

## British film certification, Jan-Sept 2009

UK Film Council Research and Statistics Unit

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A total of 113 British films received final certification in the first nine months of 2009, up from 74 in Jan-Sep 2008 but fewer than the 126 recorded in Jan-Sep 2007, as Table 1 shows. The great majority (107 out of 113) of the finally certified films in Jan-Sep 2009 were Schedule 1 films.

The total production budget in Jan-Sep 2009 (£414.0m) was lower than in Jan-Sep 2008, but UK spend (£293.6m) increased slightly compared with the same period last year (£266.1m). Note that these data are for final certifications, so include films produced over the previous one to three years.<sup>1</sup> UK spend as a percentage of total budget rose from 51% in Jan-Sep 2007 to 71% in Jan-Sep 2009 as a result of the decline in co-productions, which tend to have lower UK spend percentages.

**Table 1: FINAL CERTIFICATIONS, Jan-Sept 2007 to 2009**

Type of certification		Jan-Sep 2007	Jan-Sep 2008	Jan-Sep 2009
Schedule 1	Number	73	71	107
	UK spend £m	194.9	256.2	273.4
	Total budget £m	270.2	405.7	369.3
	UK spend as % of budget	72.1%	63.2%	74.0%
Co-production	Number	53	3	6
	UK spend £m	119.6	9.9	20.2
	Total budget £m	348.7	14.1	44.7
	UK spend as % of total budget	34.3%	70.2%	45.2%
All types	Number	126	74	113
	UK spend £m	314.5	266.1	293.6
	Total production budget £m	618.9	419.8	414.0
	UK spend as % of total budget	50.8%	63.4%	70.9%

Source: UK Film Council

'Total Budget' in the case of Sch1 films is the sum of production activity in the UK and production activity outside the UK; in the case of co-productions it is the sum of investments made by all participating countries in the film.

Interim certifications give an indication of the future level of official UK film production. Table 2 shows the numbers, UK spend and production value of British films receiving interim certification in Jan-Sep 2007 to 2009. The number of interim-certified Schedule 1 films rose to 114 (93 in Jan-Sep 2008) while the number of interim-certified official co-productions increased from 11 to 16.

<sup>1</sup> For current production statistics, see [http://www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk/media/pdf/g/g/Jan-Sept\\_2009\\_Production\\_Report.pdf](http://www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk/media/pdf/g/g/Jan-Sept_2009_Production_Report.pdf)

The anticipated UK spend of interim-certified Schedule 1 films rose to £515.5 million in Jan-Sep 2009 from £499.2 million in Jan-Sep 2008, while that of co-productions fell slightly from £35.5m to £33.1m. UK spend as a percentage of the budget (71.2%) was lower than in 2008 (79.1%) but about the same as in 2007 (70.1%).

**Table 2: INTERIM CERTIFICATIONS, Jan-Sept 2007 to 2009**

Type of certification		Jan-Sep 2007	Jan-Sep 2008	Jan-Sep 2009
Schedule 1	Number	82	93	114
	UK spend £m	621.0	499.2	515.5
	Total budget £m	861.3	600.4	676.0
	UK spend as % of budget	72.1%	83.1%	76.3%
Co-production	Number	20	11	16
	UK spend £m	47.6	35.5	33.1
	Total budget £m	92.7	75.8	94.7
	UK spend as % of total budget	51.3%	46.8%	35.0%
All types	Number	102	104	130
	UK spend £m	668.6	534.7	548.6
	Total production budget £m	954	676.2	770.7
	UK spend as % of total budget	70.1%	79.1%	71.2%

Source: UK Film Council

'Total Budget' in the case of Sch1 films is the sum of production activity in the UK and production activity outside the UK; in the case of co-productions it is the sum of investments made by all participating countries in the film.

## Budgets

While the numbers of co-productions have dropped in recent years, the median budget has fallen only slightly. In the first nine months of 2009, the median budget of co-productions receiving interim certification was £3.8 million, compared with £4-4.3m in 2003-2005.

**Table 3: Median budgets of INTERIM CO-PRODUCTION certifications**

Year	Median budget £m
2002	3.5
2003	4.3
2004	4.2
2005	4.0
2006	5.1
2007	3.9
2008	4.5
2009ytd	3.8

Source: UK Film Council

In contrast, the median budget of interim Schedule 1 certifications has dropped over the last two years, from £2.0 million to £1.1 million. This is consistent with the trend of falling median budgets for UK domestic films revealed in UK Film Council production statistics.

**Table 4: Median budgets of INTERIM SCHEDULE 1 certifications**

Year	Median budget £m
2007	2.0
2008	1.4
2009ytd	1.1

Source: UK Film Council

Interim Schedule 1 certifications have only been issued since 2007, when the new film tax relief came into effect.

### **Co-production agreements**

In Jan-Sep 2009, four of the six final co-production certifications were under the European Convention on Cinematic Co-production, one was under the UK-Australia agreement and one was under the UK-Canada agreement.

Of the 16 interim co-production certifications, nine were solely under the European Convention, one was jointly under the European Convention and the Canadian agreement, one was European Convention/South Africa, two were under the UK-New Zealand agreement and three were solely under the UK-Canada agreement.

### **Technical notes:**

#### **1. British film certification statistics collected and reported by UK Film Council**

The British film certification statistics in this report are based on data collected from the UK Film Council Certification Unit and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The data reported are all British films certified in the reference period, not a sample.

The UKFC Certification Unit assesses British film certification applications on behalf of the DCMS and makes recommendations to the Secretary of State who issues certificates.

Figures shown in the tables are for British films certified during the reference periods shown. Certification may occur some time after both the production and theatrical release of the film.

Figures for Schedule 1 film certification include certificates issued under the old Schedule 1 test, transitional Cultural Test (32 points) and the Cultural Test (31 points).

Interim certification (applicable to Schedule 1 Cultural Test films from January 2007) is not a pre-requisite for receiving final certification under the Cultural Test. Some films receive their final certification without having received an interim certificate.

## 2. Definitions

**Schedule 1 films** are British films certified under Schedule 1 to the Films Act 1985. To qualify under this definition, films commencing principal photography on or after 1 January 2007 must pass a UK Cultural Test awarding points for UK elements in the story, setting and characters and for where and by whom the film was made.

On the basis of recommendations made by the UK Film Council, the Secretary of State grants 'interim approval' prior to the completion of the film to those films that meet the criteria and 'final certification' once the film has been completed and final documents submitted.

**Official UK co-productions** are British films certified under one of the UK's official co-production agreements or the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production. 'Interim approval' is granted prior to the start of principal photography to films that meet the criteria and 'final certification' once the film has been completed and final documents submitted. Films made as official co-productions are not required to pass the Cultural Test for British film.

See UK Film Council website for full details of the Cultural Test and other information on British film certification (<http://www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk/qualifying>).

**UK spend** is the value of production activities in the UK for Schedule 1 films and UK expenditure for co-productions. The UK expenditure for co-productions may include some expenditure on UK goods and services which takes place outside the UK.

**Total production value** is the sum of total budget for Schedule 1 films and total investment for UK co-productions.

**Total investment** (in relation to co-productions) is the sum of each participating country's investment in the co-production and approximates the production budget.

## 3. Revisions

As the status and certification dates of individual films may change as a result of changing circumstances, the numbers published in this release are subject to revision. Each release in this series includes revisions of previous quarters, so the latest release should be referred to as the most accurate summation available of the certification numbers.

### Pre-release Access

Under the terms of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, statutory 24 hours pre-release access to this statistical release was granted to the following:

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