films – like *Sucker Punch* – which are aimed at teenagers rather than their parents.

At 15 classification, where parents were more comfortable with sex overall, there were a number of examples from the clips and films where humour frequently mitigated potentially problematic issues around sex. Films including *The Inbetweeners Movie* (15) and *Keith Lemon: The Film* (15), although acknowledging they contained crude sex references, nudity and strong language, believed that at a 15 classification, matched the teenage audience they were targeted at, with comedy allaying the majority of concerns.

"The Inbetweeners Movie I thought was very much a standard teenage scenario, with drinking, sexual references, hangovers and all that but that is what they do. Also it was funny." (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

"Funnily enough the only people who would be interested in that are 15 to 18 year olds. When they're going through adolescence like that then it's something that will appeal." (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

"Keith Lemon: The Film is all very tongue in cheek. It's not nasty, it's comic, funny, it's not serious and you know he's not going to be hurtful about anything." (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

"You don't really see anything and you know it's not going to go further than it does, and there is no new information for fifteen year olds, whereas you worry more about sex at 12." (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Humour frequently mitigated sex and sex references, especially at 15. This was not always sufficient however to mitigate all concerns for sex and sex references to be acceptable at this category. *The Change – Up* (15) described as 'porn' imagery was problematic and some respondents suggested it was better suited to an 18 classification.

"Looking at that I would say higher than 15, it's seems almost borderline porn." (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Passenger Side (15) was also felt to include 'porn' imagery, with detailed and more 'graphic' sex scenes including not just visual but also auditory content. Here, respondents described the sex described as 'real'. This greater level of detail was not considered by some as acceptable at 15 and was felt to shift the classification to 18.

"It feels more sexual and like porn, also the way he/she is looking at the man, and although you don't see anything but you do hear and somehow that's more graphic and serious." (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“That bit wasn’t funny at all and very uncomfortable. The man/woman was actually playing with her/himself and up until now we hadn’t seen anything like that.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

This one feels real and more serious, very different to when you have humour and comedy. (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

An important aspect of sex that *Passenger Side* highlighted was the sex being with a transsexual. This was an issue for some parents of teenagers and played a part in their recommending an 18.

“I think I’m struggling more with the transsexual. It is sex but it’s not the norm and there’s an odd sense and aggression that comes with that.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Of course, none of the BBFC’s Guidelines have ever drawn any distinction in classification terms on the grounds of sexuality.

Parents of children and teenagers demonstrated the importance of sex as a classification issue by giving much thought to analysing the clips and films they were shown. Here, level of detail, length of scene, one – off mention/scene versus theme as well as genre and overall context, were all taken into account. The clips and films reviewed at 12A helped to crystallise parents’ views and thoughts as shown by the examples below:

With *The Back – up Plan* (12A) there was felt to be no detail, only verbal sexual references and within the context of a romantic comedy, few parents expressed concern at 12A.

“It is J Lo and even though that’s sexual content it’s safe, it’s a bit of a romantic comedy and she’s not naked.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“It depends what’s around that, I’d expect that to be a 12, there’s no nudity, no detail and it’s funny. It’s just really left to your imagination and although it’s obvious what’s going on, it’s light and funny. I don’t want my children to

think that sex is wrong in any sense.” (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

Comparing this to parents’ response to *The Invention of Lying* (12A), where an extended scene focused on masturbation, and included the repeated use of the word ‘masturbation’, prompted more cause for concern. Humour in this context was not felt to be sufficient to lighten the scene. A 12A classification was considered too low.

“It’s the length of the whole clip and it was the focus of the discussion, it wasn’t a throwaway comment.” (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

“If it had just been said once and that was the end of it then that would have been fine, but it kept going on and she played it out and that isn’t okay. There’s a huge difference from twelve to fifteen going from a young child to a far more grown up.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Now is Good (12A) highlighted how context and an overall positive outcome to a film’s storyline, can mitigate parents’ anxieties around sex. There was general agreement that 12A was the correct classification for the film.

“It’s natural to think that having sex would be on your ‘wish list’ if you didn’t know how much longer you had to live, and it’s not as if the father agreed to it straight away.” (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

Sex: Implications for Guidelines

The current Guidelines for sex were well understood and overall matched respondents’ views. The only queries were around 12A and the statement ‘*Sex references should not go beyond what is suitable for young teenagers*’. Respondents questioned who defines suitability at this category? They also pointed out that ‘young teenagers’ did not include the core target audience of the ‘tweenager’ years (ages nine, ten and eleven).

This research demonstrated the need for the BBFC to pay close attention to the following when considering sex in films:

- At 12A; the amount of detail shown, the length of scene, sense of realism and sexual imagery/sexualisation of girls. Humour does not always mitigate sex at 12.
- At 15; 'porn', 'perverted' or 'sadistic' imagery is problematic. Also, sex as a theme can shift classification. 'Graphic' sex is used by respondents to define strong sex, considered unlikely to be acceptable at 15.

3.2.3 Drugs

Drugs as shown in this report was a classification area that respondents were well versed in. All were able to quickly identify and categorise the range of relevant issues relating to drugs.

Top of mind for parents were the issues of glamorisation and normalisation of drugs. All were keen to ensure that any drug related scene or indeed theme throughout a film, gave the impression to young people that drug taking was nothing other than serious and portrayed or indicated the grim consequences of taking drugs. Parents were keen to point out that teenagers and young people were generally well educated about drugs, both from school and at home, and believed they were knowledgeable and aware of the risks associated with drug taking.

Interestingly, the majority of clips and films looked at to explore classification issues around drugs were in – line with parents' expectations.

The Social Network (12A) was felt to effectively demonstrate the consequences of taking cocaine, with police searching and finding drugs that were being taken at a party.

"No glamorisation there, the film's message was quite clear that you run the risk of getting caught if you're going to do those sorts of things even in your own home." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"12 is okay as it's not glamorising it and the message is a good one in the end." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

Similarly, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (12A) was described as a brief scene and was felt to be easy to miss. Importantly for parents, as they had a 'bad trip' the film was thought to effectively show the negative consequences to drug taking.

"Yes the fact that the after effects of taking the drug aren't at all pleasant means a 12 classification is okay. It's an education for kids that things don't go well." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"It doesn't glorify drug taking in any way and young people watching it and seeing he does have a bad trip could actually put you off." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

Now is Good (12A) showed a terminally ill teenager taking drugs (magic mushrooms) under the watchful eye of her boyfriend. Here respondents took into account the context of the drug taking as well as the lack of detail shown which together was felt to mitigate the need for a higher classification. Parents also discussed the valuable opportunity a film like *Now is Good* (12A) offered parents in talking with eleven/twelve year olds about drugs and drug related issues.

"With *Now is Good* that's quite tame I thought really because it didn't show the act of taking drugs, just the effects really and no detail of instruction." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"Yes, I agree with the 12 classification - there's no instruction and she's just daydreaming in the car and you've the context of the film where she's dying and there all these things she wants to do." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"The drugs wasn't about her getting involved it was something to do before she died. She was 17 wasn't she and having sex and things like that it is the sort of thing you would want to do before you died." (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

"It was real and things that the kids are starting to get and at 12 they are starting to appreciate those things and it's time that they can start discussing them." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

Wild Bill (15) was viewed as the correct classification with reference to drugs. Here a film sequence focused on preparing drugs but was not felt to glamorise or promote drugs as a lifestyle. Most significantly, parents did not perceive that the film was providing new information or instructional detail, either, of which would have been an issue.

“There’s nothing particularly shocking there, just drug dealers cooking up their crack and it didn’t glamorise. You can tell they’re losers and it’s not glamorised. It’s not like it’s in Miami where the bloke is driving round in a Ferrari and it’s all the highlife and everything. It’s horrible, real life on an estate.” (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

Ted (15) in comparison did prompt some concern over drugs as a lifestyle, its upbeat tone and perceived lack of consequences.

“In *Ted*, the drugs made it look okay and natural and just part of being an adult suggesting that’s what you do. There was no message to suggest otherwise.” (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

Respondents’ reaction to *Paul Merton in India* (15), illustrated by the verbatims below, showed how genre and the perceived potential audience resulted in respondents suggesting a shift in classification to a lower category.

“*Paul Merton in India* is not in a council house on some sink estate, it’s on holiday with these magic men and he’s immersing himself in what they do. It’s possibly more acceptable in their society and culture and that’s how they live and he wanted to be part of that for the documentary.” (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

“I’d lower the classification to 12 in this context as it’s a documentary about India and generally about travel. That’s what they do there and it’s some obscure religious thing for them and it’s definitely not being promoted as let’s go and do this.” (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

There was an interesting discussion around the classification of *Better Things* (15). There were parents who argued that showing teenagers the grim realities of drug taking and the impact it can have on young people's lives was important for a wider, younger audience to appreciate and hence were supportive of the 15 classification.

"I thought it didn't glorify drugs, it had the opposite affect to it and I thought if my kids were watching this it wouldn't have the effect of glorifying anything so I did think it was okay as a 15 and that's because it made it look awful. It's a channel 4 type thing, not mainstream, more cutting edge." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

Not all parents agreed, however and some would have been more comfortable with an 18 classification. The drug theme being a constant throughout the film and the level of detail shown, which included injection of hard drugs with needles, provoked a strong visceral reaction for these parents.

"Graphic pictures injecting and trying to get veins in their arms, and all the detail and they could go and copy it because they were heating it and sniffing it all. There was drugs throughout and it could have been an 18." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"The drugs the way they used them and took them they weren't just sniffing they were injecting them and trying to find veins to take crack and they were chasing the dragon. I think an 18." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

Following a discussion about aerosols and accessible highs, all agreed this was an important issue for drug classification. Both parents and teenagers seemed aware of the risks and potential for instant death with these substances. Respondents concurred with the BBFC that there was a need to be 'strict' with classification in instances involving drugs of this sort that were readily available and could be easily copied.

"Aerosols and solvents, is definitely an issue, if not more so than other drugs.

You can get hold of these things easily and probably have them in the home and they shouldn't be glamorised." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"Yes, they should definitely pay attention to aerosols and they should be stricter with aerosols as they are more readily available" (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"I thought pretty good because at 15 that's easily accessible stuff that your kids have access to at home, they may just do that - so very good that it includes aerosols, very good point." (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

The clip from *Thirteen* (18) was felt to effectively highlight the concern with aerosols. Respondents as illustrated by the verbatims below, were reassured by the 18 classification.

"That's not something I'd want my girls to watch and I'd expect an 18. It's clear that it's setting the scene for what is going to come; getting wasted and the violence is likely to escalate." (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

"An 18 for that clip as they are clearly having fun and thoroughly enjoying themselves. It's the impressionability of it. It's life threatening with those aerosols." (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

"The fact that they are aerosols makes a difference, you can find that in your house easily, and you can imagine kids saying, 'Come on let's have a go at that'." (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

Drugs: Implications for the Guidelines

There was full agreement with the statements for drugs in the Guidelines and only minor comments or additions were suggested.

At U, respondents assumed the statement was describing only oblique references to drugs or within the context of an educational documentary.

At PG, the anti – drugs approach was appreciated.

At 12A/12, respondents suggested that the inclusion of a reference to normalisation may be a useful addition. Also, 'for educational purpose' could also be of value.

At 15, the inclusion of aerosols mirrors respondents' concerns and is welcomed. Also, respondents suggest the possibility of referencing level of detail and instructional information.

The issue of hard versus soft drugs was discussed amongst respondents. There was support for the Guidelines to acknowledge the differences between soft drugs and hard drugs. They were quick to point out that there were serious consequences to taking all types of drugs. Moreover, that it was important to remember that both categories of drugs were illegal.

3.2.4 Language

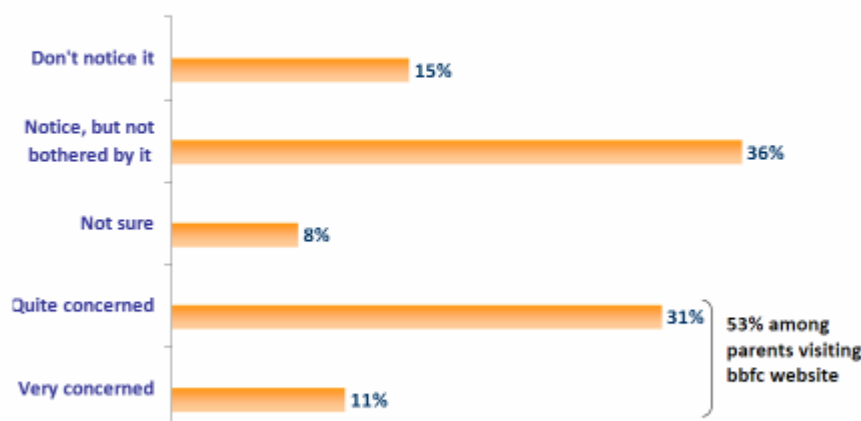
The BBFC Guidelines currently classify in part on the basis of frequency of use of strong/bad language in film, and there was a desire to identify whether frequency of use on its own is the most appropriate method to use for classification.

Viewer response to language was investigated in detail both qualitatively and quantitatively in this consultation.

Results from the quantitative phase (where bad or strong language emerges spontaneously as one of the main reasons for considering a film to be under classified) would suggest that frequency of use may not be the most relevant basis for classification.

When asked to rate level of personal concern over the use of strong language in films nowadays, there is a polarised response – over half of Recent Film Viewers either don't notice or are not bothered by the use of strong language, but a significant 42% are concerned.

Level of concern over the use of strong language (e.g. the 'F' word) in films nowadays

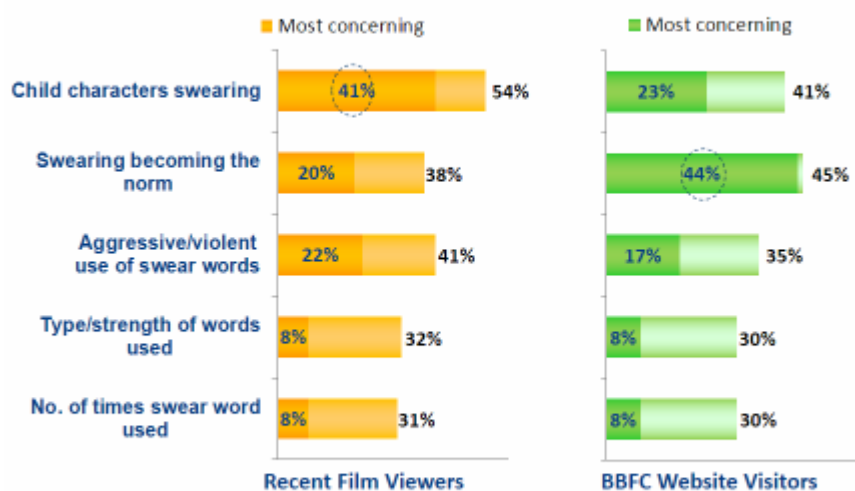


(Base: Recent film viewers)

Parents (particularly those who are BBFC Website Visitors) are not surprisingly more likely to express concern over the use of strong language in film.

Our findings show that it is in fact the nature (who is swearing and the manner in which swear words are being used) and the normalisation of bad language that is most concerning to film viewers, more so than the number of times a swear word is used or the strength of the swear word.

Aspects of bad/strong language that viewers find at all concerning



(Base: all respondents in each audience)

The General Public are particularly likely to be concerned about child characters

swearing.

BBFC Website Visitors surveyed are more concerned about the normalisation of swearing in film.

The qualitative phase of research shows that there have been greater shifts in attitudes towards language than in any other classification area of the Guidelines since the 2009 Guidelines Research. This was borne out when reviewing language in the clips and films where there was seen to be less agreement with classification decisions than in any other classification category. Interestingly, in all bar one of these ‘disagreements’, respondents recommended less ‘strict’ classification categories.

Research explored use of language at U and PG amongst parents of young children, including both pre – school and primary aged children. Parents spontaneously mentioned that language was an issue for them, with particular concern for children imitating language at a young age. Parents often picked up on language used in the films and clips shown in the research, as well as mentioning other films they had watched previously where they had been surprised by use of language. There was acknowledgement that bad language can sometimes go unnoticed by children, but this was not always the case and children being introduced to new words and repeating bad language was considered unacceptable at this younger age.

