

Correspondence relating to feedback and complaints received by IFCO in 2025

1. Feedback

Me and my 14 year old son watched the movie 'We live in time' at Vue Cinema, Liffey Valley, Dublin on 11th Jan 2025 and was shocked at movies being screened in cinemas in Ireland.

The movie was rated 15A and I had no idea from the advertisement that there would be sexual content and nude scenes in the movie. It was embarrassing to take my 14 year old son to watch the movie. Being a Catholic mom, this movie in my view should not be viewed by young adults in cinema and should not be screened at all.

My sincere request to the jury or decision board not to show such movies in cinemas.

IFCO Response

Thank you for your feedback.

We Live in Time was rated 15A due to strong sex and language in the film. This is flagged in the consumer advice published to our website; [We Live in Time \(2025\) - Irish Film Classification Office](#) Under the guidelines which inform all of our classification decisions, strong sex references may be acceptable at 15A. Scenes of a sexual nature may also be acceptable but will not be explicit or prolonged. Our classifiers felt that 15A was the appropriate rating We Live in Time, along with the accompanying consumer advice, which flags the sexual content.

Films classified 15A are suitable for teenagers of 15 years and above, but can be viewed by younger teenagers if accompanied by a parent or adult. While the IFCO advisory categories empower parents and guardians who know their children best to make decisions about the content their children can view in the cinema, we do encourage parents to find out more about the specific content before deciding whether the material is suitable for their teens.

We appreciate you might not agree with our decision in this case, but please be assured that a great deal of thought and consideration goes into each decision made by the office.

2. Feedback

Watched A Complete Unknown at the weekend and loved it. Afterwards I heard a father complaining about the bad language used in the film and that he didn't expect to hear so much profanity in a 12 cert film that he had brought his children to.

I didn't bother me tbh, can't say I really noticed the extent of the language until it was mentioned.

My question is – is there an IFCO policy change regarding bad language? Is bad language not a big deal anymore? If so I have to agree. Bad language is heard everywhere these days so giving a film a restrictive rating because of it seems pointless.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for getting in touch. We appreciate all the feedback we get on our classification decisions.

As you know, *A Complete Unknown* was rated 12A by our classifiers with the use of strong language being the determining factor in that rating. I think it's fair that to say that there are more instances of language than you might ordinarily find in a 12A rated film in *A Complete Unknown*. However, it was generally used in a conversational and non-aggressive manner and in the context of a realistic depiction of its period and setting.

This being the case, and with no other major classification issues present, we felt it would be unduly restrictive to classify the film at 15. There is no official policy change here but it's worth stating that we're currently undertaking a major research project into public attitudes and these findings might have a bearing on our decisions going forward.

3. Feedback

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the age classification of the film *The Brutalist*, which is currently rated 16 in Ireland. Having watched the film at the IFI this afternoon, I believe this rating does not adequately reflect the contents intensity, particularly in relation to its strong sexual nature and nudity.

From an audience perspective, the explicit themes and graphic scenes present in the movie make it unsuitable for viewers under the age of 18. Such content surpasses what is typically deemed appropriate for a 16 rating, as it involves mature and intense depictions that could be distressing or inappropriate for younger audiences.

It is worth noting that the film has been rated 18 by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) in the UK and received an R rating in the United States, both of which align more closely with the films mature themes. To maintain consistency with these international standards and to better protect younger audiences, I hope the IFCO could reconsider the rating and increase it from 16 to 18.

Thank you for taking the time to review my feedback. I hope you will re-evaluate the classification of *The Brutalist* in light of these concerns.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for your email. We appreciate all public feedback we get to our classification decisions.

As you note, *The Brutalist* was classified 16 by our classification team with this accompanying consumer advice published to the IFCO website: *Strong sex and nudity. Frequent strong drug use. Depiction of sexual violence and reference to self-harm.*

As is clear from that advice there are certainly intense and challenging moments in the film. In particular, the scenes relating to sexual violence and drug addiction. According to IFCO's

guidelines such content is acceptable at 16 provided it is not gratuitous or, in the case of drug use, glamourised.

