

# CHARTER FOR MEDIA LITERACY

<http://www.medialiteracy.org.uk>

## **The need for the UK to be Media Literate in today's digital world:**

Whilst reading takes up 30 minutes a day for most Europeans, they spend an average of 2.3 hours a day watching TV/video/DVD. 70% of all European households with children have a PC and 33% have broadband access. 94% of Young Europeans (12–18) are Internet users and 95 % of these have their own mobile phone. (1) Yet it was recently reported in the UK that some 70% teenagers 'believe' all they read on the web. (2)

In this knowledge-based economy and digital communications environment, a vibrant society and a diverse, sustainable economy will increasingly depend upon a population and workforce that is media literate – by which is meant everyone having opportunities to reach their full potential in today's digital world. In relation to the statistics above, the UK needs people to have not only access to digital technologies – to be digitally fluent – but to be confident in understanding them, expressing themselves creatively and communicating their ideas productively through them – in other words, to be 'media literate'. It means, for example, being able to exercise critical understanding over the choices of products, services, information and entertainment content available – and to be able to respond, comment or complain.

If the benefits of today's converged media and communications' technologies are to be harnessed for the good of all, and a 'digital divide' to be avoided, urgent steps need to be taken to empower everyone to take up the opportunities media offers.

## **Charter for Media Literacy**

For these reasons the Media Literacy Task Force (3) launched a Charter which sets out some definitions of what being media literate today means as well as priorities for developing this. The text of the Charter was widely consulted upon, both within the UK and Europe, and many individuals and agencies in education, cultural organisations, the media and communications industries have pledged their support (see

below). The Charter is championed across Europe by a wider group and has signatories from at least 19 other countries (see [www.euromedialiteracy.eu](http://www.euromedialiteracy.eu) for up-to-date information).

On 10 November 2005, James Purnell MP (Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism) received a launch briefing from a number of leading figures from the Nations and Regions of the UK in education, the film, television and media industries. Together with three of the Charter's many distinguished Patrons – Michael Grade, Anthony Minghella and Eric Bolton they expressed their support and enthusiasm for the Charter as a way forward and as the basis for collaboration. Details of this event, and other related documents, are available to download at:

<http://www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk/information/downloads/?subject=20>

The main purpose of the Charter is to raise the profile of media literacy as a highly significant portfolio of creative and critical skills, knowledge and understanding. These are essential to every citizen in the 21st century if they are to be 'fully literate – C21st style' and enjoy the widest range of content and the diverse range of opportunities to communicate and be creative in a digital world.

The Task Force believes that the Charter will help champion the value of media literacy and encourage both public and private investment in its development.

*(1) Statistics supplied by the Conseil de l'éducation aux médias at the launch of the European launch of the Charter for Media literacy, September 2006.*

*(2) By Anthony Lilley in The Guardian, 12 March 2007*

*(3) **The Media Literacy Task Force was set up with the support of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in 2004 and is chaired by Alex Wall, CEO of Wall to Wall. It comprises senior representatives of the BBC, the British Board of Film Classification, the British Film Institute, Channel Four, ITV, the Media Education Association, Skillset and the UK Film Council. DCMS, Ofcom, the Broadband Stakeholder Group and Andrea Millwood-Hargrave sit as observers.***

## CHARTER FOR MEDIA LITERACY

The media provide us with distinctive and vital means of expression; are a dominant and global source of information, stories and opinions;

and form an important part of our cultural heritage.

If people are to participate fully and effectively in today's world, they now need to be literate in all forms of media.

We are committed to the aims and principles of this Charter and to advocating and developing a media literate UK.

1) We are committed to:

- Raising public understanding and awareness of media literacy, in relation to the media of communication, information and expression;
- Advocating the importance of media literacy in the development of educational, cultural, political, social and economic policy;
- Supporting the principle that every UK citizen of any age should have opportunities, in both formal and informal education, to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to increase their enjoyment, understanding and exploration of the media.

2) We believe media literate people should be able to:

- Use media technologies effectively to access, store, retrieve and share content to meet their individual and community needs and interests;
- Gain access to, and make informed choices about, a wide range of media forms and content from different cultural and institutional sources;
- Understand how and why media content is produced, and the technological, legal, economic and political contexts for this;
- Analyse critically the techniques, languages and conventions used by the media, and the messages they convey;
- Use media creatively to express and communicate ideas, information and opinions;
- Identify, and avoid or challenge, media content and services that may be unsolicited, offensive or harmful;
- Make effective use of media in the exercise of their democratic rights and civic responsibilities.

3) We will help develop a media literate UK population by

encouraging, enabling or offering opportunities for people to:

- Broaden their experience of different kinds of media forms and content;
- Develop critical skills in analysing and assessing the media;
- Develop creative skills in using media for expression and communication and participation in public debate;

We are delighted that our Organisation will be listed as a signatory to the Charter.