The Pirates in an Adventure with Scientists! (U) highlighted parents’ concerns with language at the lowest category. The use of ‘arse’ and ‘crap’ was unexpected and disliked, prompting much criticism from parents;

“‘Crap’ and ‘arse’, I’d rather it wasn’t in there. If they’re hearing it in everyday language then it becomes normal. They could have used ‘bottom’ instead and it would make no difference to the film.” (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

“Because my daughter is an absolute repeater and even if she doesn’t understand it she repeats it like she does. There’s a sentence in there that says, ‘that makes electricity look like crap’, crap isn’t a word I would like her

saying and I don't want her repeating it." (Female, with children, 3 – 6, BC1)

"I thought, my gosh! My husband also thought it was pretty odd! My son will definitely pick it up and I don't want him walking round saying 'this is crap' and 'that is crap'. They could easily have used another word." (Female, with children 3 – 6, C2D)

In exploring language at higher classification categories, research showed a range of mitigators that were influential in justifying the use of language.

It was evident that many decisions about language were based on the film's /clip's context. If the language was felt to represent or was synonymous with expectations of real life – portraying language in a natural, realistic setting, then respondents were more accepting of language. This is shown below in reaction to *Angels' Share* (18) and *Route Irish* (15).

"The language was very realistic in *Angels' Share* and certainly in that part of Glasgow, that's normal and they would talk like that" (female, children 15 – 18, BC1)

"It's the accent and the way in which they're speaking that it just washes over you - it's more acceptable and my impression of people is that they would all talk like that. You just stop noticing the c word after a while." (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

"That's very realistic and that's how a man losing his temper would talk. It's not aimed at children and it's a situation that you can understand why he would respond in that way. It also makes a difference being men together than girls that would be completely different." (Female, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

"Typical men talk, army, men's club. It seems like that's the norm, the culture and being Ken Loach that you'd expect to be fairly hard - hitting and real." (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

Significantly, the use of very strong language in a 'naturalistic' setting, when taking

in to consideration genre and the target audience, was not seen to automatically require an 18 classification. Respondents argued that films of this nature where the language is not viewed as gratuitous, and especially if the storyline/theme was of particular interest or relevance to teenagers, then a 15 classification should be considered.

“*Angels’ Share* is very real and something like that could happen. I think it could have a positive effect on young people, the direction from the adult and the benefits from someone helping them change their lifestyle and he went the extra mile for them.” (Female, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

“The violence and language in *Angels’ Share* were possibly borderline for 15, the point at the end of the film and the whole progression of it I thought that a 15 year old would really benefit from watching as it shows someone who is down and out in real trouble who is trying to get out from there.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Films depicting a particular era or historical period were also shown in certain circumstances and when all aspects have been carefully considered, to mitigate use of language where the language was felt to be a true representation of the time. Again, relevance for teenagers and the potential educational value of a film was seen to be influential in recommending a lower classification category. *Made in Dagenham* (15) a historical drama where parents were accepting of a more liberal classification of the use of strong language. A 12 classification rather than 15 would have been welcomed in this specific instance.

“There were a couple of swear words and it seemed relevant to the times the film was portraying.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“I think it’s the context, it’s the working class and it’s the language that’s used. It’s expected and it’s real life. It’s how people talk like in *Angels’ Share* and to me that makes a difference. It’s based on something that has happened. Good role models for girls so the language isn’t a problem.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“There could be films like *Made in Dagenham* that I actually found very

educational and it was a real story and found it interesting and things like that with a rating at 15 could have put some people off.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

Interestingly, where language was relevant and in context, the language was often ‘missed’. Viewers typically underestimated the number of times strong language was used throughout *Made in Dagenham*. This was seen to be important when discussing frequency of language in films.

Humour was identified and well understood as a mitigator for language. There were a number of scenes from films and clips where humour was seen to justify use of strong or very strong language as shown in *X – Men: First Class* (12A) and *Curb your Enthusiasm – Beloved Aunt* (18).

“*X – Men* - it’s very funny and if that’s the only thing in the film and there’s no violence in that. It’s the way you differentiate and the context and what’s implied and whether it’s directed towards women and that’s between two men saying ‘get lost’ in an inappropriate way.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“It was only the once and it was very funny and he’s sitting smoking. Not aggressive and humorous and it’s not a derogatory curse word, it’s something that kids hear and is spoken everyday.” (Female, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

“Too high classification for *Curb your Enthusiasm – Beloved Aunt*, because the c word doesn’t shock and was being used out of context and that particular part was extremely funny, there was nothing shocking about it - 15 would be fine.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Equally well understood was how language was perceived when it was delivered in an aggressive or non – aggressive manner, the latter reducing the overall impact of language. Similarly, language spoken peer to peer versus, for example, woman to child, was also shown to affect how language was received; the latter heightening its intensity.

“*Bridesmaids* was funny but more offensive that she was a young girl. But I don’t think that’s as offensive or in any way as aggressive as a man going into a woman’s face and saying you ‘little cunt’ – that’s the violence. When it’s very aggressive that’s much more of a problem,” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“It’s the way you differentiate and the context and what’s implied and whether it’s directed towards women and in *X- Men* that’s between two men saying ‘get lost’ in an inappropriate way.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

Reported speech with use of language appeared to have less of an impact compared with directed speech. This was highlighted in *J. Edgar* (15) where the protagonist was repeating an instruction he had been given.

“How it was said and he was quoting someone and the fact that he didn’t like it and he said he didn’t agree with it, then if that’s the only thing in the film then it could be lower.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“It’s an Americanism and he was reporting and saying what somebody else said. It’s not the same as someone saying that directly at you.” (Female, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

Research looked at respondents’ attitudes and views of ‘motherfucker’ and ‘cocksucker’ in the context of classifying language. Interestingly, although both terms were felt to be strong, and certainly as strong as ‘fuck’, respondents generally did not view them to be as strong as ‘cunt’. Reasons for this focused on both motherfucker and cocksucker as being less salient and used less frequently than either fuck or cunt. Also, both terms often described as “American” was felt to reduce their impact.

“Motherfucker and cocksucker are the same genre as fuck, possibly fractionally worse - more syllables and stressed longer.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“Motherfucker doesn’t worry me in the same way, also more American and less people use it here, more of the culture.” (Female, with children 15 – 18,

BC1)

Given this softer attitude towards 'motherfucker' and 'cocksucker', respondents did not agree that it would always be necessary to automatically classify a film at 15 for use of either of these terms. Respondents suggested it would rest more on the context of how the words were delivered, rather than the words themselves.

"It seems wrong to use one word to classify a film as it has to be seen in context with the rest of the film. Cocksucker, is not a nice word but it's not thrown in your face and that may be lost if your child is watching. It's not like they're in a fight and they're shouting you 'fucking cocksucker', then that would be a 15." (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

Across the sample, there was evidence of softening of attitudes towards 'fuck' and also 'cunt', especially amongst younger respondents.

Reluctantly, parents were accepting that there have been shifts in language in recent years and awareness and use of the word 'fuck' in particular, is almost commonplace, even for primary school aged children. Even if their own children are not using language at home, parents are aware that it has become an accepted part of young people's lives and its use in the school playground as well as with social media, mobile phones and the Internet is widespread.

"If you stand outside a secondary school playground, you will get your eyes opened, they know everything, and nothing they don't know or use." (Female, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

"The f word is less than it used to be, it's become so commonplace to use and is used by a lot of people all the time." (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

"I know darn well that my middle son uses that on Facebook as I hacked his account! It's just not shocking to hear the word fuck anymore." (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

"Fuck is a lot more common now it's almost been dumbed down. Teens are

exposed to it and twelve year olds hear it at school and it's around when they're out with their mates and they think it's cool." (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

"'Fuck' is not new information. From ten upwards they know."
(Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

At 12A, the current Guidelines state, "The use of strong language (for example, 'fuck') must be infrequent". This statement resonated well with parents, reflecting their unwillingness to embrace strong language as a matter of course, but rather allows its use where context and/or genre permits and other relevant mitigators are in place.

"Use of strong language isn't needed in an ideal world, but that's not reality and if it's used once in the film and how it's said and you do have to reflect today's society then that can be okay." (Female, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

'Cunt', still provoked a strong negative reaction from parents. It was not well liked and was always considered to be stronger than 'fuck.' Here differences between 'strong' and 'very strong' language were well understood when discussing insight and in the context of statements in the Guidelines.

Although disliked, parents acknowledged that the word 'cunt's' shock value has been diminished over time. This was believed to be especially true among teenagers and young people, and was borne out when discussing language with teenagers themselves who acknowledged widespread peer – to – peer usage, especially amongst boys of 14/15 years; 'cunt' was seen to be part of their vernacular.

"They have seen it all at that age. I just think that with fifteen year olds today, there is nothing we can surprise them with." (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

"I'm trying to think of a swear word that I wouldn't want my 15 year old to hear or that he doesn't know already and I can't think of one!" (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Language: Implications for the Guidelines

The shift in approach and attitudes to language described, has important implications for the Guidelines.

At U, the current Guidelines state, “Infrequent use only of very mild bad language”. From material respondents were shown for the research, they perceived ‘very mild bad language’ as stronger than expected. Words such as ‘shit’, ‘arse’, ‘dick’ and ‘bitch’ were rejected at U, even if used ‘infrequently’. Respondents concluded that at U, films should be free of ‘bad language’.

At 12, the Guidelines are considered to reflect the public’s view and they appreciated inclusion of ‘fuck’ as an example of strong language ‘to be used infrequently’.

Research addressed the issue of frequency of strong language at 12 and whether the repeated use of language throughout a film matters to parents. Context can be the overriding issue here as the film *Made in Dagenham* showed; the films’ historical perspective, genre and potential target audience, mitigating use of ‘fuck’ on more than one occasion, leading to a recommendation of a12A, rather than a 15 classification.

Notwithstanding this, it was clear from parents’ responses that frequency of language at 12 is an important issue, does matter and can have an impact. One use of strong language was considered different than multiple or constant use throughout a film.

“I haven’t a problem with bad language, but when it’s constant and it does make a difference when it’s every other word.” (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

“*X – Men* is one of my boy’s favourites, it’s funny and there’s going to be violence, fantasy violence with superheroes. If it’s just the one use then I’m bordering on the 12A. If there’s a lot more then possibly higher.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“They are going to hear it anyway and there’s no point cutting it out of films as it’s part of society and it does depend on what the film is about and who and what they are trying to show. Bad language used in the right context to make a point really is okay but relentless use of it does make it much stronger.” (Female, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

Parents were unable to put an actual figure on the number of uses of strong language allowable at 12, debating that it was how the language was felt being more relevant than the precise number of strong words used. So a rule stating for example, that with over four uses of the word ‘fuck’, a film should automatically go to a 15 classification, was not considered to correctly reflect respondents’ views and attitudes to language.

At 15, as research has shown, parents were more relaxed about language in general, with both strong language and very strong language being acceptable at this classification, the latter being justified by context and when not seen as gratuitous. One off use of very strong language, i.e., cunt, was readily justified on various occasions.

“When you go and see a 15 film then you expect to hear all the language, you’re not going to be surprised.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

“With *Kick - Ass* because that film shouldn’t be an 18 for any other reason than the one use of the c word, it doesn’t need to be for any other reason, so it doesn’t seem to be justified.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

“Even the c word to me in the right context is okay for me at 15. In combination with context, then there isn’t really a problem.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Even in instances where there were repeated uses of very strong throughout a film, with the relevant mitigators in place, parents were prepared to give consideration to a 15 rather than an 18 classification. *Angels’ Share* was a notable example, where respondents had been given the 18 version of *Angels’ Share* to view prior to attending the group discussions. This 18 version contained multiple uses of very strong language, with some aggressive use of the word cunt. Interestingly, the

multiple use of the word cunt was not in the context of the film seen as an issue on its own, and even with the inclusion of some uses in an aggressive context, did not appear to automatically warrant an 18 classification. Significantly, respondents who felt an 18 classification was justified focused on the film's level of violence and not specifically the very strong language.

"It was real violence, not comical, a lot of swearing, but that's not shocking to a 15 year old." (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

As we saw with strong language at 12A, there was no magic number when considering very strong language as to where classification boundaries can shift at 15 and 18. No one was counting the number of uses of very strong language, but rather the context was the overriding factor in viewers' response to language. Evidence from this research points to the possibility of reviewing the frequency rules that exist for 'cunt' at 15.

Where parents voiced more concern was where constant very strong language was coupled with violence, particularly in sexual or sadistic violence. Respondents felt this use of language would warrant a shift in classification. Language on its own was rarely an issue.

"When the language is completely constant and blasting then I think it should go to 18. Vulgar cursing and scenes to match the aggressive language would push it to 18." (Female, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

"If it's sexual and abusive and violent then that should be an 18." (Female, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

To emphasise their views on language, respondents suggested changing the statement for language at 15 from - "the strongest terms (for example, 'cunt') may be acceptable if justified by the context" to "will be acceptable", reflecting their overall shift in attitudes at this category.

3.2.5 Violence

Like drugs and language, violence was an acknowledged and well understood area

of film classification. Parents and teenagers in particular, demonstrated the ability to quickly analyse and decode violent scenarios depicted in films. Respondents were sensitive to the level of detail shown and in determining the 'graphic' nature of the violence.

Indeed, violence that was felt to be 'real,' related to the level of detail and graphic nature of the violence shown, was key in determining respondents' reaction to the violence. The visceral nature of violence was felt to have more impact when the violence was considered 'real' – being well portrayed and looking realistic.

In the context of the clip from *Salt* (12) that was shown to respondents in the research, the violence was felt to be too strong at 12. The scene of a woman being tortured by men was felt to be graphic and 'real'. The perceived violence that she had endured previously as well as the anticipated violence that was to follow - possibly including rape - led respondents to question the 12 classification.

“When she was strapped down you didn’t know whether they were going to rape her or torture her more - there was a sense of threat - a group of men in a room with her all tied up and the aggressive language.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

“You’ve a naked lady surrounded by men, tortured and there’s blood, that’s not moderate violence. If that had been a man you possibly wouldn’t think the same.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

“That was strong, the nakedness, the abuse, woman surrounded by men, the sexual violence and imminent death, covered in blood and possibly been raped, it’s that possibility – I can’t believe it’s a 12.” (Female, with children 8 -14, C2D)

There was some reflection that out of context from the full length feature film, this opening torture scene’s impact may have been reduced if this was a one – off, setting the scene for the thriller viewers were expecting.

The importance of production values in terms of how violence was assessed and believed to be real was shown to be key. In comparison with *Salt* (12),

respondents' reactions to *The Lady* (also classified 12) were quite different. The distant camera shot panning across the assassination scene and the perceived lack of blood and graphic detail were felt to reduce the level of violence that may otherwise have been expected.

"It's not really very realistic and there's nothing too graphic in there, there's all the blood at the end but everyone is dead and everyone is quiet, not how it would be I guess." (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

"With the shooting scene there is nothing prolonged there and there is no torture and it's over quite quickly. There's also a factual context to that, rather than a fantasy and it's far more real – could be a 12." (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

The film's genre, historical context (biopic of Aung San Suu Kyi) and potential target audience were also factors mitigating the violence in this clip and respondents were in agreement with the 12 classification.

"The historical context, yes does make a difference, there's no glorification of violence and this is the dramatisation of something that's happened in history so, it is educational and something that really did happen and does it in a good way and could be good for young teenagers to see." (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

"It wasn't overly graphically violent and you could feel a bit of threat building up but not so much. It's involving history and by the age of 12 they have already been prepared to watch films like this and people being beheaded so it's not shock horror." (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

Cleanskin (15) was considered to be appropriately classified with regard to the level and detail of violence. The scene shown was described as up – close, graphic and 'real'. The level of violence although considered strong was felt relevant for the terrorist storyline and not felt to be beyond what 15 year olds and above could cope with.

