

British film certification, Calendar Year 2009

UK Film Council Research and Statistics Unit

28 January 2009

A total of 152 British films received final certification in 2009, up from 104 in 2008 and about the same number as the 154 recorded in 2007, as Table 1 shows. The great majority (144 out of 152) of the finally certified films in 2009 were Schedule 1 films.

The total production budget for 2009 final certifications (£651.8m) was lower than in 2008, as was UK spend (£444.6m compared with £619m in 2008). Note that these data are for final certifications, so include films produced over the previous one to three years.¹ Schedule 1 films include high budget UK/USA films as well as low budget UK films, so the aggregate budget is influenced by the number and timing of inward investment UK/USA productions. UK spend as a percentage of total budget rose from 61.6% in 2007 to 68.2% in 2009 as a result of the decline in co-productions, which tend to have lower UK spend percentages.

Table 1: FINAL CERTIFICATIONS, Calendar Year 2007 to 2009

Type of certification		2007	2008	2009
Schedule 1	Number	98	97	144
	UK spend £m	442.4	588.5	422.9
	Total budget £m	561.4	935.4	603.9
	UK spend as % of budget	78.8%	62.9%	70.0%
Co-production	Number	56	7	8
	UK spend £m	123.1	30.5	21.6
	Total budget £m	356.7	39.8	48.0
	UK spend as % of total budget	34.5%	76.7%	45.0%
All types	Number	154	104	152
	UK spend £m	565.5	619.0	444.6
	Total production budget £m	918.1	975.2	651.8
	UK spend as % of total budget	61.6%	63.5%	68.2%

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.

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 2007 to 2009. The number of interim-certified Schedule 1 films rose to 149 (122 in 2008) while the number of interim-certified official co-productions increased from 16 to 19.

¹ For current production statistics, see http://www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk/media/pdf/j/i/2009_Full_Year_Production_Report_Final_Version.pdf

The anticipated UK spend of interim-certified Schedule 1 films rose to £1.31 billion in 2009 from £665.8 million in 2008, while that of co-productions fell from £47.3m to £37.1m. Total UK spend for all certifications was £1.34 billion in 2009, compared with £713.1 million in 2008. UK spend as a percentage of the budget (79.3%) was higher than in 2008 (73.7%) and 2007 (70.5%).

Table 2: INTERIM CERTIFICATIONS, Calendar Year 2007 to 2009

Type of certification		2007	2008	2009
Schedule 1	Number	113	122	149
	UK spend £m	816.8	665.8	1305.1
	Total budget £m	1123.1	858.8	1591.1
	UK spend as % of budget	72.7%	77.5%	82.0%
Co-production	Number	26	16	19
	UK spend £m	74.3	47.3	37.1
	Total budget £m	140.7	108.9	102.1
	UK spend as % of total budget	52.8%	43.4%	36.3%
All types	Number	139	138	168
	UK spend £m	891.2	713.1	1342.2
	Total production budget £m	1263.8	967.7	1693.2
	UK spend as % of total budget	70.5%	73.7%	79.3%

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 2009, the median budget of co-productions receiving interim certification was £3.6 million, compared with £4.3m in 2003.

Table 3: Median budgets of INTERIM CO-PRODUCTION certifications

Year	Median budget £m
2003	4.3
2004	4.2
2005	4.0
2006	5.1
2007	3.9
2008	4.5
2009	3.6

Source: UK Film Council

The 'median' is the middle value, i.e. half the productions have higher budgets than the median; the other half have lower budgets. In 2009, budgets for interim co-productions ranged from under £500,000 to over £20 million.

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 independent films revealed in the UK Film Council production statistics.

Table 4: Median budgets of INTERIM SCHEDULE 1 certifications

Year	Median budget £m
2007	2.0
2008	1.4
2009	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.

The 'median' is the middle value, i.e. half the productions have higher budgets than the median; the other half have lower budgets. In 2009, budgets for interim Schedule 1 films ranged from under £50,000 to substantially above £100 million.

Co-production agreements

In 2009, five of the eight final co-production certifications were under the European Convention on Cinematic Co-production, one was under the UK-Australia agreement, one under the UK-Canada agreement and one under the UK-South Africa agreement.

Of the 19 interim co-production certifications, ten were under the European Convention, two were under the UK-New Zealand agreement, five were under the UK-Canada agreement, one was under the UK-Australia agreement and one under the UK-South Africa 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:

Tina McFarling, Head of Industry Relations
Oliver Rawlins, Head of Communications
Oliver Foster, Head of Press and Public Affairs
Tara Milne, Press & Public Affairs Officer
Eleanor Melinn, Web & Communications Co-ordinator
Stephen Bristow, Head of Government Relations
John Woodward, Chief Executive Officer
Thalia Baldwin, Certification Manager, Certification Unit
Isabel Davis, Senior Executive, International Strategy & Co-production
Tim Scott, Senior Film Policy Adviser, Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Stewart Kemsley, Senior Film Policy Adviser, Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Simon Oliver, Senior Press Officer, Department for Culture, Media and Sport

(end)