Accordingly, our classifiers felt these scenes were contained at 16 rather than the adults only 18. It was also felt that this scenes were justified by context (in this case an exploration of the immigrant experience in the U.S. post WW2).

Thanks again for the email. I appreciate you may not agree with us in this instance but please be assured a great deal of consideration goes into each and every classification decision we make.

4. Feedback

i was watching this Indian Moved Rekhachitram few days ago in Vue Liffey valley.
i found issues below.

1. The film was not suitable for children under 16, and even then I found families with kids. the kids were watching rape scenes, killing, murder scenes, scenes not suitable to them to watch. you wont believe, kids of 4 years of age were even there.
2. The movie's sensor certificate was not displayed prior to movie
3. Although this film produced in India, and may be given a U/ certificate in India, but this is not suitable to show or watch with kids. so any indian movie should be thoroughly checked before being shown in Irish Theatre.

I also would like to comment, this is not first time, i see this happening. Many Indian movies certified by censor board India as U certificate rated, are still not suitable for families to watch.

also I have seen better in UK that, such international films are strictly rated and are very strict and would not admit any kids, if the international movies is not suitable for them. so we also need to do same here. it looks there lacks responsibility from the part of IFCO overlooking at this area. There are very scenes shown vulgur, murders, repeatedly showing

my objection is against allowing kids in such internatinal movies, while IFCO is not careful in this or unaware of this.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for your email. We really appreciate all feedback from members of the public as it helps inform classification decisions going forward.

Rekhatchithram was classified at 12A by our classification team with the accompanying consumer advice published to the IFCO website: *"Moderate threat and violence with bloody detail. Contains a depiction of suicide"*.

Films classified at 12A have deemed appropriate by IFCO for those of 12 and over. However, they may be viewed by younger children if accompanied by a parent or guardian who has deemed the material as being suitable for their child. I note that the film was also classified as 12A by our colleagues in the UK.

I appreciate you might not agree with our rating in this instance but please be assured a great deal of consideration goes into every classification awarded.

5. Feedback

I want to make a complaint about the classification of 15A for the film *Bring Them Down*. I went to see it the other night in the cinema. I found it to be extremely disturbing with graphic scenes of animal violence and someone's head being cut off. I wasn't expecting this before seeing it. I wish there was a warning about the film beforehand clearly stating the film contained this type of violence and it certainly should have a classification of 18 to warn the public.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for your email. We appreciate all public feedback we get to our classification decisions.

As you note, *Bring Them Down* was classified 15A by our classification team. The accompanying consumer advice published to the IFCO website was: *"Very strong language. Strong violence and drugs. Bloody detail."*

We agree that there are scenes of violence and graphic detail that some viewers may find disturbing, distressing and/or upsetting and consideration was given to whether a higher rating would be more appropriate. As you can appreciate, many classification decisions are borderline.

Strong gory detail and violence are permitted at the 15A rating depending on how the violence is presented and the nature of the violence. In *Bring Them Down*, the goriest detail involved the slaughter of the animals, rather than the human characters, in the movie. The killing of the human character you describe was more discretely presented but we agree that it was nonetheless quite intense. As a result, a decision was made that 15A rating was permissible with the accompanying warning about the strong level of violence and bloody detail.

While we independently classify all the material submitted, it may be worth noting that the British Board of Film Classification also rated this feature at 15 with the following advice, *"very strong language, strong violence, injury detail, drug misuse"*.

I appreciate you may not agree with us in this instance but please be assured a great deal of consideration goes into each and every classification decision we make. Further, we take account of all feedback received in how we thereafter classify material and draft the accompanying advice.

6. Feedback

Dear Censorship Ireland

I just watched an Indian film in Limerick Odeon in Castletroy entitled "Chhaava"

In the theatre there were children as young as 3 and 4 years old.

I am just stunned and shocked because the film was adult in terms of severe scenes of stabbings beheadings throat cutting in mass battle scenes. There were multiple close ups of savage gruesome violence and mass murder. Severe blood and gore permeated the movie.