"I thought the violence was in context to what the film is all about. It doesn't

make you as uncomfortable as it may have done and the level of violence was just enough in the context of what was happening. Very realistic so definitely a 15, could have been an 18, but not uncomfortable at 15.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

“If it hadn’t looked real it would have undermined the rest of the film and plot as that’s some type of espionage film.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

Hick (15) was an example where production values in terms of the violence ‘looking real’ and credible were felt to be poor. The lack of realism was seen to reduce the overall impact of the violence. All were in agreement with a 15 classification for the film.

“It wasn’t very realistic and lacked detail. It wasn’t very graphic violence, quite cartoonish and the washbasin seemed ridiculous!” (Male, children 8 – 14, C2D)

“For the amount of times that the door slammed on his head and when he walked away there was just a trickle of blood and then the sink splitting and his head still in tact! It should have been less head slamming and looked more real.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

“There wasn’t a lot of blood and surprised he had any head left after that, almost comical and towards the end clearly all pre – planned. 15 is right.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

Similarly, *Sinister* (15) was not seen as sufficiently ‘real’ to warrant any genuine concern around its 15 classification. The lack of realism in the detail of the hanging people, the long shot and amateur nature of filming all reduced the overall sense of violence that may otherwise have been anticipated. Moreover, the target audience for horror films like *Sinister*, would anticipate this type of violence and the overall impact would be further reduced.

“It didn’t seem violent particularly and they almost looked like they were walking, a bit bizarre the way they’ve reacted to being hanged – not very real – they were standing still and not really fighting it – more like a home video.”

(Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

The historical context of *Eagle* (12A) mitigated any cause for concern with violence. Battle violence was expected in a film of this genre and the detail shown was not felt to be excessive, aided by the use of a long shot of the beheading scene. The historical perspective of the violence especially helped in reducing its overall impact.

“With that it was mainly in the distance and to me it being an historical drama and thinking about when I was younger and things like that led to me understanding history. It’s quite graphic but not gory graphic.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

“It wasn’t overly graphically violent and you could feel a bit of threat building up but not so much. It’s involving history and by the age of 12 they have already been prepared to watch films like this and people being beheaded so it’s not shock horror.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

“12 for *Eagle* as it’s in context and although see the head being chopped off, but do feel removed from it as it happened so long ago and it’s not modern day. I would let my nine year old son watch that.” (Female, with children 8 - 14, C2D)

Fantasy violence was understood and accepted as a key mitigator for this category, and considered to be particularly effective with children. Films such as *Men in Black 3* (PG) where the storyline and characters were pure fantasy distanced the viewer from the violence.

“You new exactly what you were getting aliens, gross stuff and she knows that sort of thing is complete fantasy and of course Will Smith makes everything normal again.” (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

“PG is right for as we had seen and knew what to expect and got it. It’s just total fantasy and comedy and just over the top aliens and laser guns and it’s quite exciting. He talked about the aliens coming out and all very exciting.” (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

Fantastic Mr Fox being a well known, well loved, children's book by the famous author Roald Dahl, meant parents had expectations of the film prior to viewing. The animation together with animals as key characters was effective in communicating the fictional nature of the film. Scenes of 'mild violence' highlighted in the insight were felt to fairly represent any violence shown and all were in agreement with the PG classification.

"In *Fantastic Mr Fox* there's fighting between the animals but is seen by kids as that's what animals do and they aren't frightened by it. The animals are hunted and scared down there, but to the kids, that's the adventure. It's a PG and can't be classified as anything other than that." (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

"The rat's a creepy character but in no way was that bad and no complaints there, they're animals and not people and with the animation completely lightens everything." (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

It was worth noting that in the context of fantasy violence and animation there were no concerns expressed about the use of a knife in *Fantastic Mr Fox*, compared with use of knives in films with real violence and realistic settings. (cf, section 1.3.4)

"In the context of all those films the fleeting moment of the knife flicking in *Fantastic Mr Fox* isn't ingrained on their mind and they wouldn't be mentioning it if you asked them. Just not significant." (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

The Hunger Games (12) was another example where fantasy distilled any concerns about violence. All agreed with the 12 certificate. Parents acknowledged the sense of threat and some intense and fairly violent scenes. However, they were not felt to be overly graphic, detailed or dwelt on the violence. Moreover, the fantasy dystopian storyline was seen to further mitigate the impact of the violence. The success of the *Hunger Games* trilogy also played a role in limiting the impact of the violence as it was expected.

"I thought that was spot on classification, you don't really see anything. The

scenes that include violence are not very explicit and I think 15 would be too high as there's no graphic violence in there." (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

"I agreed with the 12 classification. He had read all three books first before seeing the movie and he loved the story. Completely unrealistic, totally fantasy and so it feels less violent." (Female, with children 8 -14, C2D)

"There was nothing in *The Hunger Games* that I wouldn't let them take up to their room and watch. Not gory or graphic and not sexualised. She was a strong woman, fighting for her family and for her village and so a really good role model." (Female, with children 8 -14, C2D)

The violence in *Hooligan* (18) was considered in the context of a documentary, reporting on real CCTV footage. As a documentary on football violence, strong real violence with detail was anticipated and indeed, expected. However, the level of detail and amount of graphic violence was not felt to be especially strong, with many of the clips filmed from a distance and so reducing the impact of the violence. Moreover, much of the film used CCTV footage that had already been seen on the News or the Internet. Parents also discussed the educational merits of younger viewers having the opportunity to watch the documentary.

"Possibly a 15 as it was how it was in the 70's and 80's and would be good for younger teenagers to understand how these things can escalate - they can hear what they're saying and he got that message - you don't get involved, this could happen and you just walk away." (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

"*Hooligan* contains 'strong violence', well you just saw it from a distance and in movies you see things close up, it was just a blur, you couldn't really see anything, nothing that would make you feel was harrowing or with any detail." (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

"Because when I saw that I thought it was going to be really graphic but then we watched it was nothing like we expected. The marketing was making it far more violent than it was and all of that you could have seen on TV."

(Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

Context as identified can influence the impact of the violence in films. A film's storyline was taken into account when considering the level of violence experienced by respondents. How the violence was dealt with and resolved in the overall storyline/plot, could aid in decreasing the intensity of the violence. A 'feel good' movie was seen as being effective in reducing the overall impact of the violence.

There were a number of examples used in the research where the violence came at the beginning of the film. Respondents discussed this in terms of an effective tool in grabbing the viewer's attention at the onset of the film. Interestingly, where the opening scene was the main focus of violence in the film, after having watched the film in full the impact of the violence was felt to have diminished.

Violence: Implications for the Guidelines

There was much agreement with the current Guidelines for classifying violence. Here the terms mild, moderate and strong used to describe violence at different levels of classification were felt to be relevant and were readily understood.

At PG, including a list of mitigators for potentially justifying violence in a film was appreciated and matched the broad range of mitigators identified by respondents in the research.

At 12A, and 15 use of the word 'may' in the statements was queried and was thought to potentially weaken the ideas the Guidelines were promoting. More direct, less ambiguous statements were recommended.

Additionally, statements including 'must have strong contextual justification' or 'if justified by context', were viewed as helpful and enhanced understanding of the Guidelines and the context in which decisions were made.

3.2.6 Blood and Gore

Issues discussed in relation to blood and gore were similar to those raised with violence, indeed the two being closely linked in respondents' minds. Like violence, respondents focused on the 'graphic' nature and level of detail shown, the intensity

and length of the scene and importantly, how realistic it was perceived to be. These issues were considered possible classification shifters for scenes involving blood and gore. Where blood and gore was linked with other concerns such as sexual violence or self - harm this was also seen as justification to raise classification.

There were a number of mitigators identified for blood and gore, context being key. There were few concerns expressed about fantasy and in particular, horror films where blood and gore were expected. Here the gory aspects were mitigated by genre and were not perceived as real, especially amongst teenagers. Films such as *Final Destination 5* (15) and *Tormented* (15), were examples of horror films well known and well understood by teenagers - the more blood and gore the better! All agreed with the 15 classifications.

“I’ve seen it. It wasn’t bad at all and it was so over the top that it was unbelievable.” (Male, 18 years old)

“It’s all computer generated. It’s not real and you know the films and you know what to expect.” (Female, aged 16 – 17)

“My daughters love all those sorts of films and they seem pretty horrible, but they think the more horrific the better it is. They like watching them together with their friends.” (Female, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

All *Twilight* fans were expecting the ‘birth’ scene from the *Twilight* novels. It was not felt to be as gory as described in the book and significantly, the theme of vampires mitigated any sense of realism. Here there was agreement with the 12A classification.

“You’d have watched the whole *Twilight* saga and the build up of the story and expected something along those lines and it doesn’t seem somehow that gory or graphic.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

“The kids actually found it comical and it wasn’t blood spurting everywhere and vampires and werewolves aren’t real anyway!” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

The historical context of films, as identified with violence, was also seen as a mitigator for blood and gore; the event being in the past distanced the viewer from the impact of gory details shown.

3.2.7 Medical Gore

Research explored reactions to medical gore in films. There was consistent feedback from the groups that medical gore was different to blood and gore resulting from violence and significantly, medical gore was not perceived to be violent. Responses to medical gore demonstrated this key difference; respondents felt squeamish as opposed to feeling a sense of threat or danger.

“*Contagion* would be a lot different if it was in a different context and two men were hacking her head. With medical gore you understand that and they aren’t trying to harm her.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

“There’s a difference, it’s made to disturb you things like horror, whereas medical gore is not done with the intention of upsetting you, whereas violence with gore is something more disturbing.” (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

Moreover, scenes of medical gore were readily dismissed as ‘unreal’, known to be staged with use of special effects, further reducing the overall impact and intensity.

Significantly, viewers of films and TV series containing scenes of medical gore were seen as a self - selecting audience. A number of respondents reported that it would be unlikely that they would ever view such works, regardless of the classification.

“I wasn’t that interested in *Bones* and not the sort of thing that I would normally watch and I don’t usually choose to. A 12 is fine, as the emphasis is more on the characters.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

“But for someone like me who hates anything like that if it’s showing the arm being cut off I need to know that to rule myself out.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

House MD – After Hours (15) demonstrated respondents' ability to cope well with medical gore and that it was of less concern as a classification issue than violence with gore. *House MD* being a well known medical TV series, medical gore was expected and the clip shown although described as strong, was not seen as extreme to afford a 15 classification. Based on the clip alone, and given, the self-selecting nature of the target audience, a 12 classification was felt to be appropriate.

"I know it's quite graphic, detailed, lots of blood and there's a lot of pain, but you are expecting medical blood and gore. The fact that he's doing it to himself helps of course, it's somewhere between a 12 and a 15 isn't it?" (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

"You are expecting medical gore and that makes it feel less. It does look real, though you don't see it for very long, it's in context and it's explainable. If it was sustained throughout the whole episode, then maybe a 15, but otherwise a 12." (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

With *127 Hours*, although the scene was strong, real, prolonged and intense, respondents' felt that the medical gore together with a true story of human endurance and survival justified the film's 15 classification and they were not recommending an 18.

"*127 Hours* was all about survival, your attention is on how he did that and it's not focused on violence or the blood and gore. You know that's going to happen, accept it so you're focusing all the time on how does he survive, how does he do that?" (Male, with children 8 – 14, C2D)

"*127 Hours* would be self selecting and it's a true story and he survived, there was a good outcome, showing the strength of human spirit and so on – and it's medical and there is nothing else in there at all, also an uplifting ending." (Female, with children 8 -14, C2D)

"If it was somebody else cutting his arm off against his will then it would be an 18, but 15 is fine." (Female, with children 8 -14, C2D)

3.2.8 Horror

When discussing horror, it was clear that respondents were focused on more complex issues of theme, tone and psychological impact. These areas have been looked at in detail in section 3.1 of the report.

In summary, respondents' reaction to horror in films was seen to tap into very genuine fears and concerns, especially for young and pre – teenage children. The supernatural and paranormal prompted a particularly strong response. Parents talked about how difficult it was to explain away these concepts to children, with fear of leaving them scared and anxious and the likelihood of having nightmares and sleepless nights.

“Horror is of real concern as they are unaware that that can have an effect on them in the middle of the night and I’m quite strict about what they see.”
(Female, with children 3 – 6, C2D)

“Witchcraft and sorcery and that kind of thing are a worry. She doesn’t like the dark and anything there’s darkness to when they’re in bed at night they can’t get their heads around that and it’s difficult to explain and it opens their minds up to all sorts of suggestions and you can’t really explain all that.”
(Female, with children, 3 – 6, BC1)

Reactions to the clips and films highlighted the level of concern around horror. Themes of loss - especially loss of parents, being powerless, the dark and where the scenario seemed ‘real’, believing it may happen to them, all evoked a strong response.

“15 for *The Lovely Bones* because of the intensity and the build up to her leaving, it was actually near horror level and the way things are done with music and suspense to create the build up can be more damaging than blood and gore because the imagination works over time - and I was quite surprised it was a 12 in all honesty.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

“Anything that can be real life and involves cruelty to someone else that

would play on his or her minds as that sort of thing does happen. Fantasy stuff is quite different.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Horror: Implications for the Guidelines

In terms of the Guidelines for horror the statements were well received. At 12A the change in wording to include psychological threat was thought to be excellent and an improvement on the previous Guidelines.

To further improve guidance for horror, respondents suggested that linking horror with theme and tone would address the complexity of the issue. In so doing would help shift attention from visual and immediate horror to include psychological impact.

Descriptions of the impact of ‘horror’ used by respondents including ‘disturbing’, ‘stays with me’ and ‘plays on my mind’, were thought to be potentially useful language to consider including in the revised Guidelines.

3.2.9 Imitable behaviour and self – harm

Issues around the areas of imitable behaviour and self - harm were important to parents, especially at 12 and 15 where self - harm was closely linked with the mental health of young people, an area that had prompted much cause for concern in this research.

At U and PG there was agreement with the Guidelines with respect to potentially dangerous behaviour that can be copied. Parents were also appreciative of the focus given to easily accessible weapons whose emphasis or glamorisation was not allowed.

Research looked at works at U that included subtle and indirect references to potentially dangerous imitable behaviour with clips from *Scared Shrekless* (U) and *Puss in Boots* (U). Parents had no concerns with these sorts of references. Respondents felt they were mitigated by a number of factors including animation, a fleeting scene/moment in the film, lack of detail, humour and significantly, lack of relevance to the target audience.

“There’s nothing there you don’t see anything and there’s no blood when they do that - it’s just egg yolk!” (Female, with children 3 – 6, C2D)

“*Scared Shrekless* is all innuendo, it’s all for the adults, and it’s Halloween. That wouldn’t be noticed and he’s still kicking his legs.” (Male, children 6 – 10, C2D)

Where the overall message of a film was considered to be of particular importance and relevance to young people this could be reason to give careful consideration to classification. This was the case with *Karate Kid* (PG), where a positive anti – bullying message assuaged concerns about imitable behaviour. Many of the blows being peer to peer – an equally matched fight and within a controlled sport - provided additional justification for a PG classification.

“There’s a strong anti – bullying theme in it and the good overpowers the bad. One of the kids asked him to stop and that was a good message, it’s okay to stand up for yourself.” (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

“Not imitable and strongly discouraging the bullying which is the whole essence and theme of the film so a PG is right.” (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

At the higher classification categories concerns around self - harm and suicide dominated the discussion. This resulted in some instances of parents questioning classification decisions, where they were seeking to protect young people from exposure to new information and details of self - harm and suicide.

The Roommate (15) was considered to be at the 15/18 classification border. The clip was felt to be intense and seeing the young girl self - harm with a knife provoked a strong visceral response. Parents’ concern was slightly assuaged when learning that she was not the main protagonist of the film or an aspirational character.

“There’s nothing comical about that, it’s proper self - harm and that makes a difference. It’s a concern coming up to the teenage years and I would worry about imitable, big time.” (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

“Getting ideas from films and things that you don’t want them to know and to start looking that up and then thinking about it - like my daughter with self - harming who hasn’t come across that in their life before and starting to worry about why someone would want to do that? It seems normal.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

Black Swan (15) was felt to have some particularly disturbing scenes of self – harm and parents in the group discussions suggested this together with other concerning aspects could merit a higher film classification.

