

UK film production – Q1 2009

UK Film Council Research and Statistics Unit

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UK film production was subdued in Q1 2009, with a total of 19 films (with budgets of £500k+) going into production in the quarter, compared with 31 in Q1 2008 and 32 in Q1 2007.

This was mainly the result of the continuing fall in co-productions (only two in Q1 2009) and a lower-than-normal number of inward investment features (four in Q1 2009, compared with eight in Q1 2008 and 9 in Q1 2007).

However, the total UK spend (£228 million) compared well with 2008 (£251 million) and 2007 (£202 million) due to the UK spend associated with inward investment productions.

Table 1: UK film production, Q1s 2007, 2008 and 2009

	Q1 2007	Q1 2007	Q1 2008	Q1 2008	Q1 2009	Q1 2009
	Number	UK spend £m	Number	UK spend £m	Number	UK spend £m
DOM	16	26.9	16	89.0	13	**
COP	7	10.1	7	19.6	2	**
DOM & COP total	23	37.0	23	108.6	15	42.8
INW	9	164.5	8	142.6	4	185.7
TOTAL	32	201.5	31	251.2	19	228.4

Source: UK Film Council

** with only two co-production in Q1 2009 the UK spend data would be disclosive so the combined UK spend number for COP and DOM films is shown.

DOM – UK domestic feature films

COP – UK co-productions

INW – inward investment feature films (including inward co-productions)

Data for films with budgets \geq £500k only.

The lower numbers reflect several factors: the impact of the ‘credit crunch’ on film financing, the downward pressure on co-productions from the new

UK film tax relief based on UK spend, the continued effect of the actors' and writers' disputes in the USA and the high value of the pound until late 2008.

The UK spend figure was supported by the commencement of two high budget inward investment films in Q1 2009, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1* and *Untitled Robin Hood Adventure*.

Other films that began shooting in Q1 2009 included UK domestic productions *Centurion*, *The Great Ghost Rescue*, *It's a Wonderful Afterlife* and *Nowhere Boy* and the co-productions *Mr Nice* (UK/Spain) and *Outcast* (UK/Ireland).

For annual production data see UK Film Council, *08 Statistical Yearbook*, Chapter 15 and the production reports on the research section of the UK Film Council website: <http://www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk/ukfilms>

Note: quarterly production data tend to fluctuate and are sensitive to timing differences (a few days' difference in shoot date can cause films to shift from quarter to quarter) so for analytical purposes quarterly data should be viewed in the context of longer time periods. See production reports at above web address.

Technical Notes

1. UK Film Council production tracking

The UK Film Council production tracking system attempts to track all films with budgets greater than £500k produced in whole or part in the UK (i.e. it is a quarterly census, not a sample).

Sources of information include industry tracking forums, Skillset, trade press and internet sources, the Office of the British Film Commissioner, UK film certification data and direct approaches to film producers.

Some films with budgets less than £500k are picked up as a result of this process, but we do not have comprehensive coverage of very low budget films so we publish data only on films with budgets of £500k+

Only productions with some UK spend on shooting, visual effects or post-production are included.

Spend is allocated to the year in which principal photography starts.

2. Definitions

A **domestic** (indigenous) UK feature is a feature made by a UK production company that is produced wholly or partly in the UK

A **UK co-production** is a co-production (other than an inward co-production) involving the UK and other country partners usually under the terms of a bilateral co-production agreement or the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production.

An **inward feature** is defined as a feature film which is substantially financed and controlled from outside the UK and where the production is attracted to the UK because of script requirements, the UK's infrastructure or UK tax incentives

An **inward feature co-production** is an official co-production that originates from outside the co-production treaty countries (usually from the USA) and which is attracted to the UK because of script requirements, the UK's infrastructure or UK tax incentives

Inward investment (INW) is the total of inward features and inward feature co-productions. These are summed as the number of inward co-productions is usually low, so showing their budgets or UK spend separately would be disclosive.

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:

Tina McFarling, Head of Press

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(end)