

MOVIE NIGHT GUIDELINES

You do not generally need permission to screen a film, DVD or video in class for non-profit educational instruction.

Permission, however, is needed to screen films, DVDs or videos in public.

For the purposes of copyright law, screening a film, DVD or video outside the home is generally regarded as “in public”. Therefore, permission is needed to screen a film in any non-domestic setting, including for example, a film night as an activity or fund-raiser. Permission is needed even if a fee is not charged for viewing the film or video.

Student residents may hire and watch movies in “common rooms” – this does not constitute an infringement of copyright. “Common Rooms” on campus consist of student residence accommodation areas and the BUSA Student Lounge (previously called the Undergrad Lounge).

Important: The fact that someone owns a physical copy of the video, DVD or film does not entitle them to screen it publicly.

Screening a film, DVD or video in class is not “in public” and does not require permission if it is:

- in the course of educational instruction which is not given for profit; and
- all the people in the audience are giving or receiving instruction or are directly connected with the place where the instruction is given.

This exemption does **not**, apply if:

- a film, DVD or video is shown for entertainment purposes.
- the educational instruction is given for profit; or
- people such as parents are present, who are not giving or receiving instruction or who are not directly connected with the place where the instruction is taking place.

Getting permission

If you want to show a film, DVD or video in a situation which is public, and which is not covered by the special exemption for classroom screenings, you will need permission from the relative copyright owners. These rights are available for purchase from the commercial distributor or agent who handles the film company’s distribution in Australia.

For example, Roadshow Entertainment is the biggest distributor in Australia and are agents for many film companies such as Pixar, DreamWorks, Disney, Warner Brothers, Paramount and 20th Century Fox¹

Permission is purchased at varying cost depending on the movie chosen. Some authorised suppliers can often also supply a DVD copy of the film.

Some suppliers include:

- Film Australia
- State Film Centres; and
- Commercial Organisations
 - Roadshow Non-Theatrical (16mm & Video) <https://roadshowppl.com.au>
 - Showbiz Music Video (for video clips).

A simple google search will assist with more information on where to purchase each film, however the Australian Film Societies Federation provides in depth detail on suppliers and costs. <https://ausfilm.org.au/where-to-get-films/90-2/>

Refer: Australian Copyright Council: www.copyright.org.au

Consequences of unauthorised public screening

Screening a film, DVD or video in public without permission will usually infringe copyright. A person may also infringe copyright by authorising another person to screen a film, DVD or video without permission. In addition, a person who permits premises to be used for an unauthorised public screening of a film, DVD or video may be liable.

For “educational” events (staff only)

- The film content must have some relevance to the group viewing the film.
- The organisers must keep records of film titles and dates shown.
- A led discussion must either precede or follow the screening.
- The event must be non-profit. Any money collected may only be for the purpose of recovering costs, i.e. cost of movie, food, