**What is Copyright?**

Copyright is a means of protecting a person’s intellectual property by ensuring that other people do not copy or adapt the material. Copyright protection comes into being when the material is created. A copyright statement is not required in order for a work to be covered by copyright, so just because there is no copyright statement this does not mean that no copyright is held. All kinds of items and mediums are protected by copyright, even electronic resources including:

**Literary Works**

Any original written work eg. novels, poetry, letters, directories, the lyrics of musical works; and so Web pages, email messages, news bulletins etc. will all be examples of literary works protected by copyright. Computer programs are also protected as a literary work

**Dramatic Works**

Dramatic works are distinguished from literary works by the inclusion of spoken words, or described actions.

**Artistic Works**

Includes photographs, sculptures, maps, plans etc. All pictures, images, logos and other graphics on the Web will be protected as artistic works.

**Sound Recordings**

All sound recordings are protected by copyright.

**Films**

Moving images and video clips are protected as films.

**It should be clear that in any one Web page there may be many different copyrights for the text, pictures, icons and sounds.**

### Exceptions

There are some limited exceptions to copyright - these do not give rights to use copyright material, they simply state certain activities which do not infringe copyright. These include limited use for non-commercial research and private study. Copyright is infringed where either the whole or a "substantial part" of a work is used without permission, unless it falls within one of the exceptions. A substantial part can mean a "qualitive" significant part. This means that even a small portion of the whole work can still be a "substantial part".

### Fair Dealing

The EU Copyright Directive "The Harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society (2001/29 EC)" was implemented in the UK at the end of October 2003 by the Copyright and related rights regulations 2003.  
One major change is that for "fair dealing". This exemption to the copyright restrictions only now applies for non-commercial purposes. There is no exact definition of commercial though the [British Library](http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/atyourdesk/docsupply/help/copyright/index.html) web site gives further guidance. "Fair dealing" itself is not defined by the Copyright Act either but general guidelines are as per the limits stated in the CLA licence. It has been interpreted by looking at the economic impact on the copyright owner of the use.