“*Black Swan* was extremely violent with self - harming. If you did have a daughter going through this it might be a bit much and you wouldn’t want to encourage and influence young people in that way.” (Female, children 10 – 15, C2D)

In the quantitative study, the level of agreement with the classification of *Black Swan* among BBFC Website Visitors was 92%.

The theme of suicide was spontaneously mentioned by parents throughout the research as a sensitive and serious issue for film classification.

“It’s not a nice one suicide to focus on for children. It could be close to home for some children and is a sensitive subject.” (Male, with children 6 – 10, C2D)

Respondents were totally supportive of BBFC’s decision to cut the threatened suicide scene from *American Horror Story* (18). Showing how wrist cutting can be more effectively carried out was alarming for parents and they expressed concern about the risk of providing teenagers with new information.

Self - harm: Implications for the Guidelines

The Guidelines’ statements for imitable behaviour and self - harm were considered

to be in line with respondents' thinking.

At 12 and 15 respondents appreciated including examples of hanging, suicide and self - harm as dangerous behaviour. Additionally, 'detail that could be copied or appear pain free' was felt to be of key importance as was 'any potential for glamorising accessible weapons.'

3.2.10 Nudity

Respondents were comfortable with nudity in films and they understood and were in agreement with the nudity statements in the Guidelines.

Whether the nudity was shown in a sexual or non – sexual context was considered important and from reaction to the clips this appeared to be readily understood by respondents. It was clear that at U and PG natural nudity was acceptable, especially where only briefly glimpsed.

"It's just showing how they're living and for me I don't mind my children seeing naked people and it's not sexual. It's a documentary type thing and no problem with that as it's not about sex." (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

"Nudity, no I have no problem with that, nudity should be seen as natural and part of life and something they shouldn't be embarrassed about." (Female, with children 10 – 15 years, BC1)

"I know the sexual thing was there but they won't be thinking that they would just say, 'I can see his bum'. It's on the beach and going swimming, very light hearted and normal." (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

Holy Motors (18) an 'arthouse' film contained a scene showing an erect penis but not in a conventionally sexual way. Interestingly, this non – sexual nudity seemed acceptable to respondents at the lower 15 classification.

"Especially not in a film like that, you couldn't construe it as particularly sexual, could you? It shows he had a boner, but that was it. He's gone and

lay down and she's sung a silly song to him. No more than a 15, for me, and even that I think you could take it even further back, because that is, I suppose, some sexual reference, but most normal people would look at it and think, it's just a bloke who hasn't got clothes on." (Male, with children 15 – 18, C2D)

Respondents whilst discussing nudity, were seen to differentiate between front and back nudity; back nudity being more acceptable than front nudity, especially at the lower classification categories. It was suggested there was potential to make reference to this when revising the Guidelines.

"Well, like everyone has a butt. You always see little children running around naked, so they would see that and go, 'Oh, it's just a butt.' Whereas, if they were turned round they would be, 'what's that?'" (Female aged 16)

3.2.11 Smoking and Alcohol

Respondents across all target groups including teenagers, were clear that neither smoking nor alcohol were viewed as areas for concern for film classification and they did not anticipate that the revised Guidelines would include any statements on these issues.

The range of films and clips discussed with respondents supported their views on smoking and alcohol and nothing that was shown appeared to challenge or shift their opinions.

In debating these issues, respondents considered a number of reasons why the Guidelines should not attempt to classify film on the basis of smoking. As previously mentioned, smoking was described as part of normal, everyday life. Indeed, from a young age children are aware of adults smoking. And unlike drugs, it is not illegal. Significantly, parents did not believe that young people's attitudes to smoking are influenced by viewing films.

Parents struggled and indeed were unable to think of films they perceived to be

either glamorising or promoting smoking in any way. Rather parents were keen to point out how well versed children and teenagers are about the effects and dangers of smoking and how young people appreciate that in the past these risks were not as well understood.

“You see smoking on the street, you see smoking on *EastEnders*, children know it’s not good for them so I don’t see how that’s relevant at all to the ratings.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

No I don’t think they should be looking at cigarettes, the list will be endless and next they’ll be on to obesity. Things like racism are far more important and that should be mentioned on the Insight, never mind the smoking. (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

Is that something that actually gets classed? I don’t think that really matters.” (Female, aged 16 – 17)

“It’s normal seeing smoking but it doesn’t make you want to do it. (Female, aged 12 – 13)

“Normal smoking. No. You can walk down the street and see it. It’s life.” (Male, 18 years old)

“I am dead set against smoking but in a film it wouldn’t bother me.” (Male, 18 years old)

“No, I think because it happens so regularly in everyday life, you sort of get used to it. So, seeing it in a film, it’s like it’s sort of part of life as well. (Female, aged 16 – 17)

In *Alice in Wonderland* (PG) and *Rango* (PG), both animation films, smoking was never commented on when the clips were shown. When prompted, the smoking was dismissed as irrelevant and parents did not believe that it would ever be noticed or of any relevance to young children viewing these films.

With *Remember Me* (12A), again respondents needed to be prompted to comment on the smoking, being more interested in the level of violence and sex in the film.

When drawn to their attention, respondents discussed how Robert Pattinson's smoking was not condoned in the film. Rather, his smoking was criticised, notably by his younger sister, and the film overall was not felt to be promoting the use of cigarettes.

"Smoking wasn't a problem with Robert Pattinson. Also, the little girl kept telling him off didn't she?" (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

"He was smoking quite a lot but to be fair it was just normal cigarettes. Not really a problem, smoking in films, you see it everyday, people walking in the street smoking. It wasn't glorified, he was stressed so he had a cigarette, pretty normal." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"Although smoking is dangerous, he's legal to do it. So, he's not committing an offence or anything." (Female, aged 16 – 17)

"Also, he's playing a character. So, even though he's like an idol, but he's not actually himself in the film." (Female, aged 16 – 17)

On further discussion, respondents did agree that a celebrity or aspirational actor glorifying smoking may indeed be problematic but this was not something they would anticipate seeing in modern films.

There was no concerns expressed over old films with scenes of actors smoking and respondents did not want them to be reclassified. Smoking in these films was seen in context of the past and accepted as part of a bygone era.

"It was acceptable in its day, entirely sociable and wouldn't be a problem at all with them watching something like that and even the kids nowadays know that in those days the effects of smoking weren't known or appreciated in the way they are now." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"Black and white films are just quaint now aren't they? Times have moved on and smoking like that just doesn't happen anymore. You really couldn't put anything on that could you, there's no need to reference smoking." (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

Parents' attitudes to alcohol were similar to smoking. They discussed how young people were aware of adult drinking and consumption of alcohol as part of everyday life. Also, alcohol being legal was viewed as a key difference compared with drugs.

Whilst parents believed it was important that teenagers are aware of health issues relating to alcohol, they believed this was the remit of parents and schools to educate about these issues and not a concern for film classification.

"I tend to be a bit more lenient with drink I don't want them to hit 16/17 when they start going out on their own and not knowing how to handle it when they hit the booze." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"Not an issue alcohol, really quite general now and it's on TV and everything and they do show the states you can get in to if you drink too much." (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

"They see their parents drinking at home so why is that any different to seeing drink and alcohol on a film? We don't drink to excess". (Male, with children 15 – 18, BC1)

Parents praised films that showed the consequences of too much drink and felt this could be good learning for young people.

"No, with the drinking when she was being sick, I thought that was a really good message as when they start they need to know - I've seen pictures of kids my daughter knows who have been really drunk at 14/15 and she's 12 and needs to know that it's not a good idea to drink and that's what's going to happen and we can baby them too much sometimes – they need to see." (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

"When he drinks you see the consequences, they got drunk and got in a fight and it's not glorified it and seeing the consequences to an action like that can be very helpful." (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

4. BBFCinsight

Awareness of the BBFC website and App was low and respondents in the focus groups were delighted to learn more about these tools. A number were already using the IMDb, as previously mentioned, to research a film's suitability, however none of these respondents had thought to look for the BBFC own website. There was perceived to be a clear need for the BBFC to advertise these services.

"I like that. I would have used that. I look up films any way." (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

The App was thought to be particularly useful, offering the viewer or parents the opportunity to access information in an immediate and easy way. One parent commented that technology had robbed so many parents of control, yet this App was a good example of redressing the balance via technology.

"It's all the technology that has made it difficult to do your job but now technology is giving something back to us." (Female, with children 15 - 18, C2D)

The concept of Extended Insight was explored in the focus groups and was also well received. The promise of additional content to provide the audience with relevant contextual framework was appreciated. Executionally, this information needs to be user friendly and the fairly long prose shown to respondents in the groups was disliked and a preference for short, easy to access bullet points was noted.

5. Trailers

The impact of trailers was commented on by respondents in the focus groups. The trailer audience was felt to be unsuspecting in the sense that they had not elected to see the trailers before the main feature film. A number of respondents commented on the fact that trailers can sometimes be fairly shocking and that there can be a lot of content condensed into a short time frame. The public supported the BBFC's decision to be stricter when classifying trailers for these reasons.

"They should be tough. There is no context for language." (Male, with children 10 – 15, C2D)

"I think when you're watching a trailer, you don't know what you're letting yourself in for. So, if you went to see a 15 and you think, 'Okay, language.' With a trailer, if it had loads of language you'd be like, 'Well, I wasn't expecting that.'" (Female, aged 16 – 17)

The word 'fuck' in a 12A trailer was considered to be problematic. As discussed, context can mitigate the effect of bad language and trailers were seen to be essentially without context. Younger children were thought to be likely to miss the odd bad word, especially if it is not directed at anyone however the trailer viewing experience is different to that of film and parents anticipated that bad language would be noticed within this context.

'Fuck' in a 15 trailer was however less of a problem. Whilst the issue of context still applied, most argued that 15 year olds were used to bad language and a few uses of the word was deemed to be acceptable. Raising the classification to 18 on this basis was not therefore recommended, although it is fair to say that constant, very frequent and aggressive uses of the word may be more problematic for a 15 trailer and there would be support for raising the classification to 18 in this instance.

6. Teenagers

The 2013 consultation included teenagers for the first time in both the qualitative and quantitative phase of the research.

The focus groups offered the research team the opportunity to talk to teenagers face-to-face and to explore their feelings about film classification. Whilst this audience were seemingly more relaxed about the way in which language, soft drugs and gore is portrayed in film, they had strong views about discrimination and sadistic and sexual violence and felt that these issues should raise the classification of a film.

“Derogatory terms are worse than swearing. Like calling somebody like a nigger. You can’t do that.” (Male, 18 years old)

“*Saw* – it is twisted. It’s sadistic violence and torture. You were on the edge of your seat watching it.” (Male, 18 years old)

The teenage groups were shown a number of clips in the focus groups and it was interesting to observe the lack of a visceral response on occasion. Many claimed that they had been exposed to stronger images, having viewed films such as the *Human Centipede*, *Saw* and *Teeth* or had played with violence in video games.

Parents’ concerns that teenagers were becoming desensitised to violent images did seem to ring true to some extent. Teenagers were very good at decoding violence and differentiating between violence that looked and felt real versus that which did not. Some of these respondents had clearly been exposed to some strong content and whether this was bravado in the groups or not, were able to use various techniques to distance themselves from what they had viewed. Dismissing blood and gore as ‘not real’ and using humour were two such techniques.

“I watched *The Exorcist* at 13. I used to get a thrill from that one. At that age, you think that horror is funny.” (Male, 18 years old)

“I think the humour counteracts the sexual references, and the bad language for fifteen year olds to get it, and find it funny. Whereas, I think if you were any younger, you wouldn’t necessarily know what they were talking about.” (Female, aged 16 – 17)

“When’s there is blood pouring out, I just think that it’s ok because it’s not real.” (Female aged 12 – 13)

“Movies with guns, you sort of think that’s just normal. You see heads exploding and you don’t see a problem with it.” (Male, 18 years old)

“You’ve watched so many different things you sort of get used to it. The bad endings, the sad bits don’t bother you as much.” (Female aged 12 – 13)

“I watched *Hostel* when I was young. She cut his knob off. I won’t forget that. Paranormal activity makes you shit yourself. It’s creepy.” (Male, 18 years old)

Whilst teens could work to dismiss gory violence, the subject of psychological horror was interesting to explore and in this respect, young film viewers echoed their parents concerns about some films being genuinely disturbing and worrying. Images that were thought to ‘stay with you’ were those where teenagers could put themselves in the shoes of the main protagonists and the problems / issues depicted on screen could potentially happen in real life – and to them.

“Something that could happen. Someone could do that to you.” (Male, 18 years old)

“It just feels like it could happen to you and like it could have been you in the film. It’s just a lot more realistic.” (Female, aged 16 – 17)

Once again we see paranormal as crossing the line from fantasy to reality – those interviewed were at pains to point out that ghosts could be real and that the supernatural was scary subject area, unknown and therefore not easy to dismiss as ‘not real’.

“Ghosts freak me out. You don’t know where they are. I believe in ghosts.” (Female aged 12 – 13)

Not all teenagers were viewing strong material and it would appear that many were self selecting and using classification to screen out content that they knew would be personally difficult to view. However, teenagers are naturally sensitive to peer pressure and talked about ending up watching frightening films when viewing with their friends, despite their best intention to avoid these works.

The concept of normalisation proved to be an interesting discussion point. What adults see as ‘normalisation’ teenagers see as ‘normal’ especially with regards to drugs and alcohol at parties and sexual behaviour. Teenagers, they argued, use

the word 'cunt' as commonplace vernacular, they drink and take (soft) drugs and can be sexually promiscuous.

Respondents were frank about the 'normal' behaviour of teenagers but were also at pains to point out that they had their own views on these issues and that their opinions had not been influenced by films. The younger teenage groups were very anti – drugs and knew of their disastrous side effects, yet recognised that drugs could be the norm for certain groups of older teenagers.

"I think you're exposed to people smoking weed. Like, you can walk past it in the street and smell it, but you would never walk past someone injecting heroin. So, it's like what you already know, and then what's new." (Female, aged 16 – 17)

"I don't think that should be an 18. It was just a party and it wasn't that rude." (Female aged 12 – 13)

"The drugs may have looked fun but you know that it's not a good thing to take." (Female aged 12 – 13)

"That's something that you'd see a party but that's hard and addictive. That's about junkies." (Male, 18 years old)

Likewise the teenagers were fairly pragmatic about seeing self - harm in films arguing that the issue is more complex. They were not convinced that someone prone to self - harming or indeed who was feeling suicidal would have their situation exacerbated by film:

"Self - harmer that self - harms. I don't think that film would influence. I think if someone self - harmed over a film it would be so stupid because I think it should be brought to the attention of the public because it's such an issue with teenagers. I think that if someone is stupid enough to go, 'Oh look, she's doing that in that film. I'm going to do it,' and stuff like that." (Female, aged 16 – 17)

"Self - harm is more about the people around them and their lives and not just a film. If they wanted to self - harm a film wouldn't make them want to more." Female aged 12 – 13)

This raised an interesting question about for whom the BBFC is classifying film. Teenagers argued that the BBFC needs to pay attention to the potential audience for a film and that teen films have become an established genre – *The Inbetweeners Movie*, *Project X* and *Sucker Punch* being the works referred to in the research. They argued that the BBFC therefore had scope to be more lenient with these type of works, safe in the knowledge that most teenagers could cope with strong bad language (particularly the word 'cunt'), drugs and violence.

7. Sex and Relationship Education in Schools

Primary school teachers we interviewed for the research came from a broad range of schools including mixed and single sex, maintained and private, representative of key socio – economic groups. All had experience teaching sex and relationship education at primary level, some had also taught at secondary level and others had taught children with special needs. Our sample included teachers with varied experience from those with many years delivering sex and relationship education to those who were more recently qualified.

As well as talking with teachers we also discussed the principle of sex and relationship education with respondents in four of the focus groups we conducted. We selected the focus groups based on the age of respondents' children, aiming at parents with nine to eleven year olds, this being the key age range for sex and relationship education in primary schools.

