



HANDBOOK FOR CODERS & CONTACTS

LAST UPDATED JUNE 2008

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PAN-EUROPEAN GAME INFORMATION

1. INTRODUCTION

The PEGI system of voluntary self-regulation has been designed to provide the public (particularly parents) across Europe with an indication of the age ranges for which a game is suitable and the age ranges for which a game is not suitable. It also enables staff in games shops to be more helpful to customers when asked whether a game is suitable for a child or young teenager of a particular age.

It should be emphasised that the voluntary age-ratings given under the system relate to the content of the product and its viewing suitability, not its playability or difficulty.



The PEGI system belongs to the Interactive Software Federation of Europe (ISFE) which is based in Belgium. ISFE have contracted the administration of the system to the Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audiovisual Media (NICAM) which is based in Holland. The Video Standards Council (VSC) is acting as NICAM's agent in the UK, and serves as a help desk for UK based PEGI coders.

At its take off, the PEGI system replaced former national rating bodies, such as the ELSPA system in the UK and the SELL system in France and it currently applies to all the countries in the EU, as mentioned below (the major exception is Germany where a mandatory national system applies: USK). There are some over-stickering requirements for Portugal in order to comply with national laws applicable in this country. As of January 1st 2007, Finland, that used to have slightly different age categories as well, will use *all* of the standard PEGI age categories.

Austria	France	Iceland	Norway	Portugal
Czech R.	Cyprus	Latvia	Slovak R.	Luxembourg
Finland	Estonia	Malta	Sweden	United Kingdom
Hungary	Greece	Ireland	Poland	Romania (soon)
Belgium	Italy	Lithuania	Slovenia	Bulgaria (soon)
Denmark	Spain	Netherlands	Switzerland	

The PEGI system is also designed to assist games publishers to reach a decision as to whether a game has lost the general exemption from legal classification under UK / Irish law and must be submitted to the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) and the Irish Film Censors Office for legal classification before it can be sold in the UK and Ireland.

It is very important to establish whether a game needs to be legally classified for the UK and Ireland as the criminal law penalties for getting it wrong are serious for games publishers or retailers. For a summary of the UK legal position please see the "Law page" of the VSC web site at: www.videostandards.org.uk. A copy of this summary is available from the VSC.

2. THE ONLINE RATING SYSTEM

2.1 Games publishers licences

Any games publisher wishing to use the PEGI system must obtain an ISFE licence before registering any game. Registration with ISFE as a participant of the PEGI system is free of charge. Please contact NICAM in this respect, at deboer@nicam.cc. NICAM will supply you with all the necessary documents to start using the PEGI system, among other things an Agreement (+ Annexes) which should be signed and sent to ISFE in duplicate (by regular post), as well a coder registration form which should be used to register a company's official PEGI coders with NICAM.

2.2 Registered coders

Once any games publisher has obtained a licence from ISFE to use the PEGI system, the games publisher must ensure that all personnel responsible for rating games are registered with NICAM as 'registered coders'. All registered coders will be given a unique access code to enable them to use the on-line registration site. Games may not be rated by anyone who is not a registered coder, i.e. it is not allowed to use someone else's access code. The games publisher can register its coder/s by e-mailing the completed coder registration form (part of the initial 'start up package') to NICAM at deboer@nicam.cc. Each coder will be sent his personal login to the rating site in an automated e-mail, at his personal e-mail address.

Each publisher should appoint one PEGI Contact Person (within very large companies multiple Contact Persons can be appointed), who coordinates all PEGI activities within the company and can serve as the first person to turn to in case of difficulties, both for the PEGI Administration as for all the company's coders. Publishers must cancel a coder's PEGI account by contacting NICAM, in case this person is leaving the company.

2.3 Self-assessment form

The system uses a self-assessment form which must be completed in order to obtain an age-rating. The form sets out a series of questions with 'Yes/No' answers. The most recent form is set out in [Appendix 2](#) (page 14). The PEGI system is a flexible system which means the questionnaire is subjected to change if new developments call for this. Games publishers will be informed about changes to the questionnaire by regular email newsletters.

All self-assessment forms must be completed by way of an on-line registration site operated by NICAM. The URL of the PEGI rating site is: <https://rating.pegi.info>. The self-assessment form may not be submitted by way of post, fax or e-mail. The on-line self-assessment forms can only be completed by 'registered coders' working for games publishers who have been licensed by ISFE to use the system.

• The 'Add game' section

In order to enter a game into the system coders first have to complete the 'Add Game' section and fill out the details requested, which among other things include title, platform, and a selection of countries in which the final PEGI license is to be valid.

In the Add Game section a PEGI coder is asked to pay special attention to the information listed in the highlighted text boxes:

* One of these boxes warns the coder about the fact that at the expiration of the registered release date, the rating will automatically be transferred to the public PEGI database where it can be looked up by consumers. Should the release date change after initial registration,

coders are asked to update the registered release date accordingly, in the Edit Game section on the website.

* Another box reminds the coder that it is of great importance to have personally seen *all material* that will be included in the final product. If a coder has not viewed all of the relevant material, progress so far can be saved and the entry will remain on the system. The coder can return to this submission at any time after all the materials have been viewed and assessed.

* Also, publishers are reminded that it is their responsibility to establish whether film or video footage that is not part of the game are required to be submitted to any rating authority in any country for which a PEGI rating is being applied for.

