**Playing Films, Television and Radio in Schools**

Updated 20 July 2021

**Playing films, television and radio for educational purposes**

Schools can play films, television and radio in the classroom (or another teaching venue) as part of a course of instruction under s 28 of the Copyright Act. This includes playing a film to students via a reticulation system, ie playing the film from a central point into a number of classrooms.

Also, under the [Statutory Broadcast Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/statutory-broadcast-licence/) (s 113P(2)), teachers can copy off-air television programs and podcasts of previously broadcast free-to-air programs available on the broadcaster’s website to play to students as part of a course of instruction.

See [Performance and Communication of Copyright Material in Class](https://smartcopying.edu.au/performance-and-communication-of-copyright-material-in-class/) for further information.

**Playing films for non-educational purposes**

There is no exception or licence in the Copyright Act which allows a school to play a film to its students for non-educational purposes, such as on bus excursions, during camps and for rainy day activities at lunchtime.

The Australian school sector has negotiated a voluntary blanket licence, called the Co-Curricular Licence, with Roadshow Public Performance Licensing (‘Roadshow’) for the playing of films by schools for non-educational purposes. This includes:

* at school for entertainment purposes (eg at lunchtime on a rainy day)
* on bus excursions, where the school provides the DVD (not the bus company)
* at school camps and excursions, including outdoor screenings at camp, where the school provides the DVD (not the camp) and
* at after-school care and holiday programs conducted at and by the school.

Not all schools in Australia are covered by the Co-Curricular Licence. Schools that are not covered by this licence must seek permission from the non-theatrical distributor of the film to play the film for non-educational purposes.

To find out whether your school is covered by the Co-Curricular Licence, contact your [local copyright advisor](https://smartcopying.edu.au/contact-us/).

For further information on the Co-Curricular Licence, see information sheet [Playing Films for Non-Educational Purposes](https://smartcopying.edu.au/films-playing-for-non-educational-purposes/).

***Boarding Schools***

Screening of a film, for example, on a DVD in a boarding school by students for their own private purposes is permitted. However, to ensure that the purpose of the screening is for private purposes the DVD should be obtained (from legitimate sources) in the name of the student rather than the school.

**Always obtain DVDs from reputable sources**

It is essential that films played in schools are obtained from legitimate sources. Film DVDs, for example, may be purchased or hired from non theatrical film distributors, licensed lending libraries or educational sources for screening on school premises. See **Film sources** (below).

Playing pirated DVDs puts you, your school, your principal and your educational body at risk of serious civil penalties which include payment of compensation to the copyright owner as well as criminal penalties. For this reason schools should not accept donations or loans of DVDs or videos from students or parents. We recommend that schools source their own films to ensure that they are not pirated copies.

For further information see [Screening Pirated DVDs in Schools](https://smartcopying.edu.au/screening-pirated-dvds/).

**Film sources for schools**

***Government Organisations***

The National Film and Sound Archive’s (NFSA) School Screen program brings Australian films to regional Australia and offers free screenings for school students. The NFSA’s Education and School Screen Coordinator, Imelda Cooney, can be contacted on (02) 8202 0118 or by email at [imelda.cooney@nfsa.gov.au](mailto:imelda.cooney@nfsa.gov.au).

Australianscreen online contains information about and excerpts from a wide selection of Australian feature films, documentaries, television programs, newsreels, short films, animations, and home-movies produced over the last 100 years. It also includes teachers’ notes that identify and describe the educational values for more than 900 of the film clips. These resources are developed in partnership with the NFSA by Curriculum Corporation through The Le@rning Federation. You can contact Australianscreen online by emailing [education@australianscreen.com.au](mailto:education@australianscreen.com.au) (educational issues) or [editorial@australianscreen.com.au](mailto:editorial@australianscreen.com.au).

The National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) has an extensive international collection of films, DVDs and VHS videos which schools and community organisations can borrow at very reasonable rates, through its Non-Theatrical Loans Catalogue. The Catalogue includes Australian and international features, shorts, animations, documentaries, television shows, experimental and educational films from the silent era through to more recent releases. Most

titles are pre-licensed, delivery to your school is included, and schools can make bookings up to a year in advance. Find out more about how schools can borrow from the NFSA at [Screening Loans Registration Form](https://www.nfsa.gov.au/collection/curated/nfsa-screening-loans-theatrical-registration-form), or direct to Freecall 1800 012 175.

***“Non Theatrical” Film Distributors***

The non-theatrical division of **Roadshow Films** represents many major film companies such as Warner Bros., 20th Century Fox and Buena Vista (Disney). Roadshow Films provides films for school events, fundraisers and so on. Prices depend upon the type of use and expected audience numbers. Roadshow Films can be contacted on (02) 9552 8685 or by email at [publicperformance@roadshow.com.au](mailto:publicperformance@roadshow.com.au).

For further information, contact your [local copyright manager](https://smartcopying.edu.au/contact-us/).