

IFCO

OIFIG AICMITHE SCANNÁN NA HÉIREANN
IRISH FILM CLASSIFICATION OFFICE

A guide to our classifications

April 2025



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Introduction

The Irish Film Classification Office (IFCO) gives the advice that adults and children need to choose which audiovisual content to watch.

Audiovisual content describes content for both cinema and home entertainment. It includes:

- Feature films
- Short films
- Films and other content on DVD and Blu-ray disks that are available in shops

You can find advice on our website which will help you to decide what content is suitable for you or your children. You also can search our site for individual film titles. (Our website address is www.ifco.ie.)

Our four main principles

We are guided by four main principles when we decide how to classify audiovisual content:

Freedom of choice: We believe that adults (people over 18) should be free, within the law, to choose what they wish to view.

Supporting parents and guardians: We have a duty to support parents and guardians to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. A vulnerable adult is a person over the age of 18 years who may be unable to protect themselves from abuse, harm or exploitation. This could be due to illness, age, mental illness, disability or other types of physical or mental impairment.

Giving guidance: We give trusted guidance that reflects and shapes what our stakeholders expect. Our stakeholders include people who view the content that we certify especially children, parents and guardians. They also include people who own and work in cinemas and the people who distribute films. Our guidance helps the public decide on what audiovisual content to view. It also improves how the public understands and engages with cinema and home entertainment content.

Supporting different types of content: We support the availability of a variety of audiovisual content.



Moana 2

Distributor: Disney



| Contains: | None | Mild | Moderate | Strong |
|-------------------|------|------|----------|--------|
| Violence | | ✓ | | |
| Harmful Behaviour | ✓ | | | |
| Sex | ✓ | | | |
| Language | ✓ | | | |

Consumer advice: Mild threat and some sequences that might be frightening for very young viewers.

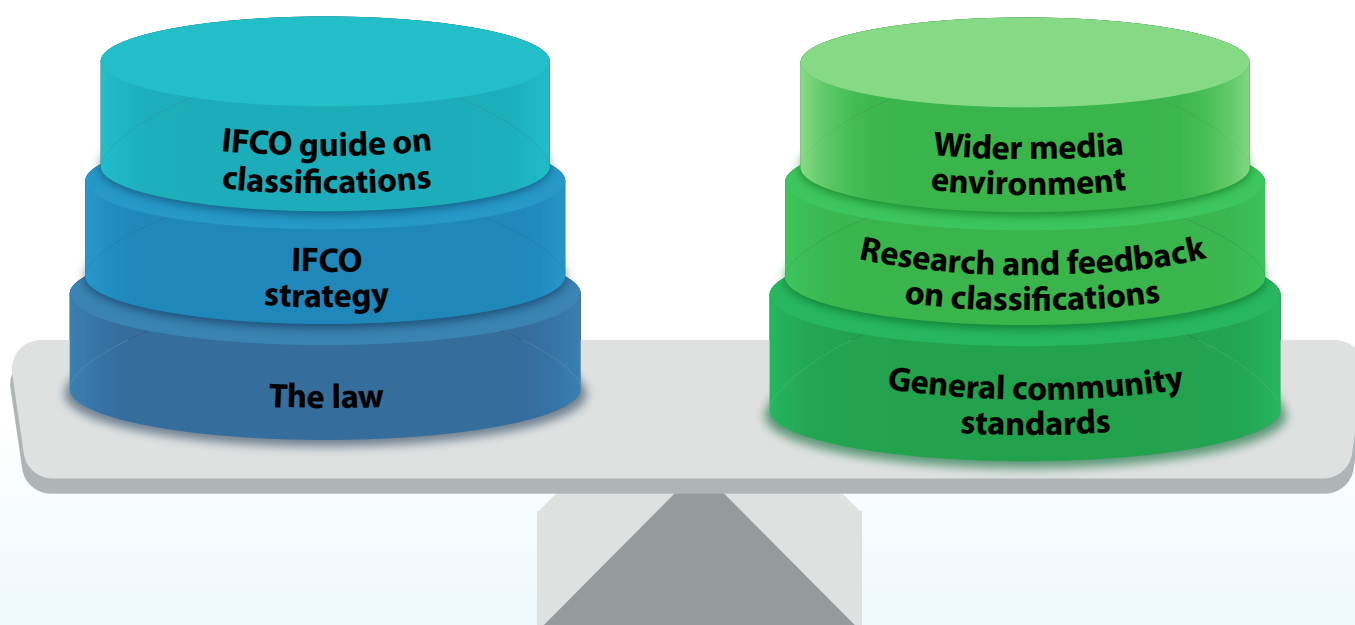
About this guide

This guide tells you how we assess audiovisual content.

