

British film certification, calendar year 2012

BFI Research and Statistics Unit

31 January 2013

A total of 200 British films received final certification in 2012, three fewer than in 2011, as Table 1 shows. The number of finally certified Cultural Test films was the second highest of the past six years, but the number of co-productions certified in the period, at 13, was lower than for 2010 and 2011 but higher than the low numbers certified in 2008 and 2009.

The total UK spend of films which received final certification in 2012 was £878 million, down from £1,533 million in 2011. However, the latest year's figure was the third highest of the last six years (after 2011 and 2010). The aggregate production budget of films receiving final certification in 2012, at £1.2 billion, was the second highest over the last six years, behind only 2011's record total. Note that these data are for final certifications, so include films produced over the previous one to three years¹. Significant titles receiving final certification in 2012 included *Arthur Christmas*, *Fast Girls*, *The Iron Lady*, *Johnny English Reborn*, *Prometheus* and *Skyfall*.

Table 1 Final certifications by calendar year, 2007-2012

Type of certification		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Cultural Test	Number	98	97	144	170	189	187
	UK spend £m	442.4	588.5	422.9	853.8	1478.5	834.2
	Total budget £m	561.4	935.1	604.8	1,001.7	2,118.3	1,169.7
	UK spend as % of budget	78.8%	62.9%	69.9%	85.2%	69.8%	71.3%
Co-production	Number	56	8	8	19	14	13
	UK spend £m	123.1	34.0	21.6	51.3	55.0	44.3
	Total budget £m	356.7	45.2	48.0	137.4	131.4	73.5
	UK spend as % of total budget	34.5%	75.2%	45.0%	37.3%	41.9%	60.3%
All types	Number	154	105	152	189	203	200
	UK spend £m	565.5	622.5	444.6	905.1	1,533.5	878.5
	Total production budget £m	918.1	980.3	652.8	1,139.1	2,249.7	1,243.2
	UK spend as % of total budget	61.6%	63.5%	68.1%	79.5%	68.2%	70.7%

Source: BFI.

'Total Budget' in the case of Cultural Test 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 between 2007 and 2012. The number of interim-certified Cultural Test films in 2012 increased by four compared with 2011,

¹ The latest production statistics are published separately in *Film Production in the UK – full year 2012 report*

but the number of interim-certified official co-productions decreased slightly from 19 in 2011 to 17 in 2012.

The anticipated UK spend as a percentage of the total budget decreased from 80% in 2011 to 69% in 2012 for interim-certified Cultural Test films, and for co-productions the UK spend as a percentage of the total budget decreased slightly from 2011's 48% to 46% in 2012.

Table 2 Interim certifications by calendar year, 2007-2012

Type of certification		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Cultural Test	Number	100	120	146	143	151	155
	UK spend £m	781.8	664.4	1,295.5	767.8	1,284.7	938.0
	Total budget £m	1,077.3	857.5	1,578.5	1,166.6	1,614.8	1,360.8
	UK spend as % of budget	72.6%	77.5%	82.1%	65.8%	79.6%	68.9%
Co-production	Number	20	15	15	23	19	17
	UK spend £m	61.6	45.7	29.2	71.0	32.4	60.3
	Total budget £m	106.7	106.6	80.8	187.8	68.1	131.8
	UK spend as % of total budget	57.7%	42.9%	36.2%	37.8%	47.5%	45.8%
All types	Number	120	135	161	166	170	172
	UK spend £m	843.4	710.1	1,324.7	838.8	1,317.0	998.3
	Total production budget £m	1,183.9	964.1	1,659.2	1,354.4	1,682.9	1,492.6
	UK spend as % of total budget	71.2%	73.7%	79.8%	61.9%	78.3%	66.9%

Source: BFI.

'Total Budget' in the case of Cultural Test 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

The median budget of interim Cultural Test certifications had been decreasing from 2007 to 2011 (Table 3), and 2011's median of £0.9 million was half of 2007's figure. However, the median budget for interim Cultural Test certifications in 2012, at £1.1 million, was slightly higher than the 2011 figure and was the same as in 2009 and 2010.

Table 3 Median budgets of interim Cultural Test certifications

Year	Median budget £m
2007	1.8
2008	1.5
2009	1.1
2010	1.1
2011	0.9
2012	1.1

Source: BFI.

