



## **Video Games Consultation Questions**

### **Option 1 Hybrid classification system**

The BBFC would rate all games that are 12+ or higher, with PEGI continuing to rate all 3+ and 7+ games.

The BBFC logos would appear on the front of all boxes, with the PEGI logos on the back.

This system will work best if BBFC and PEGI come to an agreement on their logos and age classifications so that a more integrated approach can be adopted. The BBFC would extend its statutory powers to cover games from 12+, bringing it into line with the classification system used for DVDs/videos and building on parental awareness and understanding of what those ratings mean.

**Q1: What is your overall assessment of whether this option would work and why?**

**Yes it would work it is the most colourful and appears on the front of the box. It is also easy to understand.  
It is good because it gives plenty of advice but it doesn't require either body to give up control.  
It will make a difference because the parent can be encouraged to buy the games according to the ratings.**

**Q2: What are the key flaws with this option and how could it be adapted to overcome them?**

**It is not the case of confusion between the two, it is the fact that some parents don't agree that a game should be aged at that certain age. Parents should definitely know what their child is seeing though and this allows children under 12 to buy games that may be recommended for an older age.**

<b>Q3: What are the key advantages with this option and why?</b>
<p><b>Colourful</b>  <b>Appears on the front of the box</b></p>
<b>Q4: How do you think this system would work for the following key stakeholders:</b>
<p><b>(i) the consumer?</b></p> <p><b>The rating on the front is clear</b></p>
<p><b>(ii) the games industry?</b></p> <p><b>They still have legal control over selling games that are deemed unsuitable for children aged under 12, so they are protected from 'angry' parents.</b></p>
<p><b>(iii) the retail industry?</b></p> <p><b>It shows they are being responsible</b></p>
<b>Q5: What suggestions do you have to improve the system for any of the key stakeholders?</b>
<b>Q6: Do you think this system addresses the evidence on potential harms raised by the Byron review and if not why not?</b>
<b>Q7: How do you think this system will last into the future?</b>
<b>Q8: Do you think this option would work in the online environment?</b>
<p><b>(i) If so, what would be the benefits?</b></p> <p><b>This would only work if games can only be online with 18+ rating because otherwise kids have access to it anyway</b>  <b>It will only work if they can classify it and they can enforce it.</b>  <b>It may work because it would be the law, but would it be guaranteed people that people are who they say they are and are the age they say they are.</b>  <b>Recommmended ages may confuse people.</b>  <b>It would be good if parents know how it works.</b></p>

<p><b>(ii) If not, what would be the problems and do you have any solutions?</b></p> <p>People can easily lie about their age online.</p>
<p><b>Q9: Is there any other information that you think Government should take into account when considering the monetary costs of this option?</b></p>
<p><b>Q10: Do you think having different age classifications on the front and back of the box is a significant problem? If so, do you think the solution offered here is the right one or can you suggest an alternative?</b></p>
<p><b>Q11: Do you think this option would be more or less costly to the games industry and if so what evidence do you have of this?</b></p>
<p><b>Q12: What are the likely implications (including costs) for games producers of having a classification system that does not automatically translate across to some other European countries?</b></p>
<p><b>Q13: It would be helpful to have your views on whether this option would affect games developers based outside Europe, such as those in Japan or US; namely, how this option might affect them and the extent, if any, to which it may affect them.</b></p>
<p><b>Q14: What do you think should be the determining factors or characteristics in deciding whether a game becomes subject to statutory classification at 12+? [see following section]</b></p>

## **Option 2 – Enhanced BBFC system**

The BBFC would act as the statutory classifications body for all video games, applying its ratings from U to 18. It would retain its power to refuse to classify games it feels are potentially harmful based on its public consultations.