A key finding of the research was that all teachers and parents we spoke to were proponents of children having sex and relationship education when they are in primary school. They viewed this as essential for a number of reasons, including:

- Children needing to be equipped with the correct facts and information at the relevant stages. Children were described as curious and were asking questions, often at early age

“Sex education is very important, the children are growing up much faster and they are very aware, and are at a stage where they need to understand it.” (Teacher)

“Yes at the right time it is a good thing. It's good they all get told at the same time and the correct facts - as when they learn from brothers and sisters and friends everyone's version is slightly different and they can ask questions at school in a safe environment.” (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

- For an increasing number of children, especially girls, the onset of puberty comes early. To avoid distress they need to understand how their bodies are changing and developing

“It’s important that they get educated younger as it must be very frightening for girls to start their periods and they have no idea of what it is. We need to talk with them sooner around ten years in year four.” (Teacher)

- Teachers were quick to point out, and there was acknowledgement by parents, that discussing issues around sex and relationships with their children at home can be a daunting task for some. Lessons at school for these children may be the only opportunity for them to learn key facts and correct information

“Some parents do discuss sex but it’s a real mish mash and again depends on where you’re working and they don’t all come from loving and stable homes. Often they don’t have a good breakfast so having a discussion about sex is a long way down the agenda.” (Teacher)

“Some parents are just absolutely hopeless at explaining or covering subjects that they really ought to – so if the school does it then great.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

- The prevalence of sexual material and content on - line, as we have discussed earlier in the report, was seen as a genuine concern voiced by teachers and parents alike. They are worried about misinformation and sexualised imagery shaping attitudes and behaviour of young people. Here the role of sex and relationship education was seen as crucial in addressing these widespread concerns and being able to have the opportunity to promote healthy attitudes towards sex and relationships

“It’s very important, we have all said they have access to the Internet, they are all on Facebook, it’s a minefield of sexual content, it’s so important that they know about things correctly.” (Teacher)

- Being equipped with correct and relevant facts was believed to be linked with the recent reduction in teenage pregnancies

7.1. Teaching Sex and Relationship Education

Parents we interviewed seemed aware of the nature and content of sex and relationship education their children had received or would be receiving in primary school. They appreciated the consultation process with the opportunity to review materials and ask teachers questions about the sessions planned for their children. A number had attended these meetings and no parents we interviewed had chosen for their children to opt out.

Teachers however reported from experience in recent years that there was anecdotal evidence of increasing numbers of parents withdrawing their children from sex and relationship education lessons. They pointed to the increased diversity of the population with growing numbers of ethnic minority groups. Teachers believed that different attitudes towards sex and relationship education amongst these minority groups was partly responsible for the lower levels of consent seen.

“A lot of parents especially from the ethnic minorities don’t discuss sex and issues relating to sex at home and if we don’t do it at school those children are not going to be taught.” (Teacher)

Teachers believed they played an important and responsible role in delivering sex and relationship education to children. Indeed, all appeared committed and enthusiastic about their subject, which at times they felt to be an onerous task which other teachers were often quick to shy away from.

Teachers identified their unique relationship with pupils as beneficial in teaching sex and relationship education. They suggested pupils were more comfortable discussing sensitive issues with them and less embarrassed to ask teachers questions than their parents.

It was evident that teachers worked hard and invested a great deal of time and effort in creating a safe and relaxed environment for sessions to take place in.

Teachers also appeared to go to great lengths in sourcing and preparing materials for their pupils.

The wide variation in pupils' levels of maturity, the differences between girls and boys and the diversity of pupils' backgrounds, were all highlighted when discussing the need for flexibility in the approach adopted and the resources required for teaching sex and relationship education.

Excellent teacher resource materials for sex and relationship education were said to be in short supply. Teachers discussed how they currently struggled with a limited range of relevant and up to date DVD materials.

Teachers felt that DVD material offered particular benefits for delivering the sex and relationship curriculum to pupils, including:

- the opportunity to watch and listen to the views and thoughts of their peers as well as those of older teenagers
- a means of introducing sensitive issues and topics for discussion
- helping timid, less confident pupils who can struggle to engage openly with the sessions, to still absorb key and correct information
- helping to understand in detail the physical and emotional changes that both boys and girls go through
- places sex and relationships within a framework of everyday life, both within and outside school

7.2 Response to the Living and Growing DVD

Responses from both teachers and parents demonstrated that the DVD's content was on the whole felt to be appropriate and relevant, covering the main areas of sex and relationship education they would expect at primary level in years four, five and six. However, the tone and presentation of the DVD material was considered to be inconsistent and some aspects drew criticism from teachers in particular, and also

parents.

Criticisms included:

- the outdated feel of the material; the cultural references, fashion and clothing styles and the DVD's production qualities, would be difficult for modern day pupils to relate to and identify with

"It's so dated the Living and Growing DVD. The band that they interviewed, Cleopatra, is from my childhood! The kids wouldn't relate to that at all."
(Teacher)

They just wouldn't know them. There are magazines they wouldn't read. You need things like Facebook and Twitter now." (Teacher)

- the use of slang terminology, for example, 'wanking'. Teachers expressed preference for use of correct scientific/medical terms
- the tone adopted for the boy's section was considered too lighthearted. Here, the overt sexual focus compared with the girls' narrative was disliked. The girls' sections were praised for adopting a more straightforward and factual approach
- the cartoon style animation was problematic (as discussed below)

Teachers who were currently using or had used the Living and Growing DVD, tended to cherry – pick sections they liked and considered useful, skipping material they had concerns with.

Significantly, one particular animation scene prompted a strong response from teachers, as well as some parents. The scene in question, which was heavily criticised, was known and described as the 'feather duster scene'. Concerns revolved around communication and tone; the overall message perceived to be conveyed by the 'feather duster scene' was, "Sex is fun and something for children/teenagers to be excited by!" Teachers were incredulous in their response likening the scene to 'child pornography'.

“Do kids when they are ten or eleven need to know that sex is fun? To have an animation cartoon showing sex could suggest that it looks cool? That isn’t really the aim of what we’re trying to communicate!!” (Teacher)

“There’s that awful one with the feather duster. It focuses on foreplay and that’s so not what we are teaching. The children think it’s funny and are not expecting anything like that and the point is completely missed. It’s awful!” (Teacher)

The figure drawings illustrating different sexual positions and the cartoon figures chasing one another around the room with a feather duster were especially disliked. So too was the use of a child’s voice describing ‘what fun they were having!’ As well as communicating irrelevant adult sexual content, the frivolous tone was deemed to be wholly inappropriate for serious educational material and of any significant value in the context of teaching sex and relationship education.

“Way too much information, not necessary, it’s showing them that sex is enjoyable and encouraging them to try it. It’s like taking them in to a sweet shop but telling they can’t have any until they are eighteen.” (Teacher)

Teachers’ response to the ‘feather duster scenario’ was echoed by parents’ reaction.

“I think I would have preferred if they hadn’t made the sex look so enjoyable!” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“It is important, but that almost seems encouraging and all fabulous, it needs to be a bit more factual. What’s all this chasing around the bed with a feather? They’ll get to know the fun side of it later whereas at this stage it’s more the facts we should be concerned about giving them.” (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

Teachers discussed the need for DVD material that was more biologically factual, tying in more closely with Key Stage 2 science and adhering to a relevant educational framework. Indeed, they were hoping that new materials were to be

developed soon as the DVD resources available to them currently were felt to be limited.

“It’s important that children actually see what body changes they will go through. That’s one of the things that really can worry them. They need to see proper adults, not silly cartoons. It needs to be matter of fact and no taboos.” (Teacher)

“I don’t use massive amount of material and the DVDs that are available are fairly old fashioned. The video material that we are using at the moment is really quite poor’ (Teacher)

7.3 BBFC Classification of Sex and Relationship DVD material

Neither teachers nor parents expressed concern about BBFC classifying sex and relationship educational materials for use in schools.

From the groups discussions teachers and parents identified a number of issues for the BBFC to take into account when classifying such materials:

- the need for sex and relationship material to cover potentially sensitive information in a clear and direct way which most likely would go beyond the realms of PG
- if material that was deemed to use only ‘mild sex references’ and ‘innuendo’ allowable at PG, it could potentially leave children confused in their understanding of puberty and sexual development
- any sex and relationship material would always be viewed with adults/teachers present and never viewed by a child alone. This was seen as a ‘PG’ classification as parental guidance would always be sought. It was debated that in theory, materials of this nature could be classified PG following the Guidelines
- if materials were given a 12 classification, all were anxious to stress that receiving information at this stage was simply too late; age twelve being the

first year of secondary school. Genuine concern was expressed about children receiving sex and relationship education at this late stage

“It has to be a PG as by twelve it’s too late and they must have the information before then and know the facts.” (Female, with children 6 – 10 years, BC1)

“No it must be younger as the information is not just for 12 and above, it’s definitely appropriate for younger age groups. It’s not only appropriate it is absolutely necessary. They need to know about these things; what is happening, why and what the potential consequences are. They have to understand the context. And it would be really wrong of teachers not to tell them that. Even if they’re not developed themselves, many of their friends are and they need to know how to respond to one another.” (Teacher)

Having thought through the different aspects of the issue, both teachers and parents considered that if the BBFC were to classify these works, then a PG classification should be used alongside extensive insight. The insight would identify the educational nature of the material for its use in schools only by trained members of staff.

“It is a very specific material for a very specific purpose and not for any other use. PG, it has to be and it should just be for educational purposes only.” (Female, with children 8 -14, C2D)

8. Music Videos

An element of the research involved a discussion focusing on respondents’ views and opinions of music videos. Six groups had been asked to view a number of music videos as part of their pre – group task.

At the time when this research was carried out, certain music videos were exempt from classification under the Video Recordings Act 1984.

Significantly, respondents spontaneously voiced concern about the availability and content of music videos prior to prompting any discussion. It was evident that

parents were familiar with much of the pre – placed material.

“I find pop videos are far worse than anything in film. Rap stuff can glorify beating women and glorifies drug use.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

“Oh God, now there’s a thing! My daughter likes dancing consistently on You Tube and listening to music. I have a video of her dancing, she’s 9 and it’s shocking. She’s not aware but it’s coming across all provocative, she wears glasses and she has her hair up, she takes off the glasses, lets her hair down and she’s all flexible and that’s only from music videos.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

As described earlier in this report sexualisation of young girls was of particular concern, especially to parents of girls aged around nine to twelve years. Music videos were identified as a key source of sexual imagery, which parents believed to be potentially harmful to young girls’ emotional wellbeing and social development.

The overwhelming reaction to the music videos content was one of shock and incredulity. Alongside sexualised imagery, themes revolving around self – harm, drug use and violence that were incorporated into the music videos prompted a great deal of concern amongst parents. It tapped in to parents’ fears and anxieties around normalisation of bad behaviour and desensitisation to violence - both reoccurring themes of this research.

“That Robbie Williams was just porn, it was disgusting! It’s glorifying drugs, sex and violence and so was Britney.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“Pink was clearly showing the use of drugs and self - harm which makes it seem that it’s acceptable and the message coming across is this is normal and this is how you want to be.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

The ease of access to such material on – line without restriction, viewer warning or classification further fuelled parents’ anxiety, especially when they considered the appeal of music videos to young primary school aged children.

“All the girls hardly have any clothes on, all skinny, dancing provocatively, sexy, all look the same and there’s no categories on that is there?” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

“The music videos are more of a concern, but because you aren’t there 24/7 you can’t control them in the same way as film.” (Female, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

Yet, when faced with how to tackle the issue of controlling their children’s viewing of music videos and Internet use in particular, parents appeared to have their hands tied. They claimed there was little they could do to police and prevent children accessing this sort of content either in their own homes, at friends’ houses, on mobile ‘phones or tablets etc.

Given parents’ perceived lack of control, they went on to rationalise that music videos were part of children’s and teenage culture in a way that music has always been. Adults have always been ‘shocked’ by teenage music and queried whether music videos were fundamentally any different? Parents rationalised further stating it was the music teenagers were interested in and focused on, rather than listening to and taking on board the meaning of the lyrics.

Yet, when presented with the possibility of having more input over music videos, parents were eager to learn more. Significantly, the suggestion that the BBFC may classify music videos was met with widespread support from parents. It was seen as a good concept, parents believing that the Classification Guidelines could work equally well with music videos as per films. The potential of offering parents an element of control over their children’s viewing, particularly primary aged children, was welcomed. Classification of music videos would also have the benefit of raising awareness about the content of these works encouraging parents to be more involved and vigilant in scrutinising their children’s viewing behaviour.

“Classification would be very helpful, some type of monitor. It would give some parental control.” (Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“Most of them need to be 18’s especially the self - harming - most young children don’t know about self - harming and why put that idea in their head.”
(Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

Parents were asked how the Guidelines should be applied to music videos and how these works should be viewed by the BBFC. Parents considered that music videos ought to be classified more strictly than film, similar to BBFC’s approach to classification of trailers.

Parents’ rationale for wanting greater vigilance for music videos focused on the intensity of the viewing experience. Viewing a music video was likened to ‘watching a film concentrated into three minutes’; the scenarios being visually strong and graphic. In addition, the protagonists of the music videos, the celebrities and rock/pop heroes were considered hugely aspirational and therefore believed to have greater influence in shaping young people’s attitudes, ideals and values.

“These are kids’ role models and they will think that he’s got to where he is today by doing that. So it’s the way to be as rich and famous as Robbie.”
(Female, with children 8 – 14, BC1)

“They are popular and the glamorous lifestyle that pop stars lead is very aspirational for young people. It is a worry that they think that’s normal.”
(Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

“I don’t want my girls thinking what they’re doing on those videos is acceptable and because it’s celebrities who are doing it makes it more impressionable.” (Male, with children 10 – 15, BC1)

APPENDIX

1. INTERVIEW METHODOLOGY

The *General Public* sample was accessed as part of a regular weekly national omnibus run by ICM. Seven questions were inserted into the computer assisted personal interviews conducted within randomly selected homes, across specified enumeration districts.

The *Film Viewers sample* was recruited door to door, and conducted in-home, using a pen and paper questionnaire that averaged 15 - 20 minutes for completion. Fieldwork was conducted by The New Fieldwork Company

The *BBFC Website Visitors sample* was achieved via a pop-up link on the BBFC website. Whereas in the 2009 consultation this sample comprised those who were routinely visiting the website, in 2013 this sample also comprised individuals driven to the website via promotion of the consultation process via social and traditional media and PR. Visitors to the site were invited to participate in the survey provided that they were aged 16+. The survey took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

The *Teenagers sample* was recruited in-street, at sampling points in local authority areas selected on a stratified random basis, proportional to size.

Quotas were set (apart from for the website visitors sample) on age, gender, socio-economic group and region to ensure representativeness and surveys were conducted by IQCS (Interviewer Quality Control Scheme) trained interviewers.

2. QUESTIONNAIRES

GENERAL PUBLIC QUESTIONNAIRE

ADULT OMNIBUS SURVEY

SHOW CARD

- Q1 As you may know, films and DVDs have classification ratings. Which of the following classifications do you usually watch nowadays, either on your own or with other family members? **MULTICODE**

()

U.....	1
PG.....	2
12A/12.....	3
15.....	4
18.....	5
Watch films but don't know Classifications.....	7
I don't go to the cinema or watch films/DVDs.....	8

- Q2 **ASK ALL. SHOW BBFC LOGO AND CLASSIFICATION SYMBOLS**

As you may know, films are classified in this country by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). The BBFC's role is to give films classifications which may protect children from any harm that may be caused through viewing inappropriate films in cinema or on DVDs.

SHOW CARD

How important do you think it is for film viewers to have these classifications to refer to?

()

Very important.....	1
Quite important.....	2
Unsure.....	3
Not very important.....	4
Not at all important.....	5

SHOW CARD

- Q3 Overall, how effective do you feel the BBFC is in giving reliable film classifications and advice for film viewers?

