

British film certification, Jan-Sept 2012

BFI Research and Statistics Unit

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A total of 154 British films received final certification in the first nine months of 2012, the second highest number of the last five years, as Table 1 shows. The great majority (144 of the 154) of the finally certified films in Jan-Sep 2012 were Cultural Test films.

The total production budgets of films receiving final certification in Jan-Sep 2012 was £796 million and UK spend for the period was £577 million. Both these figures are down from the very high levels seen in Jan-Sep 2011 (£1,809 total budget and £1,315 UK spend). Note that these data are for final certifications, so include films produced over the previous one to three years¹. In the first nine months of 2012, UK spend was 73% of total budget, the same as in the first nine months of 2011. Significant titles receiving final certification in Jan-Sep 2012 included *Berberian Sound Studio*, *The Inbetweeners Movie*, *Shame*, *The Sweeney* and *The Woman in Black*.

Table 1: Final Certifications, Jan-Sept 2008 to 2012

Type of certification		Jan-Sep 2008	Jan-Sep 2009	Jan-Sep 2010	Jan-Sep 2011	Jan-Sep 2012
Cultural Test	Number	71	107	129	158	144
	UK spend £m	256.2	273.4	709.7	1,267.9	548.6
	Total budget £m	405.4	369.3	831.8	1,731.2	752.4
	UK spend as % of budget	63.2%	74.0%	85.3%	73.2%	72.9%
Co-production	Number	3	6	14	12	10
	UK spend £m	9.9	20.2	43.7	47.3	28.4
	Total budget £m	14.1	44.7	101.4	77.8	43.4
	UK spend as % of total budget	70.1%	45.3%	43.1%	60.7%	65.5%
All types	Number	74	113	143	170	154
	UK spend £m	266.1	293.7	753.4	1,315.1	577.0
	Total production budget £m	419.5	413.9	933.2	1,809.0	795.8
	UK spend as % of total budget	63.4%	70.9%	80.7%	72.7%	72.5%

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.

¹ The latest production statistics are published separately in *Film Production in the UK – Jan-Sep 2012*

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 2008 to 2012. The number of interim-certified Cultural Test films in Jan-Sep 2011 was 116 (a slight increase on the 111 films which received interim certification in Jan-Sep 2010) while the number of interim-certified official co-productions decreased by three from 16 in 2010 to 13 in Jan-Sep 2012.

The expected UK spend of interim-certified Cultural Test films rose to £817 million in Jan-Sep 2012 from £577 million in Jan-Sep 2011, and that of co-productions increased from £28 million to £54 million. Overall, the expected UK spend represented 69% of total budget for films receiving interim certification in Jan-Sep 2012.

Table 2: Interim Certifications, Jan-Sept 2008 to 2012

Type of certification		Jan-Sep 2008	Jan-Sep 2009	Jan-Sep 2010	Jan-Sep 2011	Jan-Sep 2012
Cultural Test	Number	92	112	97	111	116
	UK spend £m	499.1	620.2	324.3	576.6	817.0
	Total budget £m	600.3	838.1	471.5	727.2	1,153.5
	UK spend as % of budget	83.1%	74.0%	68.8%	79.3%	70.8%
Co-production	Number	10	12	14	16	13
	UK spend £m	33.9	26.9	28.6	27.9	54.4
	Total budget £m	73.5	74.9	70.6	56.2	116.8
	UK spend as % of total budget	46.1%	36.0%	40.4%	49.7%	46.6%
All types	Number	102	124	111	127	129
	UK spend £m	533.0	647.1	352.8	604.6	871.4
	Total production budget £m	673.8	913.0	542.2	783.3	1,270.3
	UK spend as % of total budget	79.1%	70.9%	65.1%	77.2%	68.6%

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

Table 3 shows the median budget of interim Co-productions since 2002, and Table 4 shows the median budget of interim Cultural Test certifications since 2007. In Jan-Sep 2012 the median budget of Co-productions receiving interim certification was £7.5 million, the highest of the period, and more than £5 million higher than the figure for 2011. This shows a different pattern from recent years as from 2006 to 2011 there had been a downward trend in median budgets.

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	3.7
2008	4.7
2009	3.5
2010	3.7
2011	2.3
2012ytd	7.5

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.

The median budgets of interim Cultural Test certifications have been consistently lower than those of Co-productions. The median budget in Jan-Sep 2012, at £1.0 million, was the same as for all 2010 interim Cultural Test certified films, and a slight increase on 2011's £0.9 million.

Table 4: Median budgets of Interim Cultural Test certifications

Year	Median budget £m
2007	1.8
2008	1.5
2009	1.1
2010	1.0
2011	0.9
2012ytd	1.0

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 Jan-Sep 2011, budgets for interim Cultural Test films ranged from under £50,000 to substantially above £100 million.

Co-production agreements

In Jan-Sep 2012, six of the 10 final co-production certifications were under the European Convention on Cinematic Co-production, three were under the UK-South Africa agreement and one was under the UK-Canada agreement.

Of the 13 interim co-production certifications, seven 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.

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

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