

British Copyright Council — statement on exceptions

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The British Copyright Council represents all categories of rights holders, including professional associations, industry bodies and trade unions, which together represent hundreds of thousands of authors, creators, performers, publishers and producers. This community of rights holders comprises many individual freelancers, sole traders and SMEs as well as larger companies within the creative industries.

We and our members share unequivocally in the desire for wider access to works of creativity, advancing knowledge, enjoyment, opportunity and understanding in a virtuous circle of enriched learning for all. We also believe that the only way to achieve and — crucially — to sustain this, is to ensure creators can keep on producing the very works on which our shared progress depends. Making works accessible through licensing systems that are affordable, responsive to local needs and keep pace with how works are used, will ensure the lifeblood of learning continues to flow.

Where exceptions to copyright may be necessary in certain cases, we support a nuanced approach by which new or amended exceptions can be carefully tailored and based on sound evidence and reasoning.

Overbroad exceptions are imprecise instruments that ‘blunt the pen’: they imperil the economic ability to continue creating works, suppressing supply, reducing diversity and stifling talent. Quality works take time, money and skill to produce and if they are to be accessible not only today but for future generations to build on, we must work together on thoughtful solutions to this common goal.

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