<b>Q15: What is your overall assessment of whether this option would work and why?</b>
<p>Yes, as it will get rid of any bad games because it rate them. It would work because it is simple, everyone would know the ages of purchase and use and hopefully follow them. I think this is a really good idea because most of the teenagers are getting bad influences from games and this would control what they have access to. This is a good system, especially if the BBFC can clarify why they have given the particular rating and parents are happy with the reasons they have provided.</p>
<b>Q16: What are the key flaws with this option and how could it be adapted to overcome them?</b>
<p>Some 'U' games may not be very suitable for 3 year olds and there would be no way for people to know that. It would be hard for people who are used to using the PEGI system.</p>
<b>Q17: What are the key advantages with this option and why?</b>
<p>It is simple and clear. It is supported by law.</p>
<b>Q18: How do you think this system would work for the following key stakeholders:</b>
<b>(i) the consumer?</b>
<p>It would protect children and young people from being exposed to unsuitable material.</p>
<b>(ii) the games industry?</b>
<p>It would show that they are responsible and law abiding</p>
<b>(iii) the retail industry?</b>
<p>It would protect retailers so that they can not sell games that are unsuitable to children younger than the stated age</p>

<b>Q19: What suggestions do you have to improve the system for any of the key stakeholders?</b>
<b>Q20: Do you think this system addresses the evidence on potential harms raised by the Byron review and if not why not?</b>
<b>Q21: How do you think this system will last into the future?</b>
<b>Q22: Do you think this option would work in the online environment?</b>
<b>(i) If so, what would be the benefits?</b>
<b>This can work if it will go through a process and if the game is declined it will not be available online. It is simple and already widely recognised</b>
<b>(ii) If not, what would be the problems and do you have any solutions?</b>
<b>It wouldn't stop children and young people from playing unrated games</b>
<b>Q23: Is there any other information that you think Government should take into account when considering the monetary costs of this option?</b>
<b>Q24: Do you think this option would be more or less costly to the games industry than both the current system and the hybrid system and if so what evidence do you have of this?</b>
<b>Q25: Which of the following options do you think would work best in the online environment and why?</b>
<b>(i) BBFC symbols recognised as part of PEGI Online; or</b>
<b>(ii) BBFC.online (separate from the PEGI system)</b>

<b>Q26: What are the likely implications (including costs) for games producers of having a classification system that does not automatically translate across to some other European countries?</b>
<b>Q27: This option could be complicated by differences across Europe if games are purchased elsewhere. We are interested to know whether there is evidence that might support or disprove this. (Please refer to Paragraph 2.16)</b>
<b>Q28: We would be interested in evidence to demonstrate whether this option creates additional burdens to online games developers and whether this could be confusing to parents. (Please refer to Paragraph 2.25)</b>
<b>Q29: It would be helpful to have your views on whether this option would affect games developers based outside Europe, such as those in Japan or US; namely, how this option might affect them and the extent, if any, to which it may affect them.</b>

### **Option 3 – Enhanced PEGI system**

A UK-based organisation (possibly the Video Standards Council) would be the designated statutory classification body for video games, applying the PEGI ratings. The VSC (or other UK body chosen) would need to sign up to this new role and any legislative changes required. All video games would be rated using the PEGI system and there would be no role for the BBFC in classifying video games.

<b>Q30: What is your overall assessment of whether this option would work and why?</b>
<b>No, because the logo is too flexible. It could work but people may find it too confusing because the symbols would look differently to the (bbfc) ones people are used to seeing.</b>
<b>Q31: What are the key flaws with this option and how could it be adapted to overcome them?</b>

<p><b>Too flexible</b>  <b>Confusing</b>  It is not lead by the law, the UK needs a gaming industry that is controlled by law to stop children from buying games that are too old for them.</p>
<p><b>Q32: What are the key advantages with this option and why?</b></p>
<p><b>Q33: How do you think this system would work for the following key stakeholders:</b></p>
<p><b>(i) the consumer?</b></p> <p>They could get hold of harmful material.</p>
<p><b>(ii) the games industry?</b></p> <p>It would show that they are not doing enough to protect children.</p>
<p><b>(iii) the retail industry?</b></p> <p>They could sell games that are unsuitable and parents would be very angry.</p>
<p><b>Q34: What suggestions do you have to improve the system for any of the key stakeholders?</b></p>
<p><b>Q35: Do you think this system addresses the evidence on potential harms raised by the Byron review and if not why not?</b></p>
<p><b>Q36: How do you think this system will last into the future?</b></p>
<p><b>Q37: Do you think this option would work in the online environment?</b></p>
<p><b>(i) If so, what would be the benefits?</b></p>
<p><b>(ii) If not, what would be the problems and do you have any solutions?</b></p> <p>Rules need to be introduced to show what is (not) recommended for certain</p>