Once all product details have been filled out, the coder is asked to check all registered details once more, on a separate page. If all information is listed correctly, the application can be added by either clicking on the 'Save' or the 'Rate' button:

- 'Save': product details will be saved in the database, but the coder does not yet wish to complete the questionnaire at this stage.
- 'Rate': product details will be saved and the coder is immediately transferred to the PEGI questionnaire to proceed with the actual rating process.

• The 'Rate Game' section

The coder can proceed to the 'Rate Game' section, where he will have to complete the PEGI questionnaire, by answering the series of questions with Yes/No answers.

It should also be noted that if for example a publisher intends to release a game on four platforms (PC, PlayStation 2, X-Box and Gamecube) he will need to enter the game four times and complete 'RATE GAME' section for each individual platform. In such a case the ADD GAME section will only have to be completed once. The additional platforms will have to be submitted with use of the **Cloning Function** in the Edit Game section, thus copying all product details of the first submission. Some product details will have to be changed for the additional submission(s) such as the platform. A rating will *not* qualify for the reduced Additional Platform fee unless the Cloning option has been used.

Note that the different product categories and rate track options are related to specific rating fees. For the exact definitions of the different categories /options and the related fee information, please see Appendix 1: 'Fees & Payment' (page 12).

The questionnaire: UK / Irish Law – BBFC / IFCO

The first set of 15 questions has been designed to establish whether a game is exempt from legal classification in the UK and Ireland. A 'Yes' answer to any of these questions will mean that the PEGI system cannot (automatically) apply to the game in the UK / Ireland and it will have to be legally classified by the BBFC / IFCO before it can be legally supplied in the UK / Ireland. The criminal law penalties for getting this wrong are serious for the game publisher and retailers.

Please note that **all games and demo discs rated PEGI 18+** must be submitted to the BBFC if a publisher wishes to release the game in the UK even if the game or demo has not lost exemption under UK law. In such a case the 18+ PEGI rating can still be used in all the remaining European countries that have been included in the PEGI license.

The game should be submitted to the BBFC together with a BBFC submission form. This form can be obtained from the BBFC web site at www.bbfc.co.uk. The BBFC will not commence work on a legal classification until they have received the classification fee and that it can take 2/3 weeks for the classification to be finalised. The legal classification submission must be carried out by the game publisher itself (the VSC is not permitted to do it on behalf of the game publisher), although the VSC will be pleased to offer all guidance and help. Once a game has been legally classified, the disc and the packaging must comply with the legally required packaging regulations. Separate artwork will be needed for the game (disc and packaging) as it is supplied in the UK.

Notwithstanding that a game has to be legally classified for the UK, it can be rated under the PEGI system for all the other participating countries. Such games will need to carry the words 'Not for Supply in the UK' next to the PEGI age logo and descriptor on the back of the packaging. The PEGI logo and BBFC classification must not appear together on the same packaging. For a full explanation of the UK legal situation and to know when a game has lost exemption under UK law, please visit the 'LAW' page of the VSC web site at: www.videostandards.org.uk.

The IFCO position is that they will require to examine any game that has lost exemption under UK and Irish law prior to its release in Ireland. As soon as it turns out that, based on the yes-answers to the PEGI questionnaire, a game requires legal classification by the IFCO prior to its release in Ireland, application forms can be obtained from the IFCO website: info@ifco.gov.ie.

The cost of an IFCO examination are €2,500. This amount should be paid in advance and the turnaround time is approx 3-4 weeks from receipt of funds and application form together with various components.

If the IFCO approve the game, they will accept the use of the PEGI rating in Ireland (as well as the use of the PEGI age logo and descriptors). The IFCO will not insist on the use of Irish classification symbols, therefore there will be no need for special packaging for Ireland. If the IFCO do not approve the game then the game is effectively banned in Ireland.

PEGI rating

The remaining questions (16 – 48) are designed to establish what age rating a game will be given under the PEGI system. For all questions there is a help page which can be viewed by moving one's cursor over the icon to the right of the question. The help pages will be amended from time to time to deal with new questions or issues that may arise.

After completion of all the questions two options will be offered. A coder may 'Save' the rating, and by doing so he retains the ability to change the way the questionnaire has been completed. Also, he may 'Submit' the rating, at which point he no longer has the ability to make any changes.

Unless a rating has been **Submitted**, it will not be processed by the managers of the PEGI system, which means that the payment and approval process for this rating will not be started up.

As soon as a rating has been Submitted, the system will issue an automatic invoice by e-mail. In case the requested rating is a 16+ or 18+, the coder will receive an email from the VSC with respect to the material required for pre-examination.

In case changes to a submission are required after the rating has been 'Submitted', this will have to be done by NICAM, except for changes to the game's release date. This is

something a coder can still change himself, since the release date will often change after the rating has first been submitted on-line. Coders are strongly asked to do so should this be the case, as the release date registered in the system is also the date on which the rating information becomes publicly visible on the PEGI.info website.

If a false or a double rating has been submitted by mistake, NICAM should be contacted as well, in order for the rating to be removed from the system. This way the PEGI database remains free from any false ratings.