I was appalled to see children sitting beside me staring at this with double the usual volume. It was almost three hours long. As a former special needs teaching assistant I am truly shocked that in Ireland young children are being exposed to this kind of graphic violence.

It is unacceptable. I am aware of cultural differences and accept these as facts but in the interest of child safety I want to know why this movie was not censored and given an adult rating. How is this acceptable in Ireland or Europe for that matter.

Can you please explain why these children are being exposed to graphic violence in Ireland.

There was something really disturbing seeing a young child beside me in a cinema as they watched graphic adult violence.

This cannot be right and it not good for a child's minds to exposed like this in Ireland. We are supposed to protect children from bad parenting at least that's what I was brought up to believe and trained to expect when I worked in a school.

Please can you do something to certify adult movies so that no more children are exposed to graphic violence.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for getting in touch. I'm sorry to hear you had an upsetting experience at your cinema screening.

Chaavva was classified 15A by our classification team with the accompanying consumer advice published to the IFCO website: '*strong violence, threat and gory injury detail*'.

Films classified at this category have been deemed suitable for children of 15 and over. However, they can be viewed by younger children if accompanied by a parent or guardian who knows that child best. In such instances we strongly recommend that parent makes an informed decision by availing of the consumer advice on the IFCO website.

While it does not appear to have been the case in this instance, my experience is that parents appreciate having the ultimate call about what their child can view and take their responsibilities serious in this regard.

Thanks again for getting in touch. We genuinely appreciate all feedback from the public as it helps inform our decisions going forward.

7. Feedback

My husband and myself went to watch *The Brutalist* in the cinema last night. We didn't do any research as we felt it had been nominated for several Oscars so it must be good.

I can honestly say I feel my mind has been polluted by watching that film. It had a 16 rating which I feel is appalling. I am 52 years old and the extreme pornography I saw last night at that film was most certainly not suitable for me without my consent and an 18 rating on it.

I fear there is an assumption that 16 year olds have all been exposed to pornographical material by that age but this is not the case. If the film had been given an 18 rating I would have certainly been more cautious in researching it before I went.

Watching oral sex, masturbation, male rape, threesome sex to name but a few scenes is not what I would expect from a 16 rated film.

I know in your job you may become desensitised to pornographic scenes but we have got to do better than this as a society in protecting our youth and our adults. Please consider rating these films at a higher age so we may be more alert and aware and make conscious choices about whether we want to expose ourselves to this in films.

Thank you for considering the above.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for your email. We appreciate all public feedback we get to our classification decisions.

The Brutalist was classified 16 by our classification team with this accompanying consumer advice published to the IFCO website: *Strong sex and nudity. Frequent strong drug use. Depiction of sexual violence and reference to self-harm.*

As is clear from that advice there are certainly intense and challenging moments in the film. In particular, the scenes relating to sexual violence and drug addiction. According to IFCO's guidelines such content is acceptable at 16 provided it is not gratuitous or, in the case of drug use, glamourised.

Accordingly, our classifiers felt these scenes were contained at 16 rather than the adults only 18. It was also felt that these scenes were justified by context (in this case an exploration of the immigrant experience in the U.S. post WW2).

Thanks again for the email. I appreciate you may not agree with us in this instance but please be assured a great deal of consideration goes into each and every classification decision we make.

8. Feedback

I wish to register my complaint of a 16- age certification for the film Anora.

I am a former school principal and feel a duty of care is important here. I would like to err on the side of caution.

There is a crisis among young people today. They are expected to mature too early.

Not all young people mature at the same rate in my experience.

Research shows the teenage brain is still only developing till the mid--late twenties.

I am alarmed at the misogyny towards girls and women. This movie gives a false impression of prostitution. Human trafficking of girls and women is a serious issue here.

I believe we as adults need to promote wholesome values that protect the mental health and well-being of our teenagers. This film gives all the wrong messages. I am disappointed in this certification as I am generally happy in the main. I feel strongly about upholding a duty of care to the nation's future citizens for a healthy society.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for your considered email. We really appreciate feedback like yours as it can help inform our decisions going forward.

