

Quick Copyright Information for Students

What is Copyright?

Copyright is a system of laws that is designed to protect the works of authors from unauthorised copying and transmission, whilst at the same time allowing the public to have reasonable access to information. Australian copyright law is contained in *The Copyright Act (Cth) 1968*.

Copyright Terminology

In the language of copyright, the text and image materials that a person creates are called "works". These include:

- literary works (e.g. books, letters, articles, written assignments),
- dramatic works (e.g. plays, film scripts, scenarios, treatments)
- musical works (e.g. compositions of popular or classical music)
- artistic works (e.g. photos, paintings, drawings, maps, charts, diagrams).

As well as works, there are:

- films and video
- sound recordings
- broadcasts

Who owns copyright?

In most cases, copyright will be owned by the creator of the work. If you are a student, then you will own the copyright in the works that you create, as a general rule. This is articulated in the QUT Intellectual Property Policy http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/D/D_03_01.jsp.

OK, so I own copyright in my work. What does that mean?

A copyright owner has a number of exclusive rights, that are things that only they can do, or authorise someone else to do. In general, these rights are:

- a. to make copies of the work
- b. to publish the work
- c. to perform the work in public
- d. to make adaptations of the work - e.g. make a novel into a screenplay
- e. to communicate the work to the public - i.e. to put the work online and make it accessible to the public.

While I'm a student, what can I copy?

The Copyright Act has some sections called the "fair dealing" sections. You can read more about these in the *QUT Copyright Guide* <https://www.library.qut.edu.au/copyrightguide/studyorresea/>. One of these relates to fair dealing for research and study. This section says that you may copy a "reasonable portion" of a literary, dramatic or musical work for your own research and study. In brief, the Act says that a reasonable portion is 10% or one chapter of a book, or one article from any one issue of a journal. If the material you want to copy is in digital format, then you can copy one chapter, if the work is in chapters or 10% of the number of words if it is not divided into chapters.

Copying a whole textbook would not be considered fair, even if you need it for your course but you think it is too expensive. If you are a low income student and face financial difficulty in meeting your education costs, there is helpful information on the Equity Services website at <https://www.qut.edu.au/about/equity/our-services>

For artistic work, video and sound recordings, there is no simple rule as to how much you can copy for research and study purposes. There are a number of factors you have to consider.

If you have bought some computer software, or you are a licensed user, the Copyright Act says that you may make a copy of the program for the purposes of backup, research and study, error correction, interoperability (making your program interact with other software) and security testing.

Research and study includes assessment, so you may include fair portions of works in your assignments, projects and theses, provided that you attribute the sources properly. You'll find information on referencing sources in QUT cite|write <https://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au>. The copyright situation changes if your project or thesis will be distributed beyond your assessors. As a higher degree research student you will be required to upload your thesis to QUT ePrints. There is information in the Publishing and Communicating section of the *QUT Copyright Guide* <https://www.library.qut.edu.au/copyrightguide/publishingan/>.

What about the internet?

You may have heard that content on the internet is free of copyright. That's not correct. If you want to use material found on the web for your research and study, you may do so under the fair dealing provisions, but remember that you are restricted to using the material for that purpose only. Of course, if the website states that you can use the material for other purposes, then you can use it as permitted.

Music and movies on the internet - is it OK to download that?

Most of the music and movies available for download from websites or through peer to peer networks is in the form of illegal copies, which infringe copyright. Using QUT equipment to download, upload, share or store music or movies without the permission of the copyright owner is a breach of the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy, and will cause you to be involved in disciplinary action. Illegal downloads are particularly problematic. Australian university students have been convicted for music copyright offences <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2003/nov/19/australia.students>.

QUT logs network activity. These logs are used to manage IT resources, including detecting security breaches and resolving faults, and to investigate possible unlawful activity or breaches of QUT statutes and rules. If during system maintenance, music or movie files for which you are responsible are discovered on university equipment, you will be asked to (1) prove that you have permission of the copyright owner and (2) justify that the material is for QUT-related purposes. Of course, if you are using bit torrent for legitimate research, QUT will make arrangements to allow that. Talk to a HiQ Service Point <https://www.qut.edu.au/about/services-and-facilities/all-services/student-centres>.

Where can I get more help?

For more information, consult the *QUT Copyright Guide* <https://www.library.qut.edu.au/copyrightguide/>.

The Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy is available at http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/F/F_01_11.jsp.

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