Once answers have been completed for the questions de coder will be given the confirmation that he has successfully completed the PEGI questionnaire. The coder will be informed about the exact PEGI age rating and content indicator(s) as soon as the requested rating has been approved by either the VSC (16+/18+) or NICAM (3+/7+/12+), and necessary payment has been transferred to ISFE. The final awarded PEGI rating will be communicated to the coder in question in the official PEGI licence, that is issued by e-mail as soon as all conditions have been met by the publisher. The automated confirmation e-mail qualifies as the official PEGI licence.

Sub-licensing procedure:

Under the PEGI system a particular game on a particular platform can only be awarded a PEGI license for the same country once. In case a games publisher is planning to release a game which has previously been rated with PEGI by another publisher, it is not possible to rate it again. It is a publisher's responsibility to check whether this is the case. If a license already exists, the new publisher can use the PEGI rating preciously awarded to the original publisher, but only after a sublicensing procedure has been completed. For assistance on the sub-licensing procedure please contact the PEGI helpdesk at maud@nicam.cc.

NOTE: Please record your PEGI registration number/s for invoicing and payment purposes.

Furthermore, the VSC is available to give advice and assistance particularly to UK based games publishers. Games publishers outside the UK should contact NICAM in this respect. Naturally, UK based publishers are welcome to contact the central PEGI help desk at NICAM as well. Contact details for both organisations are listed in this Handbook: Useful names & addresses, page 11.

3. THE AGE-RATINGS

The answers to the questions appearing in the self-assessment form will dictate the age rating given under the PEGI system. Under the PEGI system there are five age-rating levels:



The PEGI questionnaire starts off with the questions in the higher ages categories and works its way down from 18+ to 3+. The questionnaire has been designed in such a way that the rating process is completed as soon as one or more question in a certain age category have

been answered with 'yes'. This means that the questions in the lower ages categories will no longer have to be answered. The yes answers in the highest age category therefore determine the final age rating that is submitted to the PEGI Administration.

3.1 Over-stickering for Portugal

In order to comply with the current national laws of Portugal:

- The 3+ PEGI rating will need to be over-stickered with a 4+
- The 7+ PEGI rating will need to be over-stickered with a 6+.

3.2 The use of content descriptors

The age-rating logos shown above will indicate the age-range for which a game is suitable. One or more content descriptors will be used in conjunction with the age-rating logos to indicate the main reason/s why a game is given a particular age rating.

The use of content descriptors will provide additional information to customers (particularly parents) to enable them to come to an informed decision. The descriptors also serve a useful purpose on a pan-European basis where there are differing views on levels of acceptability particularly on the matter of bad language and to an extent on matters of sex and nudity.

Each age-rating logo as it appears on packaging will be accompanied by a descriptor/s indicating the main reason/s why the game was given the age-rating, i.e. violence, bad language, fear, drugs /alcohol, discrimination, gambling and sex (the only exception being the 3+ age logo, which comes without an accompanying content descriptor):



The final licence delivered by the PEGI system will not only specify the age-rating but will also specify the content descriptor/s that must be used in conjunction with the age-rating.

Important note:

It is absolutely not allowed to start printing any PEGI age rating logos or content descriptors on game packaging until the official license specifying the awarded rating has been received by the coder.

3.3 Age-rating logos /descriptor size & positioning

Separate Guidelines giving details in this respect can be downloaded from the opening page of the PEGI rating website (<https://rating.pegi.info>) or, if the company is yet to complete registration with ISFE, from the Professionals section of this same website, designed for aspirant members. The PEGI Guidelines contain information on authorized and unauthorized logo arrangement, as well as information on product labelling and advertising & promotion. Additional platform-specific Guidelines on logo placement can be obtained through the different platform holders.

Graphics for the age-rating logos and content descriptors are once again available from the opening page of the PEGI rating website, in print quality. The set of logos is available in a light and dark version, depending on the colour or the game's inlay, and does also include the Portugal -specific age categories.

4. VSC / NICAM EXAMINATION

4.1 Pre-examination by the VSC

NICAM will not permit any game to be rated 16+ or 18+ on the on-line registration site without the game being pre-examined by the VSC. To enable such games to be examined by the VSC, materials as requested have to be provided by the games publishers to the VSC. Once the VSC has confirmed to NICAM that the rating requested is in order and that it considers that the game is exempt from legal classification in the UK, NICAM will issue a licence for the awarded age rating, provided that necessary payment has been transferred to ISFE.

This examination is carried out by the VSC in advance and any delay in providing the requested materials will delay the rating confirmation. The time period for rating examination (standard: 10 days, fast track 5 days) does not begin until such materials are received. The materials that the VSC may request will vary but may include such things as screen-shots, video footage, on-line demos or game code.

If the VSC advises that it considers that a game has lost exemption from legal classification in the UK, the game should nevertheless be rated under the PEGI system for all participating countries except the UK. In such circumstances the VSC will advise games publishers concerned as to what they need to do to apply for legal classification by the BBFC to enable the game to be supplied in the UK.

This examination by the VSC of games applying for a 16+ or 18+ rating is important as a mistake at these levels can be serious and put the games publisher and UK games retailers at risk of prosecution. The penalties for breach of the UK law can be substantial.

4.2.1 Pre-examination by NICAM

Under the PEGI system, NICAM will pre-examine all games for which a 12+ rating has been requested by the publisher. To enable such games to be examined by NICAM, materials as requested have to be provided by the games publishers to NICAM. Once NICAM has established that the 12+ rating requested is in order, NICAM will issue a licence for the awarded age rating, provided that necessary payment has been transferred to ISFE.