With regard to *Anora*, the film was classified by IFCO as 16, meaning only those of 16 and over can attend screenings. The 16 rating is one of the more restrictive ratings we can award (the 'adults only' 18 being the only stricter age band).

My own feeling was sex workers - and the titular character in particular - are not glamorised in the film rather they are humanised. The film-critic Roger Ebert once said that cinema is a machine for creating empathy. I'd hope that films that give representation to characters who exist at the edges of our societies, that seek to make them real rather than abstract ideas, can help combat the issues of misogyny and trafficking that you so rightly highlight.

Thanks again for getting in touch. I understand you might disagree with us in this instance but please be assured a great deal of consideration goes into every classification we award.

9. Feedback

I contacted the IFCO last year with questions regarding *The Substance's* classification and greatly appreciated the considered and personable response I received — something increasingly rare among classification boards, particularly the BBFC, whose communications have grown frustratingly opaque.

However, I am somewhat perplexed by your decision to rate Ali Abbasi's *The Apprentice* as 15A but Yorgos Lanthimos' *Kinds of Kindness* as 18, despite the former coming across as the more confronting film in the approach it takes to sexual violence in my view. In a recent interview, IFCO director Ciarán Kissane stated that assigning an 18 to films like *Anora*, *The Brutalist*, or *The Substance* would group them with titles such as *Saw* or *Thanksgiving*. This suggests the 18 rating is reserved for the most extreme content — a bar that *Kinds of Kindness* does not appear to meet. As typical of Yorgos Lanthimos, there is some disturbing and violent content in *Kinds of Kindness*, one particularly gruesome scene depicting a character cutting her thumb off with the subsequent implication of cannibalism, but this is infrequent, and the film overall is less disturbing than his 16-rated film *The Killing of a Sacred Deer*, which includes children bleeding from the eyes and the camera slowly zooming in on the body of a child who has been shot dead among other things.

The issues that resulted in the film getting a (similarly undeserving) 18 in the UK were its sex and sexual violence. The former is momentarily graphic as a man puts on a video involving him and several others engaged in group sex with thrusting and nudity, but this only lasts for several seconds, and is played for awkward comedy rather than eroticism, being equaled and perhaps surpassed in detail by many scenes in recent 16-rated films like *The Brutalist* and *Passages*. The scene of sexual violence is where *The Apprentice* comes in, as I think the scene in *Kinds of Kindness* is a much more restrained portrayal in comparison. The lead-up is unnerving as a woman's drink is drugged by her husband, but the assault itself is elliptical: all that is actually

seen is the assailant stroking the unconscious woman's legs, followed by a close-up of her head and shoulders moving in a manner that suggests thrusting. The Apprentice, on the other hand, features a much more brutal scene where Trump rapes his wife, which lasts for close to a minute where the scene in Kinds of Kindness is around twenty seconds, and features aggressive thrusting, an emphasis on the victim's pain and distress, and crude degrading comments made throughout the assault where Trump repeatedly asks if he's "f**king her G-spot".

I can see some contextual mitigation for The Apprentice in that Trump is one of the most powerful people in the world and the sexual abuse allegations about him are fairly well-known, but at the same time I do think a rape scene that violent (and possibly more unbidden in terms of its placement in the film than the one in Kinds of Kindness too) is a bit much for a 15A, given any age can attend with parental guidance, and should have been contained within the boundaries of the 16 rating instead. Both The Apprentice and Kinds of Kindness seem like films the 16 category was made for, which acknowledges potential shock or disturbance but acknowledges that older teenagers have the maturity to process material that may constructively challenge them, so them being two ratings apart is very confusing and difficult to reconcile for me.

This is only a small complaint though, given my general approval of this organisation as it exists now, thanks to the liberalisation process that has taken shape over the past few years and been sped up by the appointment of Kissane. The IFCO as a body, from my observations, seem much more answerable to past misjudgments they have made than the BBFC, an example being the suggestion in the past email I received that it would be possible that NOPE and Everything Everywhere All at Once might get a 15A now instead of the 16s they received. While I recognise classification is subjective and context-dependent, I hope the disparity between these two ratings may be reconsidered, either now or in future policy reflections. Thank you again for the openness your office has shown — it genuinely sets the IFCO apart.

