



Information sheet for students

This information page is designed to provide students with extra information about the Classification Board and the Classification Review Board and the National Classification Scheme. It also indicates where students may be able to access further information about classification that is relevant to their studies.

This information page should be read alongside information available on the Department of Communications and the Arts' website at www.communications.gov.au and the website for the Classification Board and Classification Review Board at www.classification.gov.au.

What are the differences between the Classification Board and the Classification Review Board?

The Classification Board (the Board) is a full-time body based in Sydney. The Board decides the classification of films, computer games and certain publications. The Board also determines the consumer advice that appears on films, computer games and certain publications.

The Classification Review Board (the Review Board) is separate and independent from the Classification Board. The Review Board has different members to the Classification Board.

The Review Board is a part-time body and its members come together from around Australia to review and make a fresh classification decision of a film, publication or computer game. A review will occur if the Review Board receives an application from an eligible person (usually the person who applied for the original decision).

The Governor-General appoints the members of the Board and the Review Board.

What do both Boards take into account when they make decisions?

Both the Board and Review Board apply the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995*, the National Classification Code, the Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Computer Games or the Guidelines for the Classification of Publications.

The Commonwealth Classification Act sets out certain matters that are to be taken into account including:

- (a) the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by reasonable adults
- (b) the literary, artistic or educational merit (if any) of the publication, film or computer game
- (c) the general character of the publication, film or computer game, including whether it is of medical, legal or scientific character, and
- (d) the persons, or class of persons, to or amongst whom it is published or is intended or likely to be published.

The National Classification Code provides that classification decisions are to give effect, as far as possible, to the following principles:

- (a) adults should be able to read, hear and see what they want



- (b) minors should be protected from material likely to harm or disturb them
- (c) everyone should be protected from exposure to unsolicited material that they find offensive, and
- (d) the need to take account of community concerns about:
 - (i) depictions that condone or incite violence, particularly sexual violence, and
 - (ii) the portrayal of a person in a demeaning manner.

Is the Classification Board responsible for the content of TV, the internet or recorded music?

The Board does not generally classify television, the internet or recorded music.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) is the authority responsible for the regulation of free-to-air radio and television, pay TV, digital broadcasting and internet content in Australia.

If you have a complaint about the content on television you should contact the station directly.

Recorded music is monitored by the Australian Record Industry Association (ARIA). Warning stickers are attached to material with strong lyrics.

Does the Classification Board ever require edits of material submitted for classification?

No. The Board does not require edits of any of the films, computer games and publications submitted. Films, computer games and publications are classified in the form in which the applicant submits them.

What other information is on this web site that may interest me?

The Annual Report contains a range of detailed information about both of the Boards, legislation and classification statistics. The classification statistics may be helpful to students. They include information about public exhibition films (those released to cinemas), sale/hire films (those released on video and DVD), computer games and publications.

The statistical information in the Annual Report can give you a breakdown of the work of the Board and Review Board.

Legislation that is relevant to the Board and Review Board is also available via links on www.communications.gov.au or www.classification.gov.au. This legislative framework is applied by the Board and Review Board when they make decisions.

Research that was undertaken may be accessed at www.ag.gov.au. The research relates to the operation of the National Classification Scheme and other classification issues that impact upon the work of the Board and the Review Board, and the way classification information is used by consumers and industry.

You can also find out about the classification of a particular film, publication or computer game by searching on the classification database at www.classification.gov.au. The database allows you to search for a film, publication or computer game by Title/Name, Director/Author, Producer/Publisher, Date Range and Country.