This examination is carried out by NICAM in advance and any delay in providing the requested materials will delay the rating confirmation. The time period for rating examination (standard: 10 days, fast track 5 days) does not begin until such materials are received. The materials that NICAM may request will vary but may include such things as screen-shots, video footage, on-line demos or game code.

Materials have to be sent to the attention of “**NICAM – Pre-screening Department**”

Please note that in case there is any doubt after NICAM's examination that the game might belong in the 16+ / 18+ category, new materials will have to be submitted to the VSC and the examination period will start to run from scratch.

4.2.2 Retrospective examination by NICAM

NICAM will also carry out a retrospective random check of games rated 3+ and 7+. These additional requirements have been added to give even greater European credibility to the overall PEGI system. Since NICAM would like to start its retrospective checking of all these

games as soon as possible, publishers are urged to provide NICAM with a sample of all 3+, 7+ and 12+ rated games as soon as they become available, but no later than ten days after the registered release date.

Should testers at NICAM find during retrospective examination that a game awarded a 3+/7+ rating actually warrants a different rating, the PEGI Administration will contact the publisher in question to discuss a suitable solution. The rating in the database will be changed to the correct one and the publisher is requested to adjust the rating on the packaging for the next re-print. In case NICAM and the publisher cannot reach a satisfying solution a Complaints Board will be convened to take the final decision.

4.3 Complaints procedure

Under the PEGI system all consumers have the option to submit a complaint concerning a game's PEGI rating through PEGI's public website: www.pegi.info. Consumers all receive a reply from the PEGI Administration in their own native language. If, based on the complaint, the PEGI Administration feels there is sufficient reason to question the age rating applied for by the publisher, it will thoroughly examine the game in question. Should the outcome be that the awarded age rating indeed appears to be incorrect, the same procedure will be applied as described above, under 'retrospective examination by NICAM'. In case this is not a satisfying solution to either the consumer or indeed the publisher, the complaint will be brought in front of an independent Complaints Board consisting of three experts. The Complaints Board has the possibility to impose a variety of sanctions, as specified in the PEGI Code of Conduct.

5. ARCHIVE LIBRARY

ISFE have required NICAM to establish an archive library of all finished products rated under the PEGI system and it will therefore be a condition of using the system for games publishers to provide NICAM with a finished copy of every game rated under PEGI within *ten working days of the game's release date*. Where a game has been rated for multi-platform use, a finished copy on each platform must be provided. The retail copy that a publisher sends to NICAM should be in English and contain the PEGI logos on the packaging, if such copy exists. If not, then the first alternative would be a French copy of the game; if this version doesn't exist either, then a German version should be provided.

Online / downloadable games

With the number of online / downloadable games growing rapidly, it might not always be possible to provide NICAM with a physical copy of the product. Although not actually a retail copy, NICAM will ask whenever possible to provide games on disc. Should this be technically impossible, please contact the NICAM office to discuss other options of keeping evidence of the product in the NICAM archive.

6. USEFUL NAMES & ADDRESSES

ISFE

15 rue Guimard
B-1040 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: +32 (0)2 513 8816
Fax: +32 (0)2 502 7462
E-mail: info@isfe.eu
Web: www.isfe-eu.org

If you have questions concerning financial aspects of the system (invoices, account), please contact:

- Martine Vandamme: martine.vandamme@isfe.eu
Tel: +32 25 13 88 16

If you have questions relating to the display of the PEGI age rating and/ or content descriptors icons, please contact:

- Jürgen Bänsch: juergen.baensch@isfe.eu
Tel: +32 25 03 50 28

NICAM

PO BOX 322
1200 AH Hilversum
The Netherlands
Street address:
Mediapark
Mediacentrum, 3rd floor, room 328
Sumatralaan 45
1217 GP Hilversum
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 (0)35 646 08 60
Fax: +31 (0)35 646 08 68
E-mail: info@nicam.cc

If you have questions about sending in archive copies, registering /cancelling coder accounts, other administrative queries, please contact:

Sandra de Boer: deboer@nicam.cc

For *all* other PEGI related questions, please contact:

Maud Stevens: maud@nicam.cc

VSC

Kinetic Business Centre
Theobald Street
Borehamwood
Herts WD6 4PJ
UK
Tel: +44 (0) 208 387 4020
Fax: +44 (0) 208 387 4004
E-mail: vsc@videostandards.org.uk (to the attention of Laurie Hall / Peter Darby)
Web: www.videostandards.org.uk

APPENDIX 1: FEES & PAYMENT

1.1 Fees

ISFE will not permit NICAM to confirm any rating under the PEGI system until ISFE have received payment for such rating. Games publishers may wish to consider contacting ISFE with a view to establishing a monetary deposit with ISFE, which may be 'topped up' from time to time so as to avoid any delays arising from payment procedures. In such case, the invoices will be automatically deducted from your deposit, and your ratings will be processed as soon as they have been "Submitted" on the rating website (and approved by either NICAM or the VSC). You may transfer the amount of your choice to your ISFE account and you will receive statements of your account on a regular basis.

