

BBFC Board of Classification Meeting

Thursday 11 July 2019

Present:

Patrick Swaffer	President
Murphy Cobbing	Vice President
David Austin	Chief Executive
Murray Perkins	Policy Director
Craig Lapper (minutes)	Head of Compliance
Amelia Erratt	Head of Age-verification
Sarah Peacock	Compliance Manager (for item 6)
Damon De Ionno	Revealing Reality (for item 4)
Olivia Nettleton	Revealing Reality (for item 4)

Apologies

1. Lord Patel sent his apologies.

Minutes of the previous meeting

2. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Matters arising

3. There were no matters arising.

Digital Economy Act

4. The research agency, Revealing Reality, gave a presentation about the qualitative and quantitative benchmarking research undertaken into children's experiences of exposure to online pornography, parental attitudes to children's exposure to pornography online, and the reported effects this has on young people's attitudes and behaviour.
5. The meeting also discussed progress on the implementation of the Digital Economy Act.

Film for discussion

6. The Board viewed and discussed *Holiday*, a drama submitted for cinema classification with an 18 request. The film follows a young woman who is in an abusive relationship with

a wealthy criminal. It includes a sequence in which the criminal rapes the young woman, the rape being depicted with explicit sexual detail.

7. The Board considered the reports written by members of the compliance team, nearly all of whom had already seen the film. It was agreed that, while there are various precedents for strong sequences of sexual violence at 18, including sight of explicit sexual detail in the case of the 2000 French film *Baise-Moi*, none of the existing precedents are directly relevant to *Holiday*.
8. The Board discussed the balance to be struck between the BBFC's Guidelines commitment that adults should generally be free to choose their own entertainment against the potential risk that a conflation of abusive images and sexually explicit images may produce a harmful effect on vulnerable viewers.
9. It was concluded that the manner in which the scene in question is shot, and its important place within the film's narrative, makes it very unlikely it will have a harmful effect on adult viewers who choose to view the film. In particular, the sequence is shot in a deliberately detached manner that does not encourage viewer arousal or complicity, and is placed within a wider narrative context that invites viewers to witness events from the perspective of the female protagonist rather than from the perspective of her abusive male partner, with whom viewers are unlikely to identify.
10. While the inclusion of explicit detail may be shocking or offensive to some viewers, this was not considered sufficient grounds to impose compulsory censorship at the 18 level in the absence of clear harm concerns. Accordingly, it was agreed the film will be classified 18 uncut with a strong warning about its content in the BBFC's ratings info.

AOB

11. There was no other business.

Date of next meeting: 19 September 2019