We consider:

- the content in whole and in context;
- the relevant legislation, such as the Censorship of Films Act 1923;
- the current IFCO Strategy Statement;
- general community standards based on research and ongoing feedback from stakeholders about our current classifications;
- this guide to our classifications; and
- the wider media environment in Ireland (for example, TV, streaming, radio, internet)

Community standards can change over time and our decisions reflect this ever-changing environment.



Factors we consider when assessing audiovisual content

How we decide on classifications

This guide tells you:

1. What we consider when deciding how to classify audiovisual content (general considerations). See page 5.
2. If there is anything specific we need to consider (language, sex, violence and harmful behaviour). See page 6.
3. Our classification categories. See page 8.
4. Our guidelines for each of our classification categories. See page 10.

We tell you about each of these considerations in more detail below.
You can also read about them on our website (www.ifco.ie).



Minecraft

Distributor: Warner



| Contains: | None | Mild | Moderate | Strong |
|-------------------|------|------|----------|--------|
| Violence | | ✓ | | |
| Harmful Behaviour | ✓ | | | |
| Sex | ✓ | | | |
| Language | | ✓ | | |

Consumer advice: Fantasy violence with scenes that might be frightening for younger viewers. Rude humour.

Part 1

What we consider when we classify audio visual content (general considerations)

When trying to decide on how to classify audio visual content, we start by considering general considerations such as theme, context, approach and outcome.

1.1 Theme, context, approach and outcome

When we are deciding on a classification for any audiovisual content, central considerations are:

- the themes the content explores;
- how it approaches these themes; and
- how it treats these themes in terms of mood and attitudes.

When considering a piece of audiovisual content, we also consider:

- the possible impact on audiences of any issues raised by it; and
- how these issues are shown, examined and resolved.

We carefully consider themes and issues that may be sensitive or difficult for some viewers, looking at how they are treated and resolved.

We may decide that some content is suitable for younger audiences. For example:

- some historical, educational, fantasy or comic contexts may be suitable for younger audiences; or
- there may be a positive resolution of sensitive issues in the content.

In historical contexts, we examine how the story is presented. For example, there could be discriminatory language or actions that would not be acceptable in today's world, but were common at the time in which the story is set.

If the content is more realistic, frightening and/or ends with a negative outcome, this can be unsettling for children. We examine how intense any frightening or threatening content is, and for how long it continues.



Bob Marley: One Love

Distributor: Universal Pictures



| Contains: | None | Mild | Moderate | Strong |
|-------------------|------|------|----------|--------|
| Violence | | | ✓ | |
| Harmful Behaviour | | | ✓ | |
| Sex | | ✓ | | |
| Language | | | ✓ | |

Consumer advice: Soft drug use appropriate to the cultural and historical context. Moderate gun violence and brief strong language.

Part

2

Specific considerations (language, violent, sex, violence and harmful behaviour)

2.1 Language

We consider the language in audiovisual content in terms of:

- the type of language used; and
- the role of language within the overall story.

We pay close attention to coarse, strong, and discriminatory language.

We consider the impact of language and whether it is needed to tell the story. Historical, educational, fantasy or comic contexts, for example, may be able to justify including language that would be an issue in more realistic, contemporary or threatening contexts. For example, discriminatory language that would not be acceptable today can be acceptable in a historical setting.

When considering the use of coarse, strong and discriminatory language, we also think about:

- how often such language appears;
- how intense or shocking it is; and
- how it is likely to make a viewer feel when they hear it.

2.2 Violence

Violence includes physical violence, sexual violence and emotional violence.