Regarding a monetary deposit or any other financial / invoicing matter publishers can contact Martine Vandamme at ISFE: martine.vandamme@isfeurope.org

Product category / rate track

Two factors that influence the price of an age rating submitted on the rating site are Product Category and Rate Track. The following definitions apply:

- *Product Category*
 - *New Game*: a game that has never been rated under the PEGI system before.
 - *Additional Platform*: a game that has already been rated under PEGI as a New Game on one platform, and which is then rated on another platform.
 - *Local Product*: where a rating is requested for a limited number of countries. The maximum number of countries is four. If the group of selected countries includes either the UK or France, the local product category does not apply.

- *Rate Track*
 - *Fast Track*: a games publisher is guaranteed the approval of a rating within 5 working days of submitting a rating request for a 12+, 16+ or 18+. The normal period is 10 working days. The rating approval period will start after the materials required for examination have been received by the VSC / NICAM. The final licence will not be awarded until necessary payment has been transferred to ISFE.
 - *Normal Rate Track*: applies first of all to all 3+/7+ ratings, which are being processed within a standard period of three working days after payment has been transferred to ISFE. Requested 12+, 16+ and 18+ ratings for which the normal rate track has been selected are being processed within 10 days after all conditions have been met by the publisher.

Under the PEGI system the fee schedule is as follows:

Product	Standard Fee	Fast Track Fee
New Game	€1000	€1500
Additional Platform	€500	€750
Local Product	€100	€150

Examples:

Some examples of how the PEGI fees will be applied:

- If a game is rated as a New Game for PlayStation 2 and is then rated for X-Box and Gamecube (additional platforms) the fee is:

$$\text{€1000} + \text{€500} + \text{€500} = \text{€2000}$$

- If a game is rated as a New Game for PlayStation 2 but only for Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland the fee is € 100 (Local Product). If the same game is then rated for the same limited number of countries for X-Box and Gamecube the total fee is:

$$\text{€100} + \text{€100} + \text{€100} = \text{€300}$$

Please note:

- So called 'sequels', 'prequels' and 'add-ons' will be treated as 'New games'.
- Any game which can be played on MAC as well as PC will be treated as one platform.
- If a game is released in different language versions this qualifies as *one* New Game (fee € 1000) regardless of the number of languages selected .

1.2 Payment

As soon as a coder 'Submits' a rating to PEGI (see: page 6), the online rating system will issue an automatic invoice to his/her organization by e-mail. The official PEGI licence will not be awarded until the invoice has been fully paid to ISFE. Payment to ISFE should be made by bank transfer.

ISFE's bank details are as follows:

ISFE 15 rue Guimard B-1040 Brussels Belgium	Bank ING Banque Place du Champ de Mars, 2 1050, Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 (0)2 513 88 16 Fax: +32 (0)2 502 74 62 E-Mail: info@isfeurope.org	Account number: 630-0133613-06 BIC : BBRUBEBB IBAN: BE85 6300 1336 1306

APPENDIX 2:

PEGI QUESTIONNAIRE

(Applicable as of 07.2007)

Rating	No.	Question	Help
		Does the game contain:	
BBFC IFCO	1	Moving images that depict human sexual activity	This means all aspects of human sexual intercourse, masturbation and sexual foreplay (homosexual and lesbian activity included). Male or female sexual organs need not be visible. It is unlikely that an innocent peck on the cheek or friendly embrace constitutes sexual activity unless something more extreme is shown (eg. a couple copulating). Once any scene that depicts a friendly relationship begins to have sexual overtones err on the side of caution in answering this question.
BBFC IFCO	2	Moving images that depict acts of force or restraint associated with human sexual activity	This means that there is a degree or element of enforced sexual activity (non-consenting) although the level of sexual activity (and degree of detail shown) need not necessarily be as extreme as in Question 1.
BBFC IFCO	3	Moving images that depict mutilation or torture of human-like or animal-like characters	This means a character that looks like a human or animal. If it looks human it should be treated as being human even if it is unrealistic. (eg. if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human). The mutilation or torture will need to be horrific and fairly detailed and will very often be associated with large amounts of blood or gore.
BBFC IFCO	4	Moving images that depict other acts of gross violence towards human-like or animal-like characters	This means a character that looks like a human or animal. If it looks human it should be treated as being human even if it is unrealistic. (eg. if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human). Gross violence will mean horrific, brutal or repulsive depictions of death, injury, dismemberment or torture and other methods of bringing severe pain or injury to the recipient. The images will be 'disgusting' or 'stomach churning' and have a capacity to sicken. They will usually be associated with large amounts of blood or gore.
BBFC IFCO	5	Moving images that depict human genital organs	This means the male penis and the female labia and vagina. It does not include 'bums and boobs' or pubic hair.
BBFC IFCO	6	Moving images that depict human urinary or excretory functions	The meaning is self-explanatory and applies to male or female.
BBFC IFCO	7	Moving images that depict techniques likely to be useful in the commission of offences	The descriptions have to show how the offences can be carried out. For example an instruction manual showing how to make a molotov cocktail or bomb would be included under this question as would details of the implements needed to break into a car and how to use them.
BBFC IFCO	8	Moving images of any kind that are likely to any extent to stimulate or encourage human sexual activity	A game likely to stimulate or encourage human sexual activity will probably show human sexual activity resulting in a 'yes' answer to Question 1. Beyond this it should be remembered that stimulation or encouragement can be achieved by the use of words as well as pictures. The game must induce some feeling of wanting to indulge in sexual activity.

