**FAQs Music – Schools**

**Updated 8 March 2022**

**Performing musical works live or playing recorded music**

**1. Can teachers and students play or perform music in the classroom for** [**educational purposes**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/educational-purpose/)**?**

Yes. Teachers and students can perform [musical works](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/musical-works/) live or play recorded music in class under s 28 of the Copyright Act.

See [Performance and Communication of copyright material in the classroom](https://smartcopying.edu.au/performance-and-communication-of-copyright-material-in-class/).

**2. Can we play recorded music over the school’s PA system?**

Yes. Schools are able to play recorded music at school under both the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) and either s 106 of the Copyright Act (for independent and Catholic Schools) or an interim licence with [PPCA](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/ppca-phonographic-performance-company-of-australia-limited/) (for government schools).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**3. Are our students allowed to perform at events such as school music festivals, eisteddfods and the Schools Spectacular?**

Yes. Under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) students are allowed to perform [musical works](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/musical-works/) (e.g. play a musical instrument or sing) publicly on behalf of their school at off-campus [school events](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) such as music festivals, music eisteddfods and the ‘Schools Spectacular’ where it is part of the usual activities of the school.

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**4. Can we use recorded music in school performances and school concerts?**

Yes. Schools are able to play recorded music at school and at [school events](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) (eg assemblies, graduations, school concerts and performances) under both the [Schools](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) Music Licence and either s 106 of the Copyright Act (for independent and Catholic schools) or an interim licence from [PPCA](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/ppca-phonographic-performance-company-of-australia-limited/) (for government schools).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**5. Can we perform live music for a school performance or school concert?**

Yes. Schools can perform live music at [school events](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) at the school or another venue under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**6. Can our school perform a couple of songs from a musical (eg ‘Matilda The Musical’) at our end of year event?**

Yes. Under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) you can perform up to three songs, but if you want to perform an entire musical you will need to obtain permission from the copyright owner of the musical.

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**7. Can a teacher play music from Spotify in the classroom?**

Yes, teachers can play music from Spotify in class under s 28 of the Copyright Act. Spotify does not offer school accounts; however a teacher may be able to play music from a personal Spotify subscription.

See [Performance and Communication of copyright material in the classroom](https://smartcopying.edu.au/performance-and-communication-of-copyright-material-in-class/).

**Making, using and sharing audio or video recordings**

**8. Can we record students performing at** [**school events**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/)**?**

Yes. Under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/), schools are permitted to make video and audio recordings of [school events](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) at which [musical works](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/musical-works/) are performed or recorded music is played.

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**9. Are parents/guardians/carers allowed to film** [**school events**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/)**?**

Yes. Under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) schools can authorise members of the school community (eg parents, guardians and friends) to make recordings of music performed at a [school event](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) for their own private and domestic listening or viewing.

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**10. Can we provide students with copies of** [**sound recordings**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) **to use as part of a class?**

Yes. Schools can provide students with copies of [sound recordings](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) to use for [educational purposes](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/educational-purpose/) under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**11. Can we incorporate recorded music into another work, for example, a commemorative school DVD?**

Yes. Schools can incorporate a [sound recording](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) or a recording of a performance of a [musical work](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/musical-works/) (ie a recording of a school orchestra performing a piece of classical music) into another, unrelated work, such as a video recording of a [school event](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**12. Can we sell copies of a video made of a** [**school event**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) **that incorporates music to the school community (ie parents/guardians/friends)?**

Yes. Schools can sell recordings of [school events](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) to members of the school community (eg parents, guardians and friends) for their private and domestic use, for free or for a fee charged solely to recover the costs of creating the recording, including the staging of the school event.

Note, however, that members of the school community are only able to use these recordings for their private and domestic use (eg they are not permitted to upload the recordings onto Facebook and YouTube).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**13. Can we provide copies of a recording of our** [school event](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) **to other schools?**

Yes. Schools can provide a digital or physical copy of a recording of a [school event](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) to other schools that are covered by the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/), for their own [educational purposes](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/educational-purpose/), at no charge or for no more than the direct cost of making the copy of the recording that is provided.