- Physical violence is when someone uses a part of their body or an object to control a person's actions.
- Sexual violence is when a person is forced to take part in sexual activity against their will.
- Emotional violence is when someone says or does something intended to frighten, intimidate or to make a person feel stupid or worthless, such as coercive control.



Oppenheimer

Distributor: Universal Pictures



| Contains: | None | Mild | Moderate | Strong |
|-------------------|------|------|----------|--------|
| Violence | | | ✓ | |
| Harmful Behaviour | ✓ | | | |
| Sex | | | | ✓ |
| Language | | | ✓ | |

Consumer advice: Moderate language, strong sex scenes and moderate violence.

We assess violent content for:

- how intense (shocking) it is;
- how often it happens;
- how much detail is shown;
- what the likely impact is on the viewer; and
- how necessary it is to tell the story.

We also consider:

- the extent to which violence is implied (hinted at) or threatened; and
- the type of violence included, for example if it is sexual violence or sustained (continues without interruption) torture.

Historical, fantasy or comic contexts, for example, may be able to justify including some violent content that would be an issue in more realistic, contemporary or threatening contexts.

2.3 Sexual content and nudity

Sexual content is material that shows or refers to sexual activity and behaviours. This content may be explicit (very obvious), and it may include images and descriptions of sexual activity. It can also be implicit (hinted at), where sexual activity and behaviours are referred to in a less obvious way.

We assess sexual content and nudity for:

- how intense or shocking it is;
- how often it appears;
- how much detail is shown;
- what the likely impact would be on a viewer; and
- how necessary it is to tell the story.

Nudity is not always shown in a sexual context. For this reason, we look at nudity and sexual content as two separate issues.

We also examine the extent to which the content merely suggests or openly shows actual sexual activity. Historical, educational, fantasy or comic contexts, for example, may be able to justify including sexual content that would be an issue in more realistic, contemporary or threatening contexts.

2.4 Harmful behaviour

Harmful behaviour is any decision or action that could cause harm, injury or pain to a person, whether this is deliberate or not. Examples include:

- bullying;
- drug use;
- self-harm; and
- anti-social behaviour.

We assess harmful behaviour for:

- how often it appears;
- how shocking it is;
- how much detail is shown;
- what the likely impact is on a viewer; and
- whether it is needed to tell the story.

We also examine if the content normalises, glamourises (makes something seem attractive) or encourages harmful behaviour. Historical, educational, fantasy or comic contexts, for example, may be able to justify including content that would be an issue in more realistic, contemporary contexts.

Part 3

Our classification categories

IFCO uses a set of age-based classifications with different levels that reflect the relevant laws in Ireland. They have been developed and refined based on:

- our experience classifying content;
- audience research; and
- stakeholder feedback.

Our classification categories consider where and how the content will be accessed (in a cinema or at home).




Our classification categories are designed to make them easy to understand. The categories

for Cinema and those for Home Entertainment follow the same design and structure. This is so they are consistent and work alongside each other.

We outline our classifications in the section below.

3.1 Cinema classifications

These classifications are on the IFCO website and displayed in cinemas. They indicate the age at which a viewer can be admitted to a cinema on their own or accompanied by a parent or guardian. The classifications are as follows:

| Age group | Classification | Description |
|---|---|--|
| Pre-teens (under 12s) |  | General audience: suitable for all viewers |
| |  | Parental guidance: a parent or guardian should decide if the content is suitable. |
| Early teens (12–15) The symbol 'A' stands for 'accompanied' |  | Suitable for viewers of 12 years and over. Those younger than 12 may be admitted if accompanied by an adult. |
| |  | Suitable for viewers of 15 years and over. Those younger than 15 may be admitted if accompanied by an adult. |
| 16 |  | Only those aged 16 and over can be admitted. |
| 18 |  | Only those aged 18 and over can be admitted. |

Our classifications recognise that cinema is a more involved experience with a bigger impact than home entertainment. We expect children under 8 or 9 will always be accompanied by a parent or guardian, and we consider this when we decide on a G (General) or PG (Parental Guidance) rating for cinema content.

Cinema trailers

We also make sure that the trailers audiences see before the film starts have a suitable classification. We classify all cinema trailers, and cinema operators have a strong track-record in making sure that the trailers shown are suitable for the film being screened.

