

British film certification, Jan-Sept 2011

BFI Research and Statistics Unit

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A total of 170 British films received final certification in the first nine months of 2011, the highest number of the last five years, as Table 1 shows. The great majority (158 out of 170) of the finally certified films in Jan-Sep 2010 were Cultural Test films.

As with the numbers of certifications, both the total production budget in Jan-Sep 2011 (£1,809.1m) and UK spend (£1,313.9m) were the highest of the last five years. 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 2011, UK spend was 73% of total budget, substantially higher than the 52% proportion of 2007, but lower than the 81% in 2010. Significant titles receiving final certification in Jan-Sep 2011 included *The King's Speech*, *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, *Gnomeo and Juliet*, *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* and *We Need to Talk about Kevin*.

¹The latest production statistics are published separately in *Film Production in the UK - Jan-Sep 2011*

Table 1: FINAL CERTIFICATIONS, Jan-Sept 2007 to 2011

Type of certification		Jan-Sep 2007	Jan- Sep 2008	Jan- Sep 2009	Jan- Sep 2010	Jan- Sep 2011
Cultural Test	Number	73	71	107	129	158
	UK spend £m	194.9	256.2	273.4	709.7	1267.9
	Total budget £m	270.2	405.7	369.3	831.8	1731.2
	UK spend as % of budget	72.1%	63.2%	74.0%	85.3%	73.2%
Co-production	Number	53	3	6	14	12
	UK spend £m	124.6	9.5	19.4	43.7	46.0
	Total budget £m	348.7	14.1	44.7	101.4	77.8
	UK spend as % of total budget	35.7%	67.4%	43.4%	43.1%	59.1%
All types	Number	126	74	113	143	170
	UK spend £m	319.5	265.7	292.8	753.5	1,313.9
	Total production budget £m	618.9	419.8	413.9	933.2	1,809.1
	UK spend as % of total budget	51.6%	63.3%	70.7%	80.7%	72.6%

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.

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 2007 to 2011. The number of interim-certified Cultural Test films in Jan-Sep 2011 was 111 (compared with 98 in Jan-Sep 2010 and 114 in Jan-Sep 2009) while the number of interim-certified official co-productions increased by one from 15 in 2010 to 16 in Jan-Sep 2011.

The anticipated UK spend of interim-certified Cultural Test films rose to £577 million in Jan-Sep 2011 from £328 million in Jan-Sep 2010, while that of co-productions fell slightly from £29 million to £27 million. Overall, the UK spend as a percentage of the total budget (77.1%) was the second highest of the last five years (after 2008's 79.4%).

Table 2: INTERIM CERTIFICATIONS, Jan-Sept 2007 to 2011

Type of certification		Jan-Sep 2007	Jan- Sep 2008	Jan- Sep 2009	Jan- Sep 2010	Jan- Sep 2011
Cultural Test	Number	79	93	114	98	111
	UK spend £m	613.4	499.2	623.3	327.5	576.6
	Total budget £m	849.2	600.4	844.3	474.8	727.2
	UK spend as % of budget	72.2%	83.2%	73.8%	69.0%	79.3%
Co-production	Number	16	10	13	15	16
	UK spend £m	35.6	36.1	26.7	29.0	27.1
	Total budget £m	72.4	73.5	79.2	72.0	56.2
	UK spend as % of total budget	49.2%	49.1%	33.7%	40.2%	48.3%
All types	Number	95	103	127	113	127
	UK spend £m	648.9	535.3	650	356.5	603.7
	Total production budget £m	921.6	673.9	923.6	546.8	783.3
	UK spend as % of total budget	70.4%	79.4%	70.4%	65.2%	77.1%

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

Between 2002 and 2010 the median budget of certified co-productions has varied between £3.5 million and £5.1 million. However, in Jan-Sep 2011 the median budget for certified co-productions has fallen to £2.5 million.

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	3.6
2010	3.6
2011ytd	2.5

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.

As Table 4 shows, the median budget of interim Cultural Test certifications has dropped over the last five years, from £2.0 million to £0.8 million in Jan-Sep 2011.

Table 4: Median budgets of INTERIM Cultural Test certifications

Year	Median budget £m
2007	2.0
2008	1.4
2009	1.1
2010	1.1
2011ytd	0.8

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 2011, six of the 12 final co-production certifications were under the European Convention on Cinematic Co-production, three

were under the UK-Canada agreement and one each were under the UK-Australia, the UK -New Zealand and the UK-South Africa agreements.

Of the 16 interim co-production certifications, 12 were under the European Convention, three were under the UK-Canada agreement and one was under the UK-South Africa agreement.

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.

Figures for Cultural Test film certification include certificates issued under the old production costs test, transitional Cultural Test (32 points) and the Cultural Test (31 points).

Interim certification (applicable to 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

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 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.

For full details of the Cultural Test and other information on British film certification see <http://www.bfi.org.uk/about/qualifying>.

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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