			The images will be sexually provocative or titillating (eg.strip tease)
BBFC IFCO	9	Moving images of any kind that are likely to any extent to stimulate or encourage acts of force or restraint associated with human sexual activity	A game likely to stimulate or encourage acts of force or restraint associated with human sexual activity will probably show such acts resulting in a 'yes' answer to Question 2. Beyond this it should be remembered that stimulation or encouragement can be achieved by the use of words as well as pictures. The game must induce some feeling of wanting to indulge in such acts.
BBFC IFCO	10	Moving images of any kind that are likely to any extent to stimulate or encourage mutilation or torture of human-like or animal-like characters	A game likely to stimulate or encourage such mutilation or torture will probably show such acts resulting in a 'yes' answer to Question 3 or 4. Beyond this it should be remembered that stimulation or encouragement can be achieved by the use of words as well as pictures. The game must induce some feeling of wanting to indulge in such acts.
BBFC IFCO	11	Moving images of any kind that are likely to any extent to stimulate or encourage other acts of gross violence	A game likely to stimulate or encourage such mutilation or torture will probably show such acts resulting in a 'yes' answer to Question 3 or 4. Beyond this it should be remembered that stimulation or encouragement can be achieved by the use of words as well as pictures. The game will call for involvement in torture or mutilation in ways which make the player take pleasure in the prospect of treating real-life humans or animals in the same way and will induce some feeling of wanting to indulge in such acts.
BBFC IFCO	12	Moving images of any kind that are likely to any extent to stimulate or encourage the commission of offences	A game likely to stimulate or encourage the commission of offences will probably show such acts resulting in a 'yes' answer to Question 7. Beyond this it should be remembered that stimulation or encouragement can be achieved by the use of words as well as pictures. The game must induce some feeling of wanting to indulge in such acts.
BBFC IFCO	13	Does the game contain film footage that is not a genuine and relevant part of the game	The use of film footage as a scene setting introduction, an explanatory link between different levels of the game and as an explanatory conclusion to the game will not warrant a 'yes' answer to this question 13. If the film footage does not fulfil any of these functions or is unrelated to the story line of the game or if the game is being used as a pretext for the showing of all or a substantial part of a film a 'yes' answer should be given to this question13.
BBFC IFCO	14	Will the retail version of the game include items that are not part of the game	This will include feature film trailers, film footage that is not a genuine and relevant part of the game, trailers and advertisements, interviews and reviews.
BBFC IFCO	15	Has the game been submitted, or is it intended to submit the game to the BBFC or IFCO for legal classification in the UK and Ireland?	This is to cover those occasions where the publisher has decided to submit a game to the BBFC and the Irish Film Censors Office prior to rating under the PEGI system or where the game has already been legally classified by the BBFC or IFCO.
		Does the game contain:	
18+	16	Depictions of gross violence, which includes torture, dismemberment, sadism and horrific depictions of death or injury towards human-like or animal-like characters	Gross violence will mean depictions of decapitation, dismemberment or torture and other horrific methods of bringing death, severe pain or injury to the recipient. This will usually be associated with large amounts of blood or gore. The emphasis is on the horrific nature of the violence. The violence will not be treated as gross violence if the recipients die or are injured in an unrealistic manner. If they instantly disappear in a puff of smoke or are killed/injured and then come back to life or appear uninjured this will not be treated as gross violence. The characters must look like humans or animals. If a character looks like

			a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human).
18+	17	Depictions of apparently motiveless killing or serious injury to multiple numbers of innocent human-like characters	This is where groups of human-like characters are killed or injured at random for no apparent reason and deals with themes such as the killing of pedestrians in the street, shoppers in a shopping arcade and children in a school. The characters must look like humans or animals. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human).
18+	18	Depictions of violence towards vulnerable or defenceless human-like characters	The characters must look like humans. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human). Vulnerable human-like characters will include in particular women and children. Defenceless characters will include those that have no opportunity to avoid the violence (eg. by running away or hiding). It will not generally include characters who are part of the game play (eg. a soldier captured by the enemy and subsequently tied up and shot). No character will be considered vulnerable or defenceless if they are not intended to be part of the game play. However, any violence in this context should be considered on its merits.
18+	19	Depictions of sexual activity with visible genital organs	Sexual activity means all aspects of human sexual intercourse, masturbation and sexual foreplay (homosexual or lesbian activity included) where a male or female sexual organ is visible. The depiction of 'boobs and bottoms' or pubic hair only will not be treated as visible sexual organs.
18+	20	Depictions of sexual violence or threats (including rape)	This will mean acts of a sexual nature where they are inflicted against a non-consenting human-like characters, including rape or the infliction (including self-infliction) of pain on genital organs.
18+	21	Detailed descriptions of techniques that could be used in criminal offences	The descriptions have to show how the offences can be carried out. For example an instruction manual showing how to make a molotov cocktail or bomb would be included under this question as would details of the implements needed to break into a car and how to use them.
18+	22	Glamorisation of the use of illegal drugs	The depictions will show that the user of the drugs is able to achieve success (win the game, get the girl, kill the enemy, commit the crime) after the use of illegal drugs. The drugs concerned should be real and be illegal (not fantasy or legal drugs).
18+	23	Depictions of ethnic, religious, nationalistic or other stereotypes like to encourage hatred	The emphasis here is on the words 'likely to encourage hatred'. It should be noted that any such depictions are very likely to infringe national criminal laws and cannot be included in the game in any event. It is the responsibility of each game publisher to comply with national criminal laws and use of the PEGI system does not absolve the game publisher from such responsibility or provide any legal or other defence to infringement of national criminal laws.
18+	24	Sexual expletives or blasphemy (only answer 'yes' to this question if a 'yes' answer has been given to any of questions 16 –23)	A 'yes' answer to this question 24 will ensure that a language descriptor is used on packaging. If a 'yes' answer has not been given to any of questions 16 – 23 do not answer 'yes' to this question 24. The most common sexual expletives are fuck, cunt,