Signed:

Organisation:

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#### **ADDITIONAL CLAUSES:**

For providers of activities that directly promote media literacy:

4) We pledge to support or participate in research that will identify and develop:

- Better understanding of what it is to be media literate;
- Effective and sustainable pedagogy for media literacy;
- Transferable evaluative methods and assessment criteria for media literacy.

5) We agree to undertake, or enable others to undertake, the following:

- Build links with other signatories and contribute to the growth of a European network for media literacy;
- Identify and share evidence of the outcomes of media literacy initiatives which we undertake or are associated with;
- Work to make content legally available to be used for media education purposes;
- Publish an action plan on the Charter website.

Signed:

Organisation:

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## **THE PATRONS OF THE CHARTER**

Professor Eric Bolton CB

Professor Tim Brighouse  
Lord Smith of Finsbury  
Professor Sir Christopher Frayling  
Michael Grade CBE  
Bonnie Greer  
Anna Home OBE  
Clive Jones  
Duncan Kenworthy OBE  
Anthony Lilley  
Anthony Minghella CBE  
Baroness Morris of Yardley  
Lord Puttnam  
Heather Rabbatts CBE  
June Sarpong  
Anthony Smith CBE  
Stewart Till CBE

## **UK SIGNATORIES TO THE CHARTER**

(204 as of July 2008):

1. 01zero-one, Westminster Kingsway College
2. Acton High School & Centre for Media Arts
3. Association for Media Education in Scotland
4. Association for Television On-demand
5. Beal High Media Arts College
6. Borderlines Film Festival
7. British Academy of Film and Television Arts
8. British Board of Film Classification
9. British Broadcasting Corporation
10. British Film Institute
11. British Federation of Film Societies  
([http://www.bffs.org.uk/Content/education/education\\_charter.html](http://www.bffs.org.uk/Content/education/education_charter.html))
12. British Video Association
13. Broadcasting Entertainment Cinematograph and Theatre Union (BECTU)
14. Buena Vista International (UK)
15. C2k: Classroom 2000
16. Central School of Speech and Drama
17. Channel 4

18. Charles Edward Brooke School, London
19. Cinema Exhibitors Association
20. Cinemagic Children's Film Festival
21. Cinesite
22. Columbia TriStar Films UK
23. Connections Communications Centre, London
24. Coombeshead College
25. Cottingham High School
26. Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment,  
Northern Ireland
27. D fie foe
28. Department of Culture Arts and Leisure, Northern Ireland
29. Dundee Contemporary Arts
30. Ealing Institute of Media
31. EM-Media
32. English and Media Centre
33. Entertainment Film Distributors
34. FDMX, Film and Media Digital Exchange, University of  
Hertfordshire
35. Feature Film Company
36. Film Distributors Association
37. Film Education
38. Film London
39. Firstborn Creatives
40. First Light Movies
41. Futurelab
42. Gala Film Distributors
43. Help the Aged
44. Icon Film Distribution
45. Ilfracombe College
46. In the Picture Magazine
47. ITV
48. Launceston College
49. Learning and Teaching Scotland
50. London College of Communication
51. Longsands Community College
52. Loughborough School of Art and Design
53. Marden High School
54. Maverick TV
55. Media Education Association

56. Media Education, Wales
57. Metrodome Distribution
58. Mike Owen Media
59. Momentum Pictures
60. MovIES
61. National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts
62. National Film and Television School
63. National Media Museum, Bradford
64. National Society for Education in Art and Design
65. National Youth Agency
66. North West Vision
67. Northern Film and Media
68. Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission
69. O2
70. Parkside Community College
71. Pathé Distribution
72. PixPencil
73. Polis, London School of Economics
74. Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television
75. Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School, Barnet
76. Queens Film Theatre
77. Rainhill High School Media Arts College
78. Royal Television Society
79. Rural Media Company
80. Ryburn Valley High School
81. S4C
82. Scottish Screen
83. Screen East
84. Screen South
85. Screen South West
86. Screen West Midlands
87. Screen Yorkshire
88. Skillset
89. Somervale School, Bath
90. South Thames College
91. Specialist Schools and Academies Trust
92. St. Catherine's School
93. St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School
94. St. Mary's College
95. Stoke Newington Media Arts College

96. Teach First
97. The County High School, Leftwich
98. The London Film School
99. The Nerve Centre
100. The Rural Media Company
101. The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA)
102. Thomas Adams School and Media Arts College
103. Turner Broadcasting (CNN, Cartoon Network, TCM)
104. Turton High School
105. Twentieth Century Fox Film Co
106. UK Film Council
107. UK Post
108. United International Pictures (UK)
109. Victoria & Albert Museum
110. Voice of the Listener and Viewer
111. Warner Bros. Distributors
112. Weatherhead High School

There are also a further **33 individual signatories from the UK**

**In addition there are 61 signatories from across Europe and beyond** from the following 19 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey. For further details of European signatories see [www.euromedialiteracy.eu/](http://www.euromedialiteracy.eu/)