Interim Cultural Test 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 2012, budgets for interim Cultural Test films ranged from under £50,000 to substantially above £100 million.

For co-productions receiving interim certification, there had been a trend of slightly decreasing median budgets from 2003 to 2010 (with exceptions to the trend in 2006 and 2008). However, as table 4 shows, there was a steeper fall in median budgets between 2010 and 2011 (a decrease of £1.4 million), but then a sharp rise in 2012 (from £2.3 million in 2011 to £5.2 million in 2012).

Table 4 Median budgets of interim co-production certifications

Year	Median budget £m
2003	4.3
2004	4.2
2005	4.0
2006	5.1
2007	3.7
2008	4.7
2009	3.5
2010	3.7
2011	2.3
2012	5.2

Source: BFI.

The 'median' is the middle value, i.e. half the productions have higher budgets than the median; the other half have lower budgets.

Co-production agreements

In 2012, eight of the 13 final co-production certifications were under the European Convention on Cinematic Co-production, four were under the UK-South Africa agreement and one was under the UK-Canada agreement.

Table 5 shows the numbers of final co-production certifications by treaty from 2007 and 2012.

Table 5 Final co-production certifications by treaty, 2007-2012

Treaty	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
European Convention	46	5	5	14	8	8
UK-Australia Treaty	1	1	1	2	1	-
UK-Canada Treaty	5	-	1	2	3	1
UK-France	4	1	-	-	-	-
UK-New Zealand Treaty	-	1	-	1	1	-
UK-South Africa Treaty	-	-	1	-	1	4
Total	56	8	8	19	14	13

Source: BFI.

Of the 17 interim co-production certifications, 11 were under the European Convention, two were under the UK-Canada agreement and one each were under the UK-Australia, the UK-France, the UK-Israel and the UK-South Africa agreements.

Table 6 shows the numbers of interim co-production certifications by treaty from 2007 and 2012.

Table 6 Interim co-production certifications by treaty, 2007-2012

Treaty	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
European Convention	15	10	10	14	15	11
UK-Australia Treaty	-	3	1	1	-	1
UK-Canada Treaty	4	1	3	2	3	2
UK-France Treaty	-	-	-	-	-	1
UK-Israel Treaty	-	-	-	-	-	1
UK-New Zealand Treaty	1	-	1	2	-	-
UK-South Africa Treaty	-	1	-	4	1	1
Total	20	15	15	23	19	17

Source: BFI.

Technical notes:

1. British film certification statistics collected and reported by the BFI

The British film certification statistics in this report are based on data collected from the BFI's 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 BFI Certification Unit assesses all British film certification applications on behalf of the DCMS and makes recommendations to the Secretary of State who signs off the certificates. The certificates are then issued by the BFI Certification Unit.

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.

2. Definitions

Cultural Test films are British films certified under the Cultural Test of 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 BFI, the Secretary of State grants interim certification 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. Under the Cultural test, applicants are not obliged to apply for interim certification and can apply just for final certification when the film is complete.

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 certification 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.

For full details of the Cultural Test and other information on British film certification see www.bfi.org.uk/film-industry/british-film-certification-tax-relief

UK spend is the value of production activities in the UK for Cultural Test 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 Cultural Test 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

This release has been prepared according to the Code of Practice for Official Statistics published by the UK Statistics Authority. Pre-release access has been granted to the following:

Amanda Nevill, Chief Executive, BFI
Tim Cagney, Deputy Chief Executive, BFI
Carol Comley, Head of Strategic Development, BFI
Wendy Parker, Deputy Head of Strategic Development, BFI
Chris Travers, Director of Marketing, Communications and Audiences, BFI
Nick Mason Pearson, Director of Press and Public Affairs, BFI
Judy Wells, Head of Press and PR, BFI
Anna Mansi, Certification Manager, Certification Unit, BFI
Isabel Davis, Head of International, BFI
Emma Hewitt, Press Officer (Corporate & Industry), BFI
James Butler, Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Ken Hunt, Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Statistical contact details

This release was prepared by Nick Maine, Research and Statistics Unit, BFI, nick.maine@bfi.org.uk, tel: +44 (0)20 7173 3249.

(end)