Copyright FAQ for students

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# Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is to provide students with an overview of how IP/copyright ownership is applied to their materials. There’s also guidance on the sharing of materials, and can third party copyright protected materials be used for private research and study? Below is an executive summary of key points throughout the document.

* There is no requirement register works for copyright in the UK, as this protection is automatically generated when a work is available in a ‘fixed’ format. You can have further protection, by choosing to use the internationally recognised copyright symbol “©” when making your work available
* Usually, students who are not employed by an educational establishment will own any Intellectual Property (IP) they create. It would be advisable to examine your own institutions policy around IP.
* The UK copyright exceptions can allow excerpts of copyright protected material to be used for non-commercial [private study](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/48/section/29), providing the usage aligns to fair dealing factors. ***N.B, the exceptions should only be used if no suitable blanket licence is in place, no written permission to use material granted, or no copyright free alternative could be found***
* You cannot share any of the work you have copied using the [Private study exception](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/48/section/29), via email or if your phone if you have taken any photographs of pages within a book/journal
* There are other UK copyright exceptions that you could choose to use, which are examined in the ‘[Using other people’s copyright protected work](https://edshare.gla.ac.uk/id/document/7126)’ document

# 1. Do I need to register my work, so it can be copyright protected?

There’s no need to register your work, as copyright is assigned automatically (under UK Law), when a work is created in a fixed format (i.e., a photograph taken using a mobile phone). Several steps can be taken to demonstrate evidence that you created the work at a specific point in time.

One of the steps that you can employ is to add the internationally recognised copyright symbol “©” when you’re publishing or making your copyright protected work available. On a similar theme, you could add a watermark to your documents and images to further indicate they’re protected by copyright. Finally, you could produce a copyright notice to deter possible infringement and make it clear your work is protected. A copyright notice demonstrates you have an awareness of copyright and take any infringement seriously.

The UK Copyright Service, have guidance you can refer to when writing your copyright notice, which can be viewed at the following webpage: [Using Copyright Notices](https://copyrightservice.co.uk/copyright/p03_copyright_notices).

# 2. Do I own the copyright of work I’ve created and for coursework I produce?

Yes, students own the copyright of original work they have created, i.e., emails, exam scripts, dissertations, course work, projects, and assignments. Usually, students who are not employed by a university will own any IP (intellectual property) they create. When you (a student), are being sponsored by a third party, you may be required to assign IP to the university of sponsoring body, subject to the terms and conditions which apply to the studentship. Examine you institutions own IP policy, to clarify what ownership rights you have.

More information about student IP ownership (UK Law), can be viewed in the Governments ‘[Ownership of copyright works policy’](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ownership-of-copyright-works#works-created-by-students) & Copyright Design and Patents Act, sections 9 -11.

# 3. Can I copy materials from the University Library for private study?

Yes, copying material such as an article from a journal or extract from a book is permissible, providing the intended use is for non-commercial research and private study. The UK copyright exception [Section 29](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/48/section/29), is what permits the copying conditions outlined in the previous sentence, however you must make sure the use would align to “[Fair Dealing](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/exceptions-to-copyright#fair-dealing)”. Below are some factors that you must consider when trying to determine if your use is “Fair”.

* Only use the amount of work required to fulfil your purpose, i.e., don’t copy pages of a book unnecessarily, if you all you need is two sentences to illustrate your point.
* Would your usage damage the interests of the creator, and impact them negatively financially?
* Always provide attribution (citation) for the creator and their work unless it is impossible or impractical to do so.

**N.B. this copyright exceptions permits the use of all types of copyright protected works, including films, images, and sound recordings.**

## 3.1: Can I share the copy I make with friends?

No, you cannot share the copy with anyone else (including friends). This includes sharing via email, social media and through print. The relevant copyright exception (section 29) doesn’t permit the sharing of the single copy you produce.

**N.B, this also covers using a mobile phone, under section 29, you could photograph a page from a book for your own private study (providing the copying is Fair). However, you’re not permitted to share the copy (image) with other individuals, as this would violate the terms of the exception.**

## 3.2: How much can I copy?

There is no legally defined amount or exact percentage of what can be copied under fair dealing exceptions. It’s at this point you should refer to the guidance around Fair Dealing and consider the factors we previously looked at (shown below):

* Only use the amount of work required to fulfil your purpose, i.e., don’t copy pages of a book unnecessarily, if you all you need is two sentences to illustrate your point.
* Would your usage damage the interests of the creator, and impact them negatively financially?
* Always provide attribution (citation) for the creator and their work unless it is impossible or impractical to do so.

# 4. Are there other ways I can use other peoples work in my course work, assignments, and projects?

There are other UK copyright exceptions you could choose to make use of to include 3rd party copyright protected work in your course work etc... However, before doing so, you should examine if there’s a copyright free alternative available, i.e., [Creative Commons](https://creativecommons.org/) materials. In some circumstances there may be a licence or service, i.e., [Box of Broadcasts](https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/bob/) in place that provides you with access to the materials you wish to use or view. You should also consider contacting the copyright owner to obtain written permission. If none of these measures provide results, then you could make the risk-based decision to use one or more of the following UK copyright exceptions (depending on the circumstances).

* [Section 30](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/48/section/30) (quotation)
* [Section 32](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/48/section/32) (Illustration for Instruction)
* [Section 34](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/48/section/34) (Performing, playing, or showing work in course of activities of educational establishment)

There are specific fuses associated with the above exception, i.e., section 32 can only be used for non-commercial educational purposes to illustrate a teaching point. Therefore, it would be advisable to read the document linked to below, which provides further guidance for the exceptions (Word document will download when link is clicked).

**Link to ‘**[**Using other people’s copyright protected work**](https://edshare.gla.ac.uk/id/document/7126)**’.**