			motherfucker and cocksucker although this list is not exhaustive. Blasphemy means irreverent depictions or words concerning sacred matters or religious beliefs (not restricted to the Christian faith). It should be noted that blasphemy is likely to be illegal under national criminal laws and may not be included in the game in any event.
18+	25	Moving images that encourage and/or teach the use of games of chance that are played/carried out as a traditional means of gambling (only answer 'yes' to this question if a 'yes' answer has been given to any of questions 16 –23)	A 'yes' answer to this question 25 will ensure that a gambling descriptor is used on packaging. If a 'yes' answer has not been given to any of questions 16 – 23 do not answer 'yes' to this question 25. This refers to types of betting or gambling for money that is normally played/carried out in casinos, gambling halls, racetracks. This does not cover games where betting or gambling is simply part of the general storyline. The game must actually teach the player how to gamble or bet and/or encourage the player to want to gamble or bet for money in real life. For example this will include games that teach the player how to play card games that are usually played for money or how to play the odds in horse racing.
16+	26	Depictions of realistic looking violence towards human-like or animal-like characters	This means violence where the character reacts as it would in real life. It is not necessary for there to be any blood or gore. The characters must look like humans or animals. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human). This does not include sporting action where the sporting action is depicted within the rules of the game.
16+	27	Sustained depictions of death or injury to human-like or animal-like characters (except arcade style or sporting action)	This means that all or the majority of the game-play relates to violence. The characters must look like humans or animals. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human). Arcade style action refers mostly to 2D effect depictions where the characters move left and right to attack each other. The sporting action must be depicted within the rules of the sport concerned.
16+	28	Depictions of arcade style or sporting action showing violence containing blood or gore	Arcade style action refers mostly to 2D effect depictions where the characters move left and right to attack each other. If there is no blood or gore then a 'yes' answer to question 39 is probably more appropriate.
16+	29	Depictions of sexual intercourse without visible genitals	This is self explanatory although it must be fairly apparent what the characters are doing. 'Boobs and bums' do not count as genital organs and nor does the showing of pubic hair only.
16+	30	Depictions of erotic or sexual nudity	This is where the depiction of nudity (including partial nudity) could result in sexual arousal or is shown as a prelude to human sexual activity. This can include still pictures particularly if they depict an erotic activity. This will not generally include straightforward pin-ups.
16+	31	Sexual expletives or blasphemy	The most common sexual expletives are fuck, cunt, motherfucker and cocksucker although this list is not exhaustive. Blasphemy means irreverent depictions or words concerning sacred matters or religious beliefs (not restricted to the Christian faith). It should be noted that blasphemy is likely to be illegal under national criminal laws and may not be included in the game in any event.

16+	32	Encouragement of the use of tobacco or alcohol	This means where the character gains advantage in the game by the use of tobacco or alcohol. It also includes prominent advertising encouraging the use of tobacco or alcohol products.
16+	33	Depictions of the use of illegal drugs	This includes the use of illegal drugs in any circumstances.
16+	34	Glamorisation of crime	This is where the depiction of criminal acts could encourage the games player to think that 'crime pays' or has no negative repercussions.
16+	35	Moving images that encourage and/or teach the use of games of chance that are played/carried out as a traditional means of gambling(only answer 'yes' to this question if a 'yes' answer has been given to any of questions 26 –34)	A 'yes' answer to this question 35 will ensure that a gambling descriptor is used on packaging. If a 'yes' answer has not been given to any of questions 26 – 34 do not answer 'yes' to this question 35.This refers to types of betting or gambling for money that is normally played/carried out in casinos, gambling halls, racetracks. This does not cover games where betting or gambling is simply part of the general storyline. The game must actually teach the player how to gamble or bet and/or encourage the player to want to gamble or bet for money in real life. For example this will include games that teach the player how to play card games that are usually played for money or how to play the odds in horse racing.
12+	36	Depictions of realistic looking violence towards fantasy characters	A fantasy character is a character that does not exist in real life and does not take a human appearance and includes ghosts, gremlins, dragons and other mythical creatures. In determining whether the violence is realistic it is assumed that the fantasy character does actually exist and reacts as if it were a human-like character.
12+	37	Depictions of non-realistic looking violence towards human-like or animal-like characters	The characters must look like humans or animals. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human). The characters react in a way that is not representative of real life and although you know that the characters are being killed or injured you do not really see very much (the characters immediately disappear in a puff of smoke or are otherwise so small that you really cannot see what exactly is happening).
12+	38	Moving images that depict any minor assault on a human-like character that does not result in any obvious injury or harm (whether or not it is realistic looking violence)	This is where the violence to the human-like character is realistic but very minor such as a slap or smack and the victim does not show any apparent harm or injury.
12+	39	Depictions of arcade style or sporting action showing violence	Arcade style action refers mostly to 2D effect depictions where the characters move left and right to attack each other. This question relates to arcade style or sporting action where there is no blood or gore. The sporting action must be depicted within the rules of the sport.
12+	40	Words or activities that amount to obvious sexual innuendo or explicit sexual descriptions or images or sexual posturing	This can refer to words or pictures that may be sexually explicit but do not amount to eroticism (a brief glimpse of a lady with bare boobs at a window or a brief glimpse of a naked couple (not showing genitalia) getting into bed). The sexual innuendo must be obviously relating to sexual intercourse/foreplay and can consist of words and/or activity. This would cover instances in which it is clear that sexual intercourse is taking place but the participants are out of view, under sheets etc. The importance is sexual connotation. If however, the couple can be

