
A GUIDE TO COPYRIGHT

ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY OF MUSIC – LIBRARY

What is copyright?

Copyright is a legal principle that protects the intellectual property of authors, composers, performers, artists, publishers, etc. Copyright law prevents unauthorised copying of books, music, recordings, computer files and software, videos etc. Whether the copying is done by photocopier, computer, fax, scanner, or even longhand transcription, is irrelevant.

What is covered by copyright law?

Copyright applies to

- Original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works
- Sound recordings, films, broadcasts
- Published editions
- Original databases
- Computer created & generated material including documents, images and files published on the Internet
- The expression of ideas and facts but not the facts themselves

A work containing many elements, e.g. music, text, performance has a separate copyright on each element. In such cases, the longest reckonable period of copyright will apply (see below)

Who owns the copyright?

- Author (including: composer, arranger, editor, illustrator, photographer, performer, maker, originator etc.)
- Publisher

For how long does copyright last ?

Duration varies according to the type of copyright:

- ***Literary dramatic, artistic or musical works and arrangements:*** life of author/creator + 70 years. "Literary work" can mean any kind of writing and can even include computer programs
- ***Films:*** longest lifetime of director(s), producer(s), actor(s), scriptwriter(s) etc. + 70 years
- ***Published editions:*** 50 years from the date of publication
- ***Recordings:*** 50 years from the date of the recording
- ***Databases:*** while the database continues to be updated, and for 15 years after the database ceases to be updated; or 15 years from date first published (whichever is later)

Is all copying prohibited?

The law makes provision for very limited copying under what is known as “fair dealing” clauses. These allow a library user to copy materials

- For research or private study
- For criticism or review (provided there is sufficient acknowledgement)

“Fair dealing” only applies:

- If the amount copied is not all or a substantial part of a whole work and the copying does not “unreasonably prejudice the interest of the copyright owner”
- If only a single copy is made (multiple copying is prohibited)

What legislation governs copyright in this country?

- Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000; Government regulations SI 404 – 411 and 427 of 2000
- European Directive 2001/29/EC

Will the library copy on behalf of a user or other library?

Users may from time to time need to ask the library to copy material for them. This process is governed by very strict regulations outlined in the law as follows:

- **Purpose of copying:** Copy supplied must be used for research or private study only
- **Amount to be copied:** A “reasonable proportion” – “reasonable” is not defined and may depend on circumstances. For example, a single poem, short story, song, sonata movement, etc. can be seen as an entire “work” in its own right, and may not be copied.
- **Journal articles:** generally 1 article per issue – or as many articles as there are issues in a volume (allows for more than one article per issue on occasions)
- **No. of copies:** not more than 1 copy per person; additional copies of same material cannot be subsequently issued to the same person. Additionally, the library cannot supply to more than 3 people with a similar requirement at the same time.
- **Declaration form:** the library user must sign the standard declaration form issued by the library before receiving the material.

These regulations are not specific to the RIAM library – they are in accordance with Government Regulations SI 404-411 and SI 427 of 2000.

For further information please contact:

Philip Shields, Librarian, Royal Irish Academy of Music, 36-38 Westland Row

Tel 01-6325316/8

Fax 01-6622798 Email philipshields@riam.ie

Disclaimer

This leaflet does not claim to be legal advice, and should not be relied on such – rather as a set of guidelines and a statement of RIAM Library policy. Each library user is responsible for understanding and complying with the law. Neither the author, nor the Royal Irish Academy of Music shall be responsible for any loss caused by reliance on these guidelines.