ages groups, i.e 7-8 years etc.
<b>Q38: Is there any other information that you think Government should take into account when considering the monetary costs of this option?</b>
<b>Q39: Who do you think would be the right body to take on the role of statutory classifier of video games and why?</b>
<b>Q40: Do you think the body given in answer to Q39 would be able to set up the systems required to carry out this statutory function and why? But if not, why not?</b>
<b>Q41: Do you think this option would be more or less costly to the games industry than both the current system and the hybrid system and if so what evidence do you have of this?</b>
<b>Q42: Do you think the BBFC should continue to rate all content (games and video) of discs which contain film or video content not integral to the game and why? [please refer to footnote 5 in answering this question]</b>
<b>Q43: Do you think PEGI should rate the game content, while the BBFC rates the film/video content and why?</b>
<b>(i) If so, should both symbols be on the box?</b>
<b>(ii) In the event of different age ratings, should only the higher symbol prevail?</b>
<b>Q44: It would be helpful to have your views on whether this option would affect games developers based outside Europe, such as those in Japan or US; namely, how this option might affect them and the extent, if any, to which it may affect them. (Please refer to Paragraph 2.36)</b>

## **Option 4 – Voluntary Code of Practice**

There would be no changes made to the legislation so the BBFC and PEGI would continue to classify games as they currently do. The Government would ask retailers and suppliers to sign up to a voluntary Code of Practice to secure adherence to the classification system when selling or supplying video games to children aged 12 or above, even though a statutory offence would not be committed if they broke the code. This Code of Practice would focus on classification and consumer protection and would follow the guidelines outlined in the review. If tougher measures were called for, this could be backed up with statutory legislation calling on the industry to consult and agree on a Code of Practice, breach of which could then be taken into consideration during a prosecution.

**Q45: What is your overall assessment of whether this option would work and why?**

**No, because there is no incentive for all shops to sign up. It would not work because an 8 year old may be able to purchase a 12+ game in certain shops because it isn't the law. It would be confusing because different shops would follow different rules.**

**Q46: What are the key flaws with this option and how could it be adapted to overcome them?**

**Some retailers would not sign up because they have have no moral or legal obligation to follow it and would be more concerned with making money. Laws are needed.**

**Q47: What are the key advantages with this option and why?**

**Q48: How do you think this system would work for the following key stakeholders:**

**(i) the consumer?**

**Children will see things that make alarm or upset them.**

**(ii) the games industry?**

**It will make games as bad as they want without fear of being punished**

**(iii) the retail industry?**

<p><b>Shop keepers will not hold any responsibility for selling unsuitable games to young children.</b></p>
<p><b>Q49: What suggestions do you have to improve the system for any of the key stakeholders?</b></p>
<p>The Children and Youth Board had lots of suggestions for the games and classification industry about what things should decide whether a game should be only be played by a child/young person aged over 12. They said a game should be rated for over 12 if it has:</p> <p><b>Language: Swearing, racist and sexual references</b>  <b>Violence: Dying, blood, gore, horror, fighting using guns and knives (because young children may copy or think it's 'cool')</b>  <b>Sexually Explicit Material: Adult scenes, nudity and sex</b>  <b>Excessively Immoral Behaviour</b></p> <p>They also thought that children under 18 should not have access to online gaming and parents should be involved in trading/buying games for children aged under 12 and that there should be a fine for retailers selling without adult permission.</p>
<p><b>Q50: Do you think this system is sufficient to reflect the evidence on potential harms raised by the Byron review and if not why not?</b></p>
<p><b>Q51: How do you think this system will last into the future?</b></p>
<p><b>Q52: Do you think this option would work in the online environment?</b></p> <p><b>(i) If so, what would be the benefits?</b></p> <p>Yes because most sites would stick to the rule.</p>
<p><b>(ii) If not, what would be the problems and do you have any solutions?</b></p> <p>Children are very vulnerable online, so some kind of rules or laws are needed to protect them. They have the experience needed to decide appropriate games, in most cases.</p>
<p><b>Q53: Is there any other information that you think Government should take into account when considering the monetary costs of this option?</b></p>

<b>Q54: Do you think industry would sign up to such a code?</b>
<b>Q55: Would this incur any additional costs to industry (games or retail) and can you provide evidence of this?</b>
<b>Q56: Do you think that this would work in practice on the ground?</b>
<b>Q57: It would be helpful to have your views on whether this option would affect games developers based outside Europe, such as those in Japan or US; namely, how this option might affect them and the extent, if any, to which it may affect them.</b>