**Issue 2 - November 2018 - THE LATEST NEWS IN COPYRIGHT FOR AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS AND TAFE**

The National Copyright Unit (NCU) is a specialised unit that provides copyright assistance and advice to all Australian government and non-government schools as well as TAFEs in Australia.

NCU is a small secretariat that acts on behalf of the Copyright Advisory Group (CAG) which reports to the COAG Education Council. CAG’s committee members are senior representatives from State and Territory Departments of Education and the Catholic and Independent school sectors. The NCU was established in 2005 to:

* provide specialist copyright assistance to schools and TAFEs;
* negotiate and administer the School and TAFE sectors licences with Australian Collecting Societies and related copyright surveys; and
* advocate for copyright law reform benefitting education.

For practical copyright advice, information on our national seminar series and Copyright for Educators (C4E) course please contact our team and/or see our [Smartcopying Website](http://www.smartcopying.edu.au/).

**End of year events**

We’re getting towards the end of the school year, which for a lot of schools means end of year events such as presentation evenings, graduation ceremonies and Christmas concerts. The NCU always receives a lot of questions at this time of the year on how schools are allowed to use music in their end of year performances and events. We’ll try to answer some of these frequently asked questions in this Copyright Update.

**End of year events: what are we allowed to do?**

All Government schools and most Catholic and Independent schools have a suite of music licences that allow them to use music in school and at events. If you’re a Catholic or Independent school and you aren’t sure whether your school has these licences, contact the NCU and we can let you know.

The music licences allow schools and students to play and perform music, for example, children singing Christmas carols, playing background music that the children sing to or playing music during a presentation evening or graduation ceremony.

These performances can occur at the school or at a function connected with the school’s activities. This means the performance can take place at the school or at non-school venues.

For additional information see the Smartcopying website: <http://www.smartcopying.edu.au/copyright-guidelines/education-licences-(statutory-and-voluntary-licences)/education-licence-c-apra-licence>.

**Are we allowed to invite parents and the school community to our Christmas concert where students will sing Christmas carols?**

Yes, your event can be open to the school community – parents, friends, relatives of staff and students – and music can be live (for example, students singing) or pre-recorded (for example, playing a song from iTunes).

**Can we play music at our graduation ceremony that will be held at our local hall?**

Yes, your school’s music licences will cover your event if the event is connected with the activities of the school. This means the event can be on or off campus.

**Can we print out the lyrics of the Christmas carols our students are singing and hand them out or project them on a screen?**

In most instances, yes. Many Christmas carols are now out of copyright and do not require permission to use or reproduce. However, even if a Christmas carol is still in copyright, your school’s Statutory Text & Artistic Licence may cover this activity. To further discuss, please give us a call or email us.

**Can we collect a gold coin donation to cover the costs of the Christmas concert?**

Yes, schools can charge admission fees for performances provided the majority of the proceeds go back to the school or to a charity.

**Can we use background music at our end of year event?**

Yes, you are allowed to use background music as part of your end of year performance. You can make a copy of a song to use as backing music and you can play this during your end of year performance.

**Can our students’ families and the school community record the end of year performance?**

Yes, students’ families and the school community can record the end of year performance. However, these recordings can only be used for their private and domestic use. This means they cannot be uploaded to social media websites such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc.

For additional information see the Smartocpying website: <http://www.smartcopying.edu.au/copyright-guidelines/education-licences-(statutory-and-voluntary-licences)/education-licence-e-amcos-aria-apra-licence>

**Additional information**

NCU is always here to provide copyright assistance and advice to schools and TAFEs. If you have any questions or need additional information, please visit the Smartcopying website (<http://www.smartcopying.edu.au/>) or contact us on Tel: 02 7814 3855 and at [smartcopying@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:smartcopying@det.nsw.edu.au).

The purpose of this update is to provide a summary and general overview of selected copyright issues. It is not intended to be comprehensive nor does it constitute legal advice. If you need to know how the law applies in a particular situation, please get advice from the National Copyright Unit.

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We request attribution as: National Copyright Unit, Copyright Advisory Groups (Schools and TAFEs)