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**14. Can we make copies of recorded music to play at** [**school events**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/)**?**

Yes. Under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/), schools are permitted to make [sound recordings](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) to play at a [school event](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) (eg downloading music from a streaming service to play at a school graduation or school assembly).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**15. Can we make copies of recorded music to play in class?**

Yes. Under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) schools are permitted to make [sound recordings](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) to play in class, whether face-to-face or virtual (eg in order to play music recordings relevant to material being studied). The actual playing of music in class is covered under [s 28 of the Copyright Act](https://smartcopying.edu.au/performance-and-communication-of-copyright-material-in-class/).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**16. Can I copy a song from Spotify or Apple Music onto the school’s** [**DTE**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/digital-teaching-environment-dte/) **for students to download and/or listen to?**

Yes. Under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/), schools are permitted to make recordings (eg copy music from Spotify or Apple Music on to the school’s DTE) to play in class to students for [educational purposes](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/educational-purpose/) (eg to play music recordings relevant to material being studied).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**17. Can I copy and play** [**sound recordings**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) **as part of a music exam?**

Yes. The exam copying exception permits schools to use any kind of copyright material in exams (including [sound recordings](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/)). This includes exams and assessments conducted online.

See [Copying for Exams](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/library-exam-and-disability-copying/copying-for-exams/).

**18. We hire our school hall out to a private dance school. Do they need a licence from** [**PPCA**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/ppca-phonographic-performance-company-of-australia-limited/) **to play** [**sound recordings**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) **during class?**

Yes. If the dance school is run as a separate [commercial activity](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/commercial-activity/) then it will need to obtain a licence from [PPCA](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/ppca-phonographic-performance-company-of-australia-limited/) to play [sound recordings](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) during its classes. They will also need a licence from [APRA](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/apra-amcos-australasian-performing-right-association-and-australasian-mechanical-copyright-owners-society/) to cover the public performance of music in the class of a [sound recording](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) (or played live on a piano during the class). They may also be able to obtain the licence it needs from OneMusic.

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**19. Can we make a recording of a** [**school event**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) **or live stream a** [**school event**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) **at which a** [**sound recording**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) **(eg a popular song) is being played, and upload it to social media and/or a school website?**

Yes. Schools can rely on the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) to upload recordings of their [school events](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/), or live stream their [school events](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/), to the school’s official social medial page on platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, and/or the school website.

In order to communicate (ie make available) those recordings from the social media pages, schools can rely on the licences that the social media platforms have with APRA AMCOS and record labels.

Note that where a [musical work](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/musical-works/) or [sound recording](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) is being performed or played at a [school event](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/), and uploaded/livestreamed to a social media page, the post may still be blocked or muted.

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**20. Our** [school event](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-events/) **has been blocked/muted on social media, what can we do?**

Music recording companies (ie record labels) and some music publishers use software to identify potentially infringing content on social media platforms, such as Facebook. When a school live streams a performance where a [musical work](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/musical-works/) or [sound recording](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/) is being played, or uploads a [musical work](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/musical-works/) or [sound recording](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/sound-recordings/), this software may alert Facebook or other social media platforms to mute the recording or send a takedown notice to the school.

If you are concerned about a live stream or recording being muted or your school being issued with a take-down notice, [contact the National Copyright Unit](https://smartcopying.edu.au/contact-us/).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**Copying Sheet Music**

**21. How many copies can be made from an original copy of sheet music under the** [**Schools Music Licence**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/)**?**

Schools can make as many copies of print (ie hardcopy) or digital sheet music as they reasonably consider they require for the relevant [school purpose](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-purpose/), but see restrictions on [choral works](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/choral-work/) and [Grand Right Works](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/grand-right-works/) below.

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**22. How many copies can be made from a** [**choral work**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/choral-work/) **or** [**Grand Right Work**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/grand-right-works/)**?**

Schools can only copy up to three songs from a [Grand Right Work](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/grand-right-works/) (eg words and music that has been written expressly for an opera, operetta, musical play, revue or pantomime), but the school can make as many copies as needed for [school purposes](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/school-purpose/) for each of those three songs.

Schools can only copy a [choral work](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/choral-work/) that is longer than 20 minutes where the public performance of the choral work is validly licensed (e.g. the School has a obtained a licence to perform the [choral work](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/choral-work/)).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**23. What if our agreement to purchase sheet music for a** [**choral work**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/choral-work/) **requires us to buy the number of copies we need (e.g. one copy per student)?**

Some publishers of sheet music for [choral works](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/choral-work/) require schools to buy the number of copies they need of the sheet music (e.g. one copy per student in the choir). The school could still choose to buy one copy of the sheet music and then make the additional copies it requires under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/). However, while this would be allowed under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/), there may be a risk that the school is in breach of the contractual terms with the publisher of the [choral work](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/choral-work/).  
  