()

Very effective.....	1
Quite effective.....	2
Unsure.....	3
Not very effective.....	4
Not at all effective.....	5

ASK THOSE WHO WATCH FILMS (CODES 1-7 AT Q1), OTHERS THANK AND CLOSE

SHOW CARD

Q4 How often do you look for classification ratings when you are selecting a film to watch? **ONE CODE**

- I always check for classifications.....1
 I usually check classifications if a
child aged under 15 will be watching.....2
 I usually only check classifications
 if a **child aged under 12** will be watching3
 I usually check classifications, even if I'm not watching
 with someone younger than me4
 I never usually bother to check classifications.....5

SHOW CARD

Q5 Thinking of the sorts of films you usually watch, in general how much do you agree with the classifications they are given? **ROTATE ORDER OF ASKING FOR EACH CLASSIFICATION MENTIONED AT Q1.** So how much do you usually agree with the classification? **ONE CODE**

	U	PG	12	15	18
	()	()	()	()	()
I often disagree with it	1	1	1	1	1
I occasionally disagree with it	2	2	2	2	2
I never really notice or pay attention to this classification	3	3	3	3	3
I usually agree with it	4	4	4	4	4
I always agree with it	5	5	5	5	5
Do not usually watch films with this classification	6	6	6	6	6

Q6 **ASK IF FILM CLASSIFICATION DISAGREED WITH AT Q5. OTHERS THANK AND CLOSE**

Thinking of the last 'INSERT CLASSIFICATIONS CODED 1 OR 2 AT Q5' film that you disagreed with the classification of, was this because you thought it was suitable for a younger audience or should have been classified for older viewers? **ONE CODE IN EACH COL**

	U	PG	12	15	18
	()	()	()	()	()
Film was suitable for a younger audience	1	1	1	1	1
Film was suitable for an older audience	2	2	2	2	2

ASK THOSE WHO CONSIDERED A FILM SUITABLE FOR OLDER AUDIENCE AT Q6 (ANY CODE 2). OTHERS THANK AND CLOSE.
SHOW CARD.

Q7 What mainly made you think that the film(s) you have seen recently should have been classified for an older audience **RECORD ALL REASONS**

<p><u>LANGUAGE</u></p> <p>Bad/strong language1</p> <p>Racist or homophobic language....2</p> <p>Crude sexual language3</p> <p><u>SEXUAL CONTENT</u></p> <p>Nudity4</p> <p>Explicit sexual scenes5</p> <p>Children being sexualised6</p> <p><u>VIOLENCE</u></p> <p>Brutal/graphic violence.....7</p> <p>Violence not justified by context....8</p> <p>Sexual violence/rape.....9</p> <p><u>BEHAVIOUR</u></p> <p>Unacceptable/anti-social behaviour that young people may copy10</p> <p>Dangerous/self-harming behaviour that young people may copy11</p>	<p><u>HORROR</u></p> <p>Blood and gore scenes in the film12</p> <p>Supernatural scenes in the film13</p> <p>Disturbing scenes that 'stay with' the viewer.....14</p> <p><u>DRUG USE</u></p> <p>Reference to illegal drugs15</p> <p>Use of illegal drugs.....16</p> <p>Making drug taking seem normal/acceptable.....17</p> <p>Characters smoking18</p> <p><u>THEMES/TONE</u></p> <p>Inclusion of issues that are very upsetting (e.g. domestic violence/self-harm/suicide)19</p> <p>The tone of the film (dark; threatening; crude).....20</p> <p>Roles played by child characters (inappropriate language/behaviour)21</p> <p>Other factors (specify).....22</p> <p>.....</p>
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THANK AND CLOSE

RECENT FILM VIEWERS SURVEY

MRS: B. HARDIE

March 2013

FILM VIEWERS

SERIAL NO:

Respondent's Name _____

Home Address _____

Postal Town _____ Post _____ Code _____

Telephone _____ Date _____ of Interview _____

Interviewer's name _____

No.				
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CHECKED BY
INTERVIEWER
(INITIALS)

CHECKED BY
SUPERVISOR
(INITIALS)

I declare that this interview has been carried out strictly in accordance with your specifications, within the Code of Conduct and with a person totally unknown to me.

Interviewer's Signature _____ Date _____

Occupation of CWE:
Qualifications
Type of organisation:

P1 Social Class (Quota'd)

- A - Higher Manager 1
B - Int Mngr..... 2
C1 - Jr Mngr/Prof 3
C2 - Skilled Manual 4
D - Semi Skilled 5
E - Unemployed/State pension6

P2 Gender (Quota'd)

- Male..... 1

Female 2

P3 Age (Quota'd)

Under 16..... 1→

CLOSE

- 16-17 2
18-24 3
25-34 4
35-44 5
45-54 6
55-64 7
65+ 8

P4 Religious affiliation

Are you actively practising any religion?

No 1

IF YES: Which religion is that

- Christian 2
Muslim 3
Jewish 4

Hindu	5
Buddhist	6
Sikh	7
Other religion	8
Refused	9

P5 Cultural background (Quota'd)

White British/Irish.....	1
Mixed.....	2
Asian or Asian British	3
Black or Black British.....	4
Chinese or Chinese British ...	5
Other ethnic group.....	6
Refused	7

P6 Location (Quota'd)

North East	1
Yorks and Humber.....	2
East Midlands.....	3
East Anglia	4
Greater London	5
South East (Excl. Greater London)	6
South West.....	7
Wales	8
West Midlands.....	9
North West	10
Scotland	11
Northern Ireland	12

P7 Working status (Quota'd)

Working	1
Non-working	2

P8 CLASSIFICATIONS WATCH (Min Quotas) – FROM SQ2

U.....	1
PG	2
12A/12.....	3
15	4
18	5

SCREENER

Good morning/afternoon, my name is... from the New Fieldwork Company. We are an independent market research agency conducting a survey among the general public about the films and DVDs that they watch.

SQ1 SHOW CARD SQ1

Have you personally watched any of the following films or DVDs recently? **MARK ALL MENTIONED.**

Recently released films Seen			Seen	Recently released DVDs		
01	Parental Guidance (U)		32	Ice Age 4 – Continental Drift (U)		
02	Sammy’s Great Escape (U)		33	Madagascar 3 – Europe’s most wanted (U)		
03	Saadi Love Story (U)		34	Room on the Broom (U)		
04	Life of Pi (PG)		35	Men in Black 3 (PG)		
05	Oz:The Great and Powerful (PG)		36	Paranorman (PG)		
06	Wreck-It-Ralph (PG)		37	Petit Nicholas (PG)		
07	Song for Marion (PG)		38	Frankenweenie (PG)		
08	The Impossible (12A)		39	Cheerful Weather for the Wedding (PG)		
09	Jack Reacher (12A)		40	The Dark Knight Rises (12)		
10	The Hobbit (12A)		41	The Bourne Legacy (12)		
11	Les Miserables (12A)		42	Avengers Assemble (12)		
12	Lincoln (12A)		43	Skyfall (12)		
13	Hitchcock (12A)		44	The Woman in Black (12)		
14	Warm Bodies (12A)		45	The Twilight Saga - Breaking Dawn-Part 2 (12)		
15	A Good Day to Die Hard (12A)		46	Hope Springs (12)		
16	Safe Haven (12A)		47	The Perks of Being a Wallflower (12)		
17	Beautiful Creatures (12A)		48	Liberal Arts (12)		
18	The Guilt Trip (12A)		49	The Sapphires (12)		
19	I Give It a Year (15)		50	Total Recall (12)		
20	Movie 43 (15)		51	Anna Karenina (12)		
21	Gangster Squad (15)		52	Paranormal Activity 4 (15)		
22	Cloud Atlas (15)		53	Ted (15)		
23	The Sessions (15)		54	The Expendables 2 (15)		
24	Mama (15)		55	Black Swan (15)		
25	Zero Dark Thirty (15)		56	Prometheus (15)		
26	Bullet to the Head (15)		57	Strippers vs Werewolves (15)		
27	Side Effects (15)		58	Kick Ass (15)		
28	Flight (15)		59	Savages (18)		
29	This is 40 (15)		60	Killing Them Softly (18)		
30	Hansel and Gretel: Witch Hunters (15)		61	Project X(18)		
31	Django Unchained (18)					

Have not seen any recently released films or DVDs 99 → **CLOSE**

Q2 SHOW CARD SQ2

As you may know, films and DVDs carry classification ratings. Which of the following classifications do you usually watch nowadays, either on your own or with children? **MARK ALL MENTIONED**

U..... 1
 PG..... 2
 12A/12..... 3
 15..... 4
 18..... 5
 R18..... 6
 Watch films but don't know classifications..... 7

RECORD CLASSIFICATIONS FOR RESPONDENT AT P8 – CHECK QUOTAS.

MAIN INTERVIEW

WEIGHT OF FILM VIEWING- ASK ALL

Q1a SHOW CARD Q1

How frequently, on average, do you rent, buy or download films to watch at home?

ONE CODE

Q1b And how often do you go to the cinema nowadays? **MARK ONE CODE IN SECOND COLUMN.**

	Q1a – DVDs	Q1b - Cinema
Every day	1	1
2-3 times a week	2	2
Once a week	3	3
Once a fortnight.....	4	4
Once a month.....	5	5
Once every two to three months.....	6	6
Once every 4-6 months	7	7
Less often.....	8	8

MONITORING OF FILM VIEWING - ASK ALL

Q2a Are you the parent of any children under the age of 18? IF YES: What ages are they? **MARK ALL MENTIONED**

Under 5	1	} → GO TO Q2b
6-8 yrs	2	
9-11 yrs	3	
12	4	
13	5	
14	6	
15	7	
16	8	
17	9	
I don't have any children under the age of 18	0	→ GO TO Q3

ASK THOSE WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18. OTHERS TO Q3

Q2b **SHOW CARD Q2**

And in general, to what extent do you check the classification of films that your child(ren) is/are watching in the cinema or on DVD? **ONE CODE IN EACH COLUMN**

	Children under 12	age 13-14	age 15+
All the time	1	1	1
Most of the time	2	2	2
Occasionally	3	3	3
Rarely	4	4	4
Never	5	5	5
No children of this age at home	6	6	6

OPINION OF BBFC – ASK ALL

Q3 SHOWCARD BBFC

As you may know, films are classified in this country by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). The BBFC's role is to provide classifications which may protect children and young people from any harm that may be caused through viewing inappropriate films in the cinema or on DVDs.

SHOW CARD Q3

How important do you think it is for film viewers to have such classifications to refer to?

Very important	1
Quite important	2
Unsure	3
Not very important	4
Not at all important	5

Q4 SHOW CARD Q4.

Overall, how effective do you feel the BBFC is in its role of providing reliable film classifications and advice for consumers? **MARK ONE CODE**

- Very effective..... 1
 Quite effective 2
 Unsure..... 3
 Not very effective..... 4
 Not at all effective..... 5

ATTENTION PAID TO CLASSIFICATIONS – ASK ALL

SHOW CARD Q5

Q5 How often do you look for classification ratings when you are selecting a film to watch? **ONE CODE**

- I always check for classifications..... 1
 I usually check classifications if a
child aged under 15 will be watching..... 2
 I usually only check classifications
 if a **child aged under 12** will be watching..... 3
 I usually check classifications, even if I'm not watching
 with someone younger than me 4
 I never usually bother to check classifications..... 5

AGREEMENT WITH CLASSIFICATIONS – ASK ALL

Q6 SHOW CARD Q6.

Thinking of the sorts of films you usually watch, in general how much do you agree with the classifications they are given? So how much do you usually agree with the classification?

**ROTATE ORDER OF ASKING FOR EACH CLASSIFICATION MENTIONED AT SQ2.
 MARK ONE CODE IN EACH COLUMN**

	U	PG	12	15	18
1.I often disagree and find this classification inappropriate					
2.I occasionally disagree and find this classification inappropriate					
3.I never really notice or pay attention to this classification					
4.I usually agree that this classification is appropriate					
5.I always agree that this classification is appropriate					
6. Do not usually watch films with this classification					

Q7 ASK THOSE DISAGREEING WITH ANY CLASSIFICATION AT Q6 (CODES 1, 2), OTHERS TO Q8

What mainly makes you disagree with classifications? **RECORD IN FULL**

Q8 SHOW CARD Q8 AND SQ1. ASK ALL

Overall, did you agree with the classification(s) given to the film(s) that you have seen recently? **MARK ONE CODE.**

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------|
| Can't recall | 1 | } → GO TO Q11a |
| Yes, totally agreed with all classifications..... | 2 | |
| Yes, mainly agreed with all classifications..... | 3 | |
| Disagreed with one or two classifications..... | 4 | } → GO TO Q9a |
| Disagreed with quite a few classifications | 5 | |

Q9a ASK THOSE WHO DISAGREED WITH A CLASSIFICATION, OTHERS TO Q11a

Which films did you most disagree with the classification of? **WRITE IN CODE OF FILMS MENTIONED, IN BOXES BELOW. IF MORE THAN 3 FILMS MENTIONED, SAY:** Can you please select the three films that you most disagreed with the classification of?

Q9b ASK FOR EACH FILM CODED AT Q9a. OTHERS TO Q11a

And was this because you believed this film was suitable for a younger audience than the certificate suggested, for an older audience or should have been restricted to adults only?

CODE ON EACH ROW

Q9a

Write in code of film/DVD
disagreed with

Q9b

Considered suitable for
Younger Older Adults only

	..... 1 .....	..... 2 .....	..... 3
	..... 1 .....	..... 2 .....	..... 3
	.....	..... 1 .....	..... 2 3

Q10 ASK THOSE SAYING CODE 2/3 FOR ANY FILM AT Q9b, OTHERS TO Q11a.

SHOW CARD Q10

Which of the following areas did you find particularly unsuitable in ASK FOR ONE FILM FROM Q9a (ROTATE ORDER IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION)? **MULTICODE. PROBE:** Anything else?