			<p>seen, even if they are partially clothed, then question 27 'sexual intercourse without visible genitals' will be more appropriate. The test is whether the images could prompt sexual curiosity on behalf of the player.</p> <p>Sexual posturing means dancing or posing (while remaining clothed) in a manner intended to put across a sexual message or suggestion. This will include such things as pole dancing, lap dancing and even some of the more suggestive music video sequences.</p>
12+	41	Mild swearing and/or offensive language	This means bad language that falls short of sexual expletives and includes the words damn, hell, God, bloody, son-of-a-bitch, sod, tart, crap, bugger, screw, arse, slag, slut, tosser, Christ, dickhead, bitch, shit, piss off, whore, arsehole, prick, bollocks, twat, bastard, wanker and shag. It also covers offensive language such as nigger, coon, yid, queer, dyke and other racially or gender offensive words
12+	42	Moving images that encourage and/or teach the use of games of chance that are played/carried out as a traditional means of gambling	This refers to types of betting or gambling for money that is normally played/carried out in casinos, gambling halls, racetracks. This does not cover games where betting or gambling is simply part of the general storyline. The game must actually teach the player how to gamble or bet and/or encourage the player to want to gamble or bet for money in real life. For example this will include games that teach the player how to play card games that are usually played for money or how to play the odds in horse racing.
7+	43	Depictions of non-realistic violence towards fantasy characters	A fantasy character is a character that does not exist in real life and does not take a human appearance and includes ghosts, gremlins, dragons and other mythical creatures. The characters react in a way that would not be expected of human-like characters and although you know that the characters are being killed or injured you do not really see very much (eg. the characters immediately disappear in a puff of smoke or are otherwise so small that you really cannot see what exactly is happening).
7+	44	Depictions of non-detailed and non-realistic violence towards non-detailed human-like characters	This is where the depiction gives only a basic representation of a human (stick men or pixelated characters). If the characters are small but are detailed enough to be clearly recognisable as humans a 'yes' answer to this question is not appropriate.
7+	45	Depictions of implied violence to humans where the actual violence (death or injury) is not shown	This is where you do not actually see any violence to humans but it is obvious what is happening. It covers such matters as the bombing of a city where you know civilians are killed and injured, blowing up a tank or shooting down a plane where you know the crew are killed, smashing into cars or other vehicles where the driver/passenger must be injured.

7+	46	Depictions of violence that is humorous and is set in a cartoon, slapstick or child-like setting but might, in any way, be disturbing to younger children.	<p>The humorous element is essential for violence to be depicted at this level, however, it is immaterial whether the characters are realistic (Laurel and Hardy style), non-realistic (fantasy characters or characters drawn as you would expect in comic books) or cartoon characters (Bugs Bunny or Tom and Jerry style). It refers to the actual violence and not merely to the overall theme of the game. For instance an act of violence, which in itself is not humorous, contained in a comedy would be more appropriate at the 12+ level. No blood or obvious injuries should be visible.</p> <p>The disturbing element is by necessity subjective but will cover anything that might reasonably be considered as possibly disturbing to younger children. An example may be where the recipient of the violence (albeit humorous) is a child and the player may be able to identify with the character. If there is any doubt then this question should be answered yes in preference to the 3+ question.</p>
7+	47	Pictures or sounds likely to be scary or frightening to young children	This is where you do not actually see or hear anything specifically violent but nevertheless because of the sounds or depictions the overall theme may be frightening to young children (haunting or aggressive music, entering a haunted house, background screams or rustling in the undergrowth).
3+	48	Depictions of nudity in a non-sexual context	This is where the nudity (which includes partial nudity but no visible genitalia) has no direct or implied sexual meaning such as a lady breast feeding a baby, topless sunbathing or a nudist beach.
3+	49	Depictions of violence that is humorous and is set in a cartoon, slapstick or child-like setting.	<p>The humorous element is essential for violence to be depicted at this level, however, it is immaterial whether the characters are realistic (Laurel and Hardy style), non-realistic (fantasy characters or characters drawn as you would expect in comic books) or cartoon characters (Bugs Bunny or Tom and Jerry style). It refers to the actual violence and not merely to the overall theme of the game. Therefore an act of violence, which in itself is not humorous, contained in a comedy would be more appropriate at the 12+ level. Nothing should be shown that might in any way disturb younger children. No blood or obvious injuries should be visible.</p>

	50	Does the game allow online game play with or against other people?	This applies to games where it is necessary to connect to any website, portal, gateway or other internet connection in order to play the game. It includes those games played as 'single player' as well as those played as 'multi-player'. It does not include games that are only downloaded via the internet and subsequently played on the PC or console without the requirement for an internet connection for the actual game play.
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