We don't enforce ratings. Enforcement is the responsibility of Cinema operators and An Garda Síochána.

3.2 Home Entertainment classifications

Our classifications tell you at what age you can buy a piece of audiovisual content (for example, a DVD) to watch at home. These are the classifications we use for home entertainment:

The classification categories set out the age at which you can purchase a DVD/Blu Ray and act as a guide for the appropriate age for viewing that content. However, there is an element of parental discretion with all content for home entertainment, as it is not generally viewed in a public space. Home entertainment viewing may not always be accompanied, and children react differently to different types of material.

We recommend that you refer to our IFCO classifications and consumer advice on www.ifco.ie before deciding if a piece of home entertainment is suitable for you or for children under your care. There is no requirement for online sellers to protect minors.

Section 4 below tells you more about our guidelines for each of our classification categories.

In addition to the individual classification, we give advice about content we have reviewed. We do this in line with the general and specific considerations we told you about in Sections 1 and 2 of this guide (see pages 5–7). The advice is also available on our website www.ifco.ie.

| Classification | Description |
|---|---|
|  | General audience: suitable for all viewers. |
|  | Parental guidance: parents should decide if it is suitable. |
|  | Suitable for viewers of 12 years and over |
|  | Suitable for viewers of 15 years and over |
|  | Suitable for viewers of 18 years and over |

Part 4

Guidelines for each of the classification categories

G – General Guidelines



A film classified as G – General should be suitable for children who have started primary school. Language, violence, sexual activity and any depictions of harmful behaviour will be very mild in impact, brief, and presented in suitable contexts (for example, fantasy). There will be a quick and reassuring outcome.

We encourage parents and guardians – who know their own children best – to refer to our advice on our website www.ifco.ie before deciding what is appropriate. This advice will tell you if there is anything that might be frightening for very young viewers.

PG Parental Guidance Guidelines



A film classified as PG will be suitable for older children, though it may not necessarily be a 'children's film'. Our advice at www.ifco.ie helps guardians and parents to choose content that is suitable for their own children's tastes and sensitivities.

- **Themes:** PG titles may explore themes and issues (for example war or bereavement) that can be difficult for younger viewers. These themes can be acceptable in certain contexts (for example historical or educational) where there is a reassuring outcome.

There is no requirement on sellers to protect children under the relevant age threshold in the classifications.

- **Language:** PG titles may include occasional bad language, but discriminatory terms can only be included if they can be justified as needed to tell the story.
- **Violence:** Frightening scenes, or scenes with violence will not be graphic or sustained, unless presented in a clearly comic or fantasy context.
- **Sexual content and nudity:** PG films may include sexually suggestive scenes, but sexual activity will be implied (hinted at) rather than shown and sexual references will be mild.
- **Harmful behaviour:** References to harmful behaviour will be mild, but stronger references can be included in educational contexts where there is clear discouragement of the behaviour.

12A Guidance Guidelines (12 in Home Entertainment)



Films classified 12A are suitable for children of 12 years and above, but can be viewed by younger children if accompanied by a parent, guardian or other adult.

We encourage parents and guardians to research the content and to read our advice on www.ifco.ie before deciding whether the material is suitable for their children.

- **Themes:** Titles classified as 12A can include more difficult themes and mature exploration of issues such as crime, bullying and relationships.
- **Language:** Occasional strong, coarse and discriminatory language can be acceptable

depending on context and where it is needed to tell the story.

- **Violence:** This material can contain moderate violence and sustained threat, with stronger scenes permitted if they are justified as necessary to tell the story (for example, fantasy) and if there are reassuring outcomes.
- **Sexual content and nudity:** Sexual content without explicit detail, and brief sexual nudity, can occur in 12A films.
- **Harmful behaviour:** Brief scenes and references to harmful behaviour, without instruction, glamourisation or normalisation can be included.

15A Guidance Guidelines (15 in Home Entertainment)

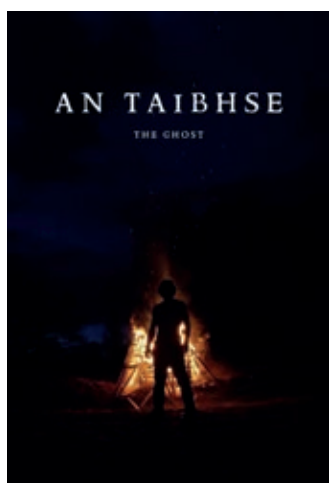


Content classified as 15A is suitable for teenagers of 15 years and above, but can be viewed by younger children if accompanied by a parent or other adult. We encourage parents and guardians to research the content and to read our advice on www.ifco.ie before deciding whether the material is suitable for their teenagers.

- **Themes:** 15A titles can include themes that require a mature outlook and understanding, and elements that may have a strong impact.
- **Language:** Frequent strong and coarse

language is permitted, as is discriminatory language, if it can be justified as necessary to tell the story.

- **Violence:** 15A material can include realistic violence, injury and horror. Sexual violence can be included, if it can be justified as needed to tell the story.
- **Sexual content and nudity:** Sex scenes and strong sexual references are permitted.
- **Harmful behaviour:** Harmful behaviour can be referenced and shown, but without instruction, glamourisation or normalisation.



An Taibhse

Distributor: Anna Lavery PR/Jackport Films



| Contains: | None | Mild | Moderate | Strong |
|-------------------|------|------|----------|--------|
| Violence | | | | ✓ |
| Harmful Behaviour | | | | ✓ |
| Sex | | | | ✓ |
| Language | | | | ✓ |

Consumer advice: Strong violence, horror, sexual content and language. Self-harm and sexual assault references.

16

16 Guidance Guidelines (Cinema Only)

Content classified as 16 is suitable for people of 16 years or over. We encourage parents and guardians to read our advice that accompanies this content on www.ifco.ie to identify issues and elements that may be sensitive for them and their teens.

- **Themes:** The 16 certificate recognises that older teenagers can digest and understand complex, mature themes and material that has a strong impact on viewers.

- **Language:** Strong, coarse and discriminatory language can be strong and appear often.
- **Violence:** There can be strong, realistic violence, graphic injury detail, gore and horror. Sexual violence can be included if it can be justified as necessary to the story.
- **Sexual content and nudity:** Strong sex scenes are permitted.
- **Harmful behaviour:** Scenes of harmful behaviour are permitted.

18

18 Guidance Guidelines

Content classified as 18 is suitable for people of 18 or over. People over 18 are free to choose what they want to watch. In addition to strong language, sexual content, violence, horror and harmful behaviour, films classified as 18 can contain material and themes that can have a strong impact on viewers.

We encourage citizens to read the guidance that accompanies the classification to identify issues and elements that may be sensitive for them.



Poor Things

Distributor: Disney









18

| Contains: | None | Mild | Moderate | Strong |
|-------------------|------|------|----------|--------|
| Violence | | | | ✓ |
| Harmful Behaviour | | | | ✓ |
| Sex | | | | ✓ |
| Language | | | | ✓ |






Consumer advice: Frequent strong scenes of a sexual nature including male and female nudity. Very strong and sexually explicit language throughout. Some gory scenes of dead and dismembered bodies. References to drug use and suicide.

Our classifications at a glance

Cinema classifications

| Age group | Classification | Description |
|---|---|--|
| Pre-teens (under 12s) |  | General audience: suitable for all viewers |
| |  | Parental guidance: a parent or guardian should decide if the content is suitable. |
| Early teens (12-15) The symbol 'A' stands for 'accompanied' |  | Suitable for viewers of 12 years and over. Those younger than 12 may be admitted if accompanied by an adult. |
| |  | Suitable for viewers of 15 years and over. Those younger than 15 may be admitted if accompanied by an adult. |
| 16 |  | Only those aged 16 and over can be admitted. |
| 18 |  | Only those aged 18 and over can be admitted. |

Home entertainment classifications

| Classification | Description |
|---|---|
|  | General audience: suitable for all viewers. |
|  | Parental guidance: parents should decide if it is suitable. |
|  | Suitable for viewers of 12 years and over |
|  | Suitable for viewers of 15 years and over |
|  | Suitable for viewers of 18 years and over |



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