<p><u>LANGUAGE</u></p> <p>Bad/strong language 1</p> <p>Racist or homophobic language ... 2</p> <p>Crude sexual language..... 3</p> <p><u>SEXUAL CONTENT</u></p> <p>Nudity 4</p> <p>Explicit sexual scenes..... 5</p> <p>Children being sexualised..... 6</p> <p><u>VIOLENCE</u></p> <p>Brutal/graphic violence 7</p> <p>Violence not justified by context ... 8</p> <p>Sexual violence/rape 9</p> <p><u>BEHAVIOUR</u></p> <p>Unacceptable/anti-social behaviour that young people may copy 10</p> <p>Dangerous/self-harming behaviour that young people may copy..... 11</p>	<p><u>HORROR</u></p> <p>Blood and gore scenes in the film 12</p> <p>Supernatural scenes in the film 13</p> <p>Disturbing scenes that 'stay with' the viewer..... 14</p> <p><u>DRUG USE</u></p> <p>Reference to illegal drugs 15</p> <p>Use of illegal drugs..... 16</p> <p>Making drug taking seem normal/acceptable..... 17</p> <p>Characters smoking 18</p> <p><u>THEMES/TONE</u></p> <p>Inclusion of issues that are very upsetting (e.g. domestic violence/self-harm/suicide) 19</p> <p>The tone of the film (dark; threatening; crude)..... 20</p> <p>Roles played by child characters (inappropriate language/behaviour) 21</p> <p>Other factors (specify) 22</p> <p>.....</p>
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ATTITUDE TO BAD LANGUAGE – ASK ALL

Q11a SHOW CARD Q11a

How concerned are you by the use of strong language (e.g. use of the 'F' word) in films nowadays – this might be either a personal concern or concern as a parent? **MARK ONE CODE.**

- I don't really notice it to be honest 1
- I notice it, but it doesn't really bother me 2
- I'm not sure..... 3
- I am quite concerned about it 4
- I am very concerned about it 5

Q11b SHOW CARD Q11b

Here are five ways in which other people have said they find swearing inappropriate in films. Are there any of these aspects that you personally find concerning? **MULTICODE POSSIBLE**

Q11c ASK THOSE SELECTING MORE THAN ONE ASPECT AT Q11b, OTHERS TO Q12

And which is the one aspect about strong language in films that you are most bothered by? **ONE CODE**

	Q11b	Q11c
	Concern at all	Most concerning
The <u>number of times</u> a strong swear word is used.....	1.....	1
The <u>type/strength</u> of swear words used.....	2.....	2
The <u>aggressive/violent</u> way in which swear words are used.....	3.....	3
<u>Child characters using</u> swear words.....	4.....	4
Swearing <u>becoming the norm</u> /something everyone does in films.....	5.....	5
None of these aspects concern me.....	6	

UNDERSTANDING OF CLASSIFICATIONS – ASK ALL

Q12 SHOW CARD Q12

As far as you know, what does a 12A classification at the cinema mean, in terms of who a film is suitable for? **MARK ONE CODE**

Suitable for children aged 12 and above, but parents can take younger children if they choose to	1	
Suitable for <u>all</u> children, provided they are accompanied	2	SAY: In fact, the answer is..
Not suitable for any child under the age of 12	3	
.....		READ OUT CODE 1
Not sure/can't say.....	4	

ATTITUDE TO HORROR AT 12A/12 – ASK ALL

Q13a Have you recently watched any 'scary' 12A/12 classified films with children aged 12 or under. By scary, I mean films that include a certain degree of horror or threat? **MARK ONE CODE.**

Yes	1	→ Q13b
No.....	2	→ Q14

Q13b ASK THOSE WHO SAY 'YES' AT Q13a, OTHERS TO Q14

Was the strength of horror and threat at the level you would have expected for a 12A/12 classified film, or stronger/more scary than you would have expected? **MARK ONE CODE.**

- All at the level I would have expected for a 12A/12 1
One or two films had stronger horror/threat than
I would have expected 2
Several films had stronger horror/threat than I would have
expected 3

Q13c ASK THOSE WHO SAY 'YES' AT Q13a, OTHERS TO Q14

Have any children you know been particularly disturbed or worried by the level of horror or threat in a 12A/12 classified film they have seen recently? **MARK ONE CODE**

- Yes 1
No 2
Not sure 3

INTEREST IN 'INSIGHT'- ASK ALL

Q14 SHOW CARD Q14 AND NEW BBFC INSIGHT DESCRIPTION FOR CORALINE

This is an example of a new service called 'insight' which the BBFC is now providing on its website and mobile Apps. This allows film goers to have more detail about why a film has been given its classification.

How useful is this service for you? **MARK ONE CODE**

- Very useful 1
Quite useful 2
Unsure 3
Not very useful 4
Not at all useful 5

COMPLETE PROFILE SECTION ON FRONT PAGE AND CLOSE

BBFC WEBSITE VISITOR SURVEY

March 2013

WEB SAMPLE

SQ1 Age Under 161→ CLOSE 16-172 18-243 25-344 35-445 45-546 55-647 65+8	SQ2 Location North East 1 Yorks and Humber 2 East Midlands 3 East Anglia 4 Greater London 5 South East (Excl. GLC) 6 South West 7 Wales 8 West Midlands 9 North West 10 Scotland 11 Northern Ireland 12 Outside of UK13→ CLOSE
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SQ3 Have you personally watched any of the following films or DVDs recently? **MARK ALL MENTIONED.**

*Recently released films
DVDs*

Seen

Recently released

01	Parental Guidance (U)		32	Ice Age 4 – Continental Drift (U)	
02	Sammy's Great Escape (U)		33	Madagascar 4 (U)	
03	Saadi Love Story (U)		34	Room on the Broom (U)	
04	Life of Pi (PG)		35	Men in Black 3 (PG)	
05	Oz: The Great and Powerful (PG)		36	Paranorman (PG)	
06	Wreck-It-Ralph (PG)		37	Petit Nicholas (PG)	
07	Song for Marion (PG)		38	Frankenweenie (PG)	
08	The Impossible (12A)		39	Cheerful Weather for the Wedding (PG)	
09	Jack Reacher (12A)		40	The Dark Knight Rises (12)	
10	The Hobbit (12A)		41	The Bourne Legacy (12)	
11	Les Misérables (12A)		42	Avengers Assemble (12)	
12	Lincoln (12A)		43	Skyfall (12)	
13	Hitchcock (12A)		44	The Woman in Black (12)	
14	Warm Bodies (12A)		45	Breaking Dawn, Part 2 (12)	
15	A Good Day to Die (12A)		46	Hope Springs (12)	
16	Safe Haven (12A)		47	The Perks of Being a Wallflower (12)	
17	Beautiful Creatures (12A)		48	Liberal Arts (12)	
18	The Guilt Trip (12A)		49	The Sapphires (12)	
19	I Give It a Year (15)		50	Total Recall (12)	
20	Movie 43 (15)		51	Anna Karenina (12)	
21	Gangster Squad (15)		52	Paranormal Activity 4 (15)	

22	Cloud Atlas (15)		53	Ted (15)	
23	The Sessions (15)		54	The Expendables 2 (15)	
24	Mama (15)		55	Black Swan (15)	
25	Zero Dark Thirty (15)		56	Prometheus (15)	
26	Bullet to the Head (15)		57	Strippers vs Werewolves (15)	
27	Side Effects (15)		58	Kick Ass (15)	
28	Flight (15)		59	Savages (18)	
29	This is 40 (15)		60	Killing Them Softly (18)	
30	Hansel and Gretel: Witch Hunters (15)		61	Project X(18)	
31	Django Unchained (18)				

Have not seen any recently released films or DVDs 99

SQ4 SHOW CLASSIFICATION RATINGS IMAGE

As you may know, films and DVDs carry classification ratings. Which of the following classifications do you usually watch nowadays, either on your own or with children?

MULTICODE

U 1
PG..... 2
12A/12 3
15..... 4
18..... 5
R18 6
Watch films but don't know classifications 7

WEIGHT OF FILM VIEWING- ASK ALL

Q1a How frequently, on average, do you rent, buy or download films to watch at home?
ONE CODE

Q1b And how often do you go to the cinema nowadays? **ONE CODE**

	Q1a – DVDs	Q1b - Cinema
Every day	1	1
2-3 times a week.....	2	2
Once a week	3	3
Once a fortnight	4	4
Once a month	5	5
Once every two to three months	6	6
Once every 4-6 months.....	7	7
Less often	8	8

MONITORING OF FILM VIEWING - ASK ALL

Q2a Are you the parent of any children under the age of 18? IF YES: What ages are they? **MULTICODE**

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------|
| Under 5..... | 1 | } → GO TO Q2b |
| 6-8 yrs..... | 2 | |
| 9-11 yrs..... | 3 | |
| 12..... | 4 | |
| 13..... | 5 | |
| 14..... | 6 | |
| 15..... | 7 | |
| 16..... | 8 | } → GO TO Q2b |
| 17..... | 9 | |
| I don't have any children under the age of 18..... | 0 | → GO TO Q3 |

ASK THOSE WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18. OTHERS TO Q3

Q2b And in general, to what extent do you check the classification of films that your child(ren) is/are watching? **ONE CODE IN EACH COLUMN**

	Children under 12	Aged 12-14	Aged 15+
All the time	1.....	1.....	1.....
Most of the time	2.....	2.....	2.....
Occasionally	3.....	3.....	3.....
Rarely	4.....	4.....	4.....
Never	5.....	5.....	5.....
No children of this age at home	6.....	6.....	6.....

OPINION OF BBFC – ASK ALL

Q3 SHOW BBFC IMAGE

As you may know, films are classified in this country by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). The BBFC's role is to provide classifications which may protect children and young people from any harm that may be caused through viewing inappropriate films in the cinema or on DVDs.

How important do you think it is for film viewers to have such classifications to refer to? **ONE CODE**

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Very important..... | 1 |
| Quite important | 2 |
| Unsure | 3 |
| Not very important..... | 4 |
| Not at all important..... | 5 |

Q4 Overall, how effective do you feel the BBFC is in its role of providing reliable film classifications and advice for consumers? **ONE CODE**

- Very effective 1
 Quite effective 2
 Unsure 3
 Not very effective 4
 Not at all effective 5

ATTENTION PAID TO CLASSIFICATIONS – ASK ALL

Q5 How often do you look for classification ratings when you are selecting a film to watch? **ONE CODE**

- I always check for classifications 1
 I usually check classifications if a
child aged under 15 will be watching 2
 I usually only check classifications
 if a **child aged under 12** will be watching 3
 I usually check classifications, even if I'm not watching
 with someone younger than me 4
 I never usually bother to check classifications 5

AGREEMENT WITH CLASSIFICATIONS – ASK ALL

Q6 Thinking of the sorts of films you usually watch, in general how much do you agree with the classifications they are given? So how much do you usually agree with the classification?

ROTATE ORDER OF ASKING FOR EACH CLASSIFICATION MENTIONED AT SQ4. ONE CODE IN EACH COLUMN

	U	PG	12	15	18
1.I often disagree and find this classification inappropriate					
2.I occasionally disagree and find this classification inappropriate					
3.I never really notice or pay attention to this classification					
4.I usually agree that this classification is appropriate					
5.I always agree that this classification is appropriate					
6. Do not usually watch films with this classification					

Q7 ASK THOSE DISAGREEING WITH ANY CLASSIFICATION AT Q6 (CODES 1, 2), OTHERS TO Q8

What mainly makes you disagree with classifications?

--

Q8 SHOW FILMS/DVDs MENTIONED AT SQ3. IF NONE WATCHED, GO TO Q11a

Overall, did you agree with the classification(s) of the film(s) that you have seen recently? **ONE CODE.**

- | | | |
|--|---|----------------|
| Can't recall..... | 1 | } → GO TO Q11a |
| Yes, totally agreed with all classifications | 2 | |
| Yes, mainly agreed with all classifications | 3 | |
| Disagreed with one or two classifications | 4 | } → GO TO Q9a |
| Disagreed with quite a few classifications..... | 5 | |

Q9a ASK THOSE WHO DISAGREED WITH A CLASSIFICATION (CODE 4/5 AT Q8), OTHERS TO Q11a. SHOW FILMS/DVDs MENTIONED AT SQ3

Did you disagree with the classification of these films? **MAX 3 FILMS CAN BE MENTIONED,**

Q9b SHOW EACH FILM CODED AT Q9a. OTHERS TO Q11a

And was this because you believed this film was suitable for a younger audience than the certificate suggested, for an older audience or should have been restricted to adults only? **CODE ON EACH ROW**

	Q9a	Q9b			
	Insert film/DVD disagreed with	Considered suitable for Younger	Older	Adults	only
		..... 1 .....	..... 2 .....	..... 3	
		..... 1 .....	..... 2 .....	..... 3	
		..... 1 .....	..... 2 .....	..... 3	

Q10 ASK THOSE WHO SAY CODE 2 OR 3 FOR ANY FILM AT Q9b, OTHERS TO Q11a.

Which of the following areas did you find particularly unsuitable in ASK FOR ONE FILM MENTIONED AT Q9a (ROTATE ORDER IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION)?

MULTICODE.

PROMPT: Anything else?

<p><u>LANGUAGE</u></p> <p>Bad/strong language 1</p> <p>Racist or homophobic language ... 2</p> <p>Crude sexual language..... 3</p> <p><u>SEXUAL CONTENT</u></p> <p>Nudity 4</p> <p>Explicit sexual scenes..... 5</p> <p>Children being sexualised..... 6</p> <p><u>VIOLENCE</u></p> <p>Brutal/graphic violence 7</p> <p>Violence not justified by context ... 8</p> <p>Sexual violence/rape 9</p> <p><u>BEHAVIOUR</u></p> <p>Unacceptable/anti-social behaviour that young people may copy 10</p> <p>Dangerous/self-harming behaviour that young people may copy..... 11</p>	<p><u>HORROR</u></p> <p>Blood and gore scenes in the film12</p> <p>Supernatural scenes in the film13</p> <p>Disturbing scenes that 'stay with' the viewer.....14</p> <p><u>DRUG USE</u></p> <p>Reference to illegal drugs15</p> <p>Use of illegal drugs.....16</p> <p>Making drug taking seem normal/acceptable.....17</p> <p>Characters smoking18</p> <p><u>THEMES/TONE</u></p> <p>Inclusion of issues that are very upsetting (e.g. domestic violence/self-harm/suicide)19</p> <p>The tone of the film (dark; threatening; crude).....20</p> <p>Roles played by child characters (inappropriate language/behaviour)21</p> <p>Other factors (specify)22</p> <p>.....</p>
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ATTITUDE TO BAD LANGUAGE – ASK ALL

Q11a How concerned are you by the use of strong language (e.g. use of the 'F' word) in films nowadays - this might be either a personal concern or concern as a parent?
ONE CODE.

- I don't really notice it to be honest..... 1
- I notice it, but it doesn't really bother me.....2
- I'm not sure3
- I am quite concerned about it.....4
- I am very concerned about it.....5

Q11b SHOW CARD Q11b

Here are five ways in which other people have said they find swearing inappropriate in films. Are there any of these aspects that you personally find concerning.

MULTICODE POSSIBLE

Q11c **ASK THOSE SELECTING MORE THAN ONE ASPECT AT Q11b, OTHERS TO Q12**

And which is the one aspect about strong language in films that you are most bothered by? **ONE CODE**

	Q11b	Q11c
	Concern at all	Most concerning
The <u>number of times</u> a strong swear word is used	1.....	1
The <u>type/strength</u> of swear words used	2.....	2
The <u>aggressive/violent</u> way in which swear words are used.....	3.....	3
<u>Child characters using</u> swear words	4.....	4
Swearing <u>becoming the norm</u> /something everyone does in films.....	5.....	5
None of these aspects concern me	6	

UNDERSTANDING OF CLASSIFICATIONS – ASK ALL

Q12 As far as you know, what does a 12A classification at the cinema mean, in terms of who a film is suitable for? **MARK ONE CODE**

Suitable for children aged 12 and above, but
parents can take younger children if they choose to. 1

Suitable for all children, provided they are accompanied

2

**PROMPT: In fact, the
answer is..**

Not suitable for any child under the age of 12..... 3

SHOW CODE 1

Not sure/can't say 4

ATTITUDE TO HORROR AT 12A/12 – ASK ALL

Q13a Have you recently watched any 'scary' 12A/12 classified films with children aged 12 or under. By scary, I mean films that include a certain degree of horror or threat? **MARK ONE CODE.**

Yes..... 1

Q13b

No 2

Q14

Q13b **ASK THOSE WHO SAY 'YES' AT Q13a, OTHERS TO Q14**

Was the strength of horror and threat at the level you would have expected for a 12A/12 classified film, or stronger/more scary than you would have expected? **MARK ONE CODE.**

All at the level I would have expected for a 12A/12.... 1

One or two films had stronger horror/threat than
I would have expected

2

Several films had stronger horror/threat than I would have
expected

3

Q13c ASK THOSE WHO SAY 'YES' AT Q13a, OTHERS TO Q14

Have any children you know been particularly disturbed or worried by the level of horror or threat in a 12A/12 classified film they have seen recently? **ONE CODE**

Yes..... 1
No 2
Not sure 3

INTEREST IN 'INSIGHT'- ASK ALL

Q14 SHOW IMAGE OF INSIGHT DESCRIPTION

This is an example of a new service called 'Insight' which the BBFC is now providing on its website. This allows film goers to have more detail about why a film has been given its classification.

How useful is this service for you? **MARK ONE CODE**

Very useful..... 1
Quite useful..... 2
Unsure 3
Not very useful 4
Not at all useful 5

P1 Gender

Male 1
Female 2

P2 Religious affiliation

Are you actively practising any religion?

No 1

IF YES: Which religion is that

Christian..... 2

Muslim 3

Jewish..... 4

Hindu 5

Buddhist..... 6

Sikh..... 7

Other religion 8

Refused..... 9

P3 Cultural background

White British/Irish 1

Mixed 2

Asian or Asian British..... 3

Black or Black British 4

Chinese or Chinese British.... 5

Other ethnic group 6

Refused..... 7

P4 Working status

Working..... 1

Non-working..... 2

TEENAGERS SURVEY

SHOW CARD

Q1 In which of the following ways do you, or any members of your family, watch films at home regularly?

