

British film certification, Q1 2009

UK Film Council research and Statistics Unit

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A total of 30 British films received final certification in Q1 2009, up from 17 in Q1 2008 but lower than the 63 in Q1 2007, as Table 1 shows. Twenty-nine of the finally certified films in Q1 2009 were Schedule 1 films.

The fall in number was mainly due to a sharp decline in official co-productions from 31 in Q1 2007 to one in Q1 2009, continuing a fall since the peak in 2005. There were 106 in full year 2005, 68 in 2006, 56 in 2007 and only 7 in 2008. This reflects the changes in the co-production environment over this period, with the tightening of rules on balance in co-production agreements and the introduction of the new film tax relief based on UK spend rather than the total budget of the film.

Table 1: British film (final, all types) certification, Q1s 2007 to 2009

Type of certification		Q1 2007	Q1 2008	Q1 2009
Schedule 1	Number	32	16	29
	UK spend £m	77.8	*	*
	Total budget £m	92.0	*	*
Co-production	Number	31	1	1
	UK spend £m	75.7	*	*
	Total investment £m	222.2	*	*
All types	Number	63	17	30
	UK spend £m	153.5	131.7	76.4
	Total production value £m	314.2	253.1	115.3

Source: UK Film Council

Note: * with only one final certification in each of Q1 2008 and Q1 2009 the UK spend and total investment value for official co-productions would reveal the budgets of individual films so only the combined figures for both types of certification are shown.

Total production value in Q1 2009 was £115.3 million (£253.1 million in Q1 2008) and UK spend was £76.4 million (£131.7 million in Q1 2008). Although the UK spend and total budget for Schedule 1 films in Q1 2009 were comparable to those

in Q1 2007, the near absence of official co-productions in Q1 2009 resulted in lower total production value and UK spend than in Q1 2007.

Interim certifications give an indication of the future level of official UK film production. Tables 2 and 3 show the numbers, UK spend and production value of British films receiving interim certification in the first quarters of 2007, 2008 and 2009. While the numbers of interim certifications were similar in Q1 2009 to Q1 2008, the anticipated production value and median budget for both categories of film decreased.

The anticipated UK spend of interim-certified Schedule 1 films fell to £35.1 million in Q1 2009 from £100 million in Q1 2008, while the median film budget was halved to £0.8 million from £1.6 million (Table 2).

Table 2: Schedule 1 interim certifications, UK spend and total budget, Q1s 2007 to 2009

	Number	UK spend (£m)	Total budget (£m)	Median budget (£m)
Q1 2007	19	152.6	263.8	2.0
Q1 2008	28	100.0	153.8	1.6
Q1 2009	27	35.1	39.3	0.8

Source: UK Film Council

Table 3 shows that the anticipated UK expenditure of official co-productions fell to £10.2 million from £17.6 million in Q1 2008, while the median investment fell to £3.5 million from £4.5 million.

Table 3: Official UK co-production interim certifications, UK expenditure and total investment, Q1s 2007 to 2009

	Number	UK expenditure (£m)	Total investment (£m)	Median investment (£m)
Q1 2007	6	9.3	27.3	4.3
Q1 2008	6	17.6	35.8	4.5
Q1 2009	5	10.2	20.1	3.5

Source: UK Film Council

Four of the five interim co-production certificates in Q1 2009 were issued under the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production and one was under the UK/Canada bilateral treaty.

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 quarter, 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 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.

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:

Stephen Bristow, Senior Executive, Government Liaison
Rebecca Greenfield, Certification Manager, Certification Unit.
Eleanor Kenny, Head of Press and Public Affairs
Tina McFarling, Head of Industry Relations
Oliver Rawlins, Head of Communications
John Woodward, Chief Executive Officer

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