If you have any further questions please [contact the National Copyright Unit](https://smartcopying.edu.au/contact-us/).

**24. Can we scan copies of sheet music to digital form and upload to our School’s** [**DTE**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/digital-teaching-environment-dte/)**?**

Yes. Schools can make digital copies of print sheet music (ie scan to digital format).

Schools can then email PDF versions of digital sheet music to students, and/or upload the digital copies of sheet music to a [DTE](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/digital-teaching-environment-dte/).

See [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

**25. Are we required to mark the original and any copies of sheet music?**

Schools do not need to label the original. However, they must make a reasonable effort to **mark** any hardcopy and digital copies of sheet music, on the copy or near where the copy is made available. For example, schools could include a notice that licensed copies have been made under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/), and keep this in the same folder as the licensed copies on a school’s [DTE](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/digital-teaching-environment-dte/), or include the notice in the document or folder title.

* The marking should say " AMCOS Licensed copy" and include the following information:
  + Name of school
  + date copied
  + the name of the owner of the original sheet music that was copied (e.g. if the school bought the original, the school or if it was a teacher, the teacher).

**26. Are private music teachers able to use copies of sheet music made under the**

[**Schools Music Licence**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) **where the tuition is on the school premises?**

No. The [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) does not cover copying of sheet music for private music teaching, even if this takes place on school premises. Private music teachers will have to purchase original copies of sheet music for use with their students.

**27. Can we loan copies of sheet music made under the** [**Schools Music Licence**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) **to another school?**

No. The [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) does not allow a school to loan copies of sheet music to any other organisation, including other schools, even if the original is owned by the staff member.

However, a school **can** lend an original piece of sheet music to another school (but they should make it clear that the school they loan to is not permitted to make copies from this original).

**28. Can we make copies of sheet music that we have hired or borrowed?**

No. The [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) only permits schools to copy sheet music belonging to the school or a teacher at the school.

**29. Can I incorporate a piece of sheet music into an exam paper?**

Yes. Teachers can copy and communicate sheet music for use in online and hardcopy exams, under the [exam copying exception](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/library-exam-and-disability-copying/copying-for-exams/).

For more information see [Copying for Exams](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/library-exam-and-disability-copying/copying-for-exams/).

**30. Can I provide student access to digital sheet music on our school’s** [**DTE**](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/digital-teaching-environment-dte/)**?**

Yes. Under the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/) schools can upload copies of sheet music to a password protected digital teaching environment ([DTE](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/digital-teaching-environment-dte/)).

**Copying Lyrics**

**31. Can I make copies of song lyrics on their own to hand out to my class?**

Yes. Making copies of song lyrics on their own (or of sheet music with lyrics), is covered by the [Schools Music Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/schools-music-licence/).

You can also rely on the [Statutory Text and Artistic Works Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/the-statutory-text-and-artistic-works-licence/) to copy lyrics on their own (for example copying song lyrics for students to use as part of a class activity), provided this is for [educational purposes](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/educational-purpose/).

See [Statutory Text and Artistic Works Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/the-statutory-text-and-artistic-works-licence/).

**Rearranging Music**

**32. Can I re-arrange a piece of music for a classroom exercise?**

It depends. You may be able to do this under the [flexible dealing exception](https://smartcopying.edu.au/flexible-dealing/) in the Copyright Act, provided you cannot purchase the particular arrangement you need. You will also need to meet a number of other criteria for the [Flexible Dealing exception](https://smartcopying.edu.au/flexible-dealing/) to apply. See our information sheet [Flexible Dealing](https://smartcopying.edu.au/flexible-dealing/) for more information.

**Copying Music from the Radio**

**33. Can I record music from the radio and play it for my students in the classroom.**

Yes. The copying of radio broadcasts by schools for [educational purposes](https://smartcopying.edu.au/glossary/educational-purpose/) is permitted under the [Statutory Broadcast Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/statutory-broadcast-licence/). The playing of radio broadcasts in class is covered under s 28 of the Copyright Act. See [Performance and Communication of Copyright Material in Class](https://smartcopying.edu.au/performance-and-communication-of-copyright-material-in-class/).

See also [Statutory Broadcast Licence](https://smartcopying.edu.au/guidelines/education-licences/statutory-broadcast-licence/).