Q2 And which is the main way in which you personally watch films at home most often?

	Q1	Q2
	()	()
Television (DVD/Blu-Ray/Downloads)	1	1
Computer/i-pad	2	2
Smartphone	3	3
Games console	4	4
Don't watch films at home	5	5

SHOW CARD

Q3 As you may know, films and DVDs have classification ratings. Which of the following classifications of films and DVDs do you usually watch nowadays? **MULTICODE**

	()	
U	1	
PG	2	
12A/12	3	
15	4	
18	5	
Watch films but don't know Classifications		6
I don't go to the cinema or watch DVDs/films	7	

Q4 **ASK ALL. SHOW BBFC LOGO AND CLASSIFICATION SYMBOLS**

As you may know, films are classified in this country by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). The BBFC's role is to give films classifications which may protect children and young people from any harm that may be caused through viewing inappropriate films in cinema or on DVDs.

SHOW CARD

How important do you think it is for film viewers to have these classifications to refer to?

	()
Very important	1
Quite important	2
Unsure	3
Not very important	4
Not at all important	5

SHOW CARD

Q5 Overall, how effective do you feel the BBFC (*British Board of Film Classification*) is in giving reliable film classifications and advice for film viewers?

()

- Very effective 1
Quite effective 2
Unsure 3
Not very effective 4
Not at all effective 5

ASK THOSE WHO WATCH FILMS (CODE 1-6 AT Q3), OTHERS THANK AND CLOSE

SHOW CARD

Q6 How often do you personally look for classification ratings when you are selecting a film to watch? **ONE CODE**

- I always check for a classification 1
I usually only check classifications if someone younger than myself will be watching 2
I usually check classifications, even if I'm not watching with someone younger than me 3
I never bother to check classifications 4

ASK THOSE WHO WATCH 15 FILMS (CODE 4 AT Q3), OTHERS TO Q8a

SHOW CARD

Q7a Thinking of the films you have watched recently that are classified 15 (i.e. only suitable for those aged 15 or over to watch), overall how often did you agree or disagree with their classification? **ONE CODE**

()

- | |
|--|
| I often disagreed with it 1 |
| I occasionally disagreed with it 2 |
- I never really noticed or paid attention to the classification 3
I usually agreed with it 4
I always agreed with it 5
I have not watched films with this classification recently 6

Q7b **ASK IF FILM CLASSIFICATION DISAGREED WITH AT Q7a. OTHERS TO Q8a**
 And why have you disagreed with the 15 classification for the films that you have seen recently? **MULTICODE**

()
 I think some of the 15 films I have seen are suitable for
 a younger audience to watch1

I think some of the 15 films I have seen should have been rated 18 .....2
--

ASK THOSE WHO WATCH '12A/12' FILMS (CODE 3 AT Q3), OTHERS 9.

SHOW CARD

Q8a Now, think about the films you have watched recently that are classified '12A' (i.e. only suitable for those aged 12 or older to watch alone, but younger children can watch if with an adult). Overall, how often did you agree or disagree with their classification? **ONE CODE**

()

I often disagreed with it .....1	
I occasionally disagreed with it.....2	GO TO Q8b

I never really noticed or paid attention to the classification 3
 I usually agreed with it.....4
 I always agreed with it.....5
 I have not watched films with this classification recently 6

Q8b **ASK IF FILM CLASSIFICATION DISAGREED WITH AT Q8a. OTHERS TO Q9**
 And why have you disagreed with the '12A/12' classification for the films that you have seen recently? **MULTICODE**

()
 I think some of the '12' films I have seen are suitable for
 younger children to watch alone.....1

I think some of the '12' films I have seen should have been rated 15 .....2
--

Q9 **ASK THOSE WHO CONSIDERED FILMS SUITABLE FOR OLDER AUDIENCE AT Q7b OR Q8b (CODE 2). OTHERS THANK AND CLOSE.**

SHOW CARD

What mainly makes you think that some of the films you have seen recently should have been classified for an older audience? **RECORD ALL REASONS**

LANGUAGE	()	HORROR	()
Bad/strong language	1	Blood and gore scenes in the film	1
Racist or homophobic language	2	Supernatural scenes in the film	2
Crude sexual language	3	Disturbing scenes that stay with you	3
SEXUAL CONTENT	4	DRUG USE	
VIOLENCE		Reference to illegal drugs	4
Brutal/graphic violence	5	Use of illegal drugs	5
Violence not justified by context	6	Making drug taking seem 'normal/acceptable'	6
Violence against women	7	Characters smoking	7
		THEMES/TONE	
BEHAVIOUR		The films included issues that are very upsetting (e.g. domestic violence/self-harm/suicide)	8
Unacceptable/anti-social behaviour that young people may copy	8	The tone or mood of the film (e.g. dark; threatening; crude)	9
Dangerous/self-harming behaviour that young people may copy	9	The roles played by child characters (inappropriate language/behaviour)	0
Other factors (please specify)			

SEX (19)

Boy -----1
 Girl ----- 2

AGE (20)

12 years or less ----- CLOSE
 13 years ----- 1
 14 years ----- 2
 15 years ----- 3
 16 years ----- 4
 17 years ----- 5
 18 years ----- 6
 Over 18 years ----- CLOSE

CLASS (21)

A -----1
 B -----2
 C1 -----3
 C2 -----4
 D ----- 5
 E -----6

SCHOOL YEAR (25)

Year 8 -----1
 Year 9 ----- 2
 Year 10 -----3
 Year 11 -----4
 Year 12 (lower 6th) -----5
 Year 13 (upper 6th) -----6

SCHOOL/WORKING STATUS (26)

School -----1
 6th form college -----2
 University/higher education -----3
 Working full-time -----4
 Working part-time -----5
 Unemployed -----6

Location

North East..... 1
 Yorks and Humber..... 2
 East Midlands..... 3
 East Anglia.....4
 Greater London..... 5
 South East (Excl. GLC).....6
 South West..... 7
 Wales.....8
 West Midlands.....9
 North West..... 10
 Scotland..... 11
 Northern Ireland..... 12

Religious affiliation

Are you actively practising any religion?

No..... 1
 IF YES: Which religion is that
 Christian..... 2
 Muslim..... 3
 Jewish..... 4
 Hindu..... 5
 Buddhist..... 6
 Sikh..... 7
 Other religion..... 8
 Refused..... 9

THANK AND CLOSE

3. Full Feature Films (and TV Episodes) shown across the focus groups

U

The Pirates in an Adventure with Scientists!

The Princess and the Frog

Toy Story 3

PG

Men in Black 3

Coraline

Fantastic Mr Fox

Frankenweenie

12

The Hunger Games

The Woman in Black

Hanna

The Lovely Bones

Sucker Punch

Remember Me

Now Is Good

Bones – The Bump in the Road

15

Black Swan

Ted

Made in Dagenham

The Inbetweeners Movie

Kick- Ass

Better Things

Keith Lemon: the Film

18

Project X

The Angels' Share

Hooligan

Shame

Drive Angry

Curb Your Enthusiasm – Beloved Aunt
Girls – Vagina Panic

Film Clips shown across the focus groups

Horror, violence and threat at 12 and 15

Salt (12 version)
The Lady (12)
Sinister (15)
Hick (15)
Cleanskin (15)

Blood and gore at 12/15

Tormented (15)
Final Destination 5 (15)
127 Hours (15)
House M.D. – After Hours (15)

Theme at the junior categories

Cars 2 (U)
The Artist (PG)

Language

The Pirates! In An Adventure With Scientists (U)
Route Irish (15)
X-Men: First Class (12)
J. Edgar (15)
Bridesmaids (15)
Eat Pray Love (15 version)

Drug misuse

The Social Network (12)
The Perks of Being a Wallflower (12)
Wild Bill (15)
Paul Merton in India (15)
30 Rock (15)
Thirteen (18)

Sex references

Hop (U)

Rio (U)

Katy Perry – Part of Me (PG)

The Back-Up Plan (12)

The Other Guys (12)

The Invention of Lying (12)

The Change-Up (15)

Passenger Side (15)

Keith Lemon: the Film (15)

The Watch (15)

Self - harm

Scared Shrekless (U)

Puss in Boota (U)

The Karate Kid (PG)

The Beaver (12)

The Roommate (15)

Black Swan (15)

American Horror Story (18 uncut)

Nudity

From the Sea to the Land Beyond (U)

Eat Pray Love (PG)

The Knot (15)

The Hangover Part II (15)

Holy Motors (18)

Smoking/alcohol

Rango (PG)

Now Voyager (U)

Alice in Wonderland (PG)

The Adventures of Tintin – The Secret of the Unicorn (PG)

Remember Me (12)

4. Qualitative Discussion Guide

PART ONE – ALL RESPONDENTS, BACKGROUND

Warm up

Family background, hobbies and interests

Film Classifications

How used

How interpreted

Role of insight

Pre viewing scrutiny – assessing films, on and off line (downloading films)

The BBFC

Awareness

Perceived role; awareness of changes over time

Overall perceptions; credibility and reliability

Fit with public / public attitude

Usefulness of film classification (imagine if no film classification....)

Classification issues

Spontaneous thoughts and feelings

Key areas of concern

How have they been used, problems experienced

When and why use own judgment

Review homework task

Had they seen films before / used or agreed with classification

Spontaneous thoughts about films' classification

Why, areas of agreement, disagreement etc

Key issues

Feedback from children / other family members:

Areas of agreement / disagreement

Whether agree with actual classification

Relevance of the Guidelines

Why are films classified (flip chart)

Issue of harm – how is this understood

Probe: imitable behaviour, sexualisation, desensitisation, normalisation, learning new information, impact on society / values etc

The Classification Guidelines (read in group or refer to pre group task)

Use to explain purpose of the research

Focus on relevant category

Spontaneous thoughts and feelings

Areas of fit or dissonance

Fit with pre conceptions

Overall communication and comprehension

Areas for improvement

PART TWO – COVER RELEVANT SECTION WITH RELEVANT FOCUS GROUPS

Language – key issues

Use clips of films and clips where appropriate

Overview

Key issues and concerns

Which category is particularly relevant

Perceptions of possible harm or offence; influence and impact

Agreement with Guidelines

Key mitigators

Specific issues

Very mild, mild, moderate, strong etc – understood?

Is example helpful at 12A

Numbers / frequency rule at 12A / 15

Cunt at 15– attitudes, mitigators. Ever acceptable

Are attitudes to strong language ‘softening’ (fuck, cunt)

Strong language in lower category works or 12A with little/no appeal for children/not aimed at children (dated works, arthouse, subtitled, documentaries, films aimed at ‘older’ audience eg Exotic Marigold Hotel, Quartet etc)

Arse and crap at U / PG – also pissed/bastard/shit/bullshit at PG

Motherfuckers and cocksucker (general attitudes, stronger than fuck)

Understanding of strong vs. very strong language

Relevance of insight and extended insight

Contains very strong language or contains strong language and one use of very strong language example

Is language at 15 ever an issue. What would raise the classification to 18

Rude gestures (eg. ‘wanker’ gestures, middle finger)

Fit between language and insight, role of insight

Violence and threat

Use clips of films and clips where appropriate

Overview

Key issues and concerns

Which category is particularly relevant

Perceptions of possible harm; influence and impact

Agreement with Guidelines

Key mitigators

Distinctions at categories eg PG and 12

Specific Issues

Visceral nature of violence; poor vs good production values (realism)

Prolonged vs infrequent

Fit with genre of film

Moderate vs mild vs strong – how understood

Is 'without detail' 'dwelling on detail' useful

Knife threat at U

Is it right to differentiate between different types of violence eg sexual, sadistic and verbal references

Blood and Gore (part of violence)
--

Clips etc where appropriate

Overview

Key issues and concerns

Which category is particularly relevant

Perceptions of possible harm; influence and impact

Key mitigators

Distinctions at categories eg PG and 12

Specific issues

Medical vs act of violence blood and gore

Expectation of medical gore (via genre) vs unexpected

Frequency

Realism and detail, prolonged

What are the expectations at 12A vs 15 vs 18

Animal vs human

Any concerns/issues re. the 'sanitisation' (not realistically depicting the real effects of violence in lower categories) or normalization of violence?

Violence (and Threat)

Use clips

Overview

Key issues and concerns

Which category is particularly relevant

Perceptions of possible harm; influence and impact

Agreement with Guidelines

Key mitigators

Distinctions at categories eg PG and 12

Specific issues

Understanding of mild vs moderate vs strong

Relevance of sinister tone

Supernatural threat (esp. at a younger category): paranormal with children

15 / 18 boundaries between supernatural and real

key mitigators

sexual threat

Drugs

Use clips etc

Overview

Key issues and concerns

Which category is particularly relevant

Perceptions of possible harm; influence and impact

Agreement with Guidelines – concepts and wording

Key mitigators

Distinctions at categories eg PG and 12

Specific issues

‘Soft’ – does it underplay seriousness of issue; better to say cannabis

Film as a whole not promoting drug use

What would make a film go to 18 on this issue

‘Accessible’ highs eg aerosols – treated differently – as are activities that could cause instant death (again, aerosols)

Glamorization vs normalization – how are differences understood

Drugs as a lifestyle – key issues

Concerns about imitable behavior

Relevance of focusing on details – unclear shot vs detail

Alcohol

Use clips etc

Overview

Key issues and concerns

Do people even notice it

Which category is particularly relevant

Perceptions of possible harm; influence and impact

Agreement with Guidelines

Key mitigators

Distinctions at categories eg PG and 12

Any concerns re normalizing drinking

Specific Issues

Glamorization concerns

Key mitigators; protagonist, frequency, as a theme

Binge drinking

Relative concerns re smoking and drugs

Smoking

Show clips

Is this a concern and classification issue

What would make this an issue when viewing a film

Is it useful to mention it in the shortform insight? How is it most usefully described?

Are allowances made for old films, films set in different eras or real / fictional characters known for smoking (eg. Churchill)

Sex ref / Nudity

Clips etc

Overview

Key issues and concerns

Which category is particularly relevant

Perceptions of possible harm; influence and impact

Agreement with Guidelines

Key mitigators

Distinctions at categories eg PG and 12

Specific issues

Innocuous references eg looking down someone's top

Sex at 15 / 18 borders; differences, how understood, key issues

Understanding of strong sex references, suitability, frequency, no strong detail, verbal references

Non sexual vs sexual nudity; an issue

Sexualisation of children; is this an issue (show music videos if appropriate)

Exposing children to inappropriate sexual content; key concerns

Self - harm / Imitable

Show clips etc

Is this a concern (growing / new concern)

Imitability issue

Glamorized concerns

What would make this an issue

Frequency / theme

Key mitigators

Theme

Show clips

Overview

Key issues and concerns

Which category is particularly relevant

Perceptions of possible harm; influence and impact

Agreement with Guidelines

Key mitigators

Distinctions at categories eg PG and 12

Specific issues

Theme at lower categories eg Hunger Games, Toy Story, Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

Impact of knowing the genre / theme eg James Bond, Harry Potter

Do the merits (educational, moral, artistic, etc) of a work justify leniency?

Music videos

How are children accessing music videos; are parents aware of what they are viewing

How should the BBFC classify music videos:

Especially if short online promo vs 2 hour compilation

Same as film classification Guidelines

Using different rules / Guidelines; should BBFC be stricter as no context

PART THREE – ALL RESPONDENTS

Insight

Current usage of insight

Awareness of BBFC website or app

Explain extended insight and explore differences:

Giving more context

Referencing other works

Taking expectations into account

May not suit certain audiences eg PG film but not for children

How would respondents use this information

Perceived benefits

Fit with classification and Guidelines

Is the word “contains” needed

Is it too long; how could it be shortened (bullet points)

Trailers – strong language

Should trailers be classified differently

No strong language in trailers at 12A

If one use of strong lang (eg fuck) if non threatening at 15 or goes to an 18

Does this make sense

Sum Up

Key issues

Key learnings

Attitudes to the Guidelines

Changes and recommendations

Where are their concerns (by category / by age groups)