IFCO Response

You make some fair points here in terms of the disparities of classification between *The Apprentice* and *Kinds of Kindness*. I must admit I haven't viewed *The Apprentice* myself but I understand from my colleagues that the mitigation here was related to audience foreknowledge of Donald Trump's story and the historical contexts present in the film.

I see how the 18 for *Kinds of Kindness* may look harsh by comparison. This was awarded for the very explicit (albeit brief) scene of group sex as well as the scene of sexual violence that occurs later. In my experience, direct comparison between titles can sometimes throw up seeming anomalies but I try to watch any film on its own merits when applying IFCO's classification guidelines.

Thanks for your email. The line between 15A, 16 and 18 is one we spend a lot of time debating at IFCO and you've provided some good food for thought here.

10. Complaint

I wish to make a complaint about the rating for a movie I saw this afternoon with my daughter. We went to see the movie 'Elio' which was rated 'G' and we had to leave midway through due to adult content, themes and serious violence and threat. I'm not sure how it managed to get such a rating but I would recommend revising it as it is damaging for children. PG would be more suitable and even still I can't believe the violence in an animated Disney movie meant for children.

I never make complaints and am a very liberal easy going parent but my daughter was so upset by what she saw I was compelled to send this mail.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for your email. We appreciate all feedback to our decisions, in particular from parents/guardians as it helps inform our decisions going forward.

I'm really sorry to hear that you and your daughter had an unpleasant experience at the screening of Elio. The film was rated as 'General' by IFCO with the accompanying consumer advice published to the IFCO website: "Mild sci-fi violence and threat. Bereavement theme and scenes of bullying."

As you can see, we noted some of the themes that could be potentially unsettling. Overall, we felt they were handled sensitively and ultimately fed into a story of resilience and bravery. There were also some scary scenes that we felt were mitigated by the sci-fi/fantasy nature of the story and were often broken up by moments of humour.

We recommend, even at General, that parents consult our website for more information as we're very conscious that not every child will respond in the same way to every scene, theme or image. I know you may disagree with us in this instance but please be assured a great deal of consideration goes into every age rating awarded.

11. Feedback

I brought my autistic son to the cinema in The Odeon in Mullingar today to see "Savages".

He was horrified when the mother monkey got shot and the baby watched it all. We had to leave abruptly as a result.

I cannot believe this film was rated as only PG? I was going to bring my 6 year old daughter but thankfully she didn't want to go.

It has taken us years to get *my son* used to the cinema environment with all his struggles so we must ensure his next experience is a positive one.

The manager was very understanding and gave us a refund for future viewing.

My son has come to love the cinema and we don't want that to change.

The reason I am getting in touch is to make you aware of this particular film is that it was rated as PG when it was clearly too upsetting for my son, let alone a young child.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for getting in touch. I'm really sorry to hear you and *your son* had a difficult experience at your cinema screening.

Savages was classified PG by our classification team with the accompanying consumer advice published to the IFCO website: *'Mild animated violence. Some scenes may frighten younger viewers'*.

A film classified as PG will generally be suitable for children of 8 and up but it goes without saying that each child is different and how they might respond to particular themes, scenes and imagery can vary hugely from child to child. We recommend that parents avail of the advice on the IFCO website concerning each cinema release so they can gather as much information as possible before deciding on a film's suitability.

I hope the experience hasn't put *your son* off the movies too much and that he continues to enjoy his trips to the cinema.

Thanks again for getting in touch. We genuinely appreciate all feedback from parents as it helps inform our decisions going forward.

12. Feedback

I would like to express my concern that some Disney movies rated by Disney as 6 plus are rated by you as G.

As a result they are making there was into crèches and childcare facilities and deemed safe for children age 5 to be shown.

My daughter was subjected to Tangled recently and could not sleep as she kept seeing the witch and violence and was very upset.

I would like to know why you are your ratings so low and G rather than PG at least?

IFCO Response

I'm really sorry to hear that your daughter had an unpleasant experience viewing Tangled. The film was rated as 'General' by IFCO in 2011 with the accompanying consumer advice published to the IFCO website noted that there were some scary scenes. We felt they were mitigated by the fantasy nature of the story and were often broken up by moments of humour.

We recommend, even at General, that parents/guardians consult our website for more information as we're very conscious that not every child will respond in the same way to every scene, theme or image. I know you may disagree with us in this instance but please be assured a great deal of consideration goes into every age rating awarded.

IFCO is responsible for rating theatrical content and home entertainment content that is sold in shops in Ireland. Streaming services such as Disney plus are not under IFCO's remit. For information on the relevant regulator for Disney Plus in Ireland I suggest you contact Coimisiún na Meán – www.cnam.ie

The IFCO Home Entertainment categories are set out in legislation. Disney plus appear to operate three categories for under 12's (0+ 6+ and 9+) in Ireland. IFCO has two G and PG. Our approach to making content decisions is set out in our Guidelines. More information is available at <https://www.ifco.ie/en/ifco/pages/guidelines>

13. Feedback

Yesterday, my husband and I went to the cinema to watch a newly released film called *Materialists*.

We were both utterly dismayed and upset to see scenes involving entirely unnecessary cigarette smoking. The inclusion of such scenes did little or nothing to develop the plot or characters involved, and their presence jarred the rest of the film for us.

We are noticing more and more scenes glamorising cigarette smoking creeping in to movies and streaming platform productions, and it is both upsetting and unnecessary.

Is there any way the IFCO can consider adding a classification to movies - that will state where cigarette smoking will be shown? I am certain that if such a classification existed, and the allocation of it to a film lead to reduced viewing figures, film producers and directors might consider more carefully whether including scenes of such a devastating hobby were in fact necessary to their production, and leave them out entirely.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for getting in touch. We appreciate all correspondence from the public on classification issues as it can help us determine ratings decisions going forward.

In terms of cigarette smoking in movies, our guidelines treat this in much the same way we treat scenes relating to the consumption of alcohol. Where such scenes occur involving minors, in particular where glamorised, they will be a strong determining factor in the age rating awarded and will feature in the consumer advice. Where there's incidental cigarette smoking by adults, as in the case of *Materialists*, it may be noted, but will not usually determine the rating.

It can be noted that *Materialists* was rated 15A (suitable for those of 15 and over) so an impressionable younger audience would not be in attendance.

I hope that helps clarify our position and it will be something we continue to monitor going forward.

14. Feedback

I wanted to enquire about a classification for *Bad Guys 2* which is a kids animation film in cinemas at the moment. It's rated G but the level of fighting/violence, in some cases with knives, is not, in my opinion, suitable for younger kids.

I went with my 5 year old on the basis it was G but found it very unsuitable for that age given they are learning to deal with emotions. Learning that punching and hitting is inappropriate is not helped with animations like this which should be for older kids.

In the US it's actually PG rated I learnt when I went to double check the rating. I honestly thought it had to be an error by the cinema.

I have never felt compelled to write such an email but I am in slight disbelief that this could be rated G.

I await your response please.

IFCO Response

Many thanks for the email. We appreciate all feedback to our decisions, in particular from parents/guardians, as it helps inform our decisions going forward.

I'm sorry to hear that you and your child had an unpleasant experience at the screening of Bad Guys 2. The film was rated as 'General' by IFCO with the accompanying consumer advice published to the IFCO website: "Mild violence and threat with some scenes that might frighten very young viewers. Rude humour."

As you can see, we noted that there were some scary scenes, but we felt were mitigated by the generally light-hearted nature of the story and were often broken up by moments of humour.

We recommend, even at General, that parents consult our website for more information as we're very conscious that not every child will respond in the same way to every scene, theme, or image. I know you may disagree with us in this instance but please be assured a great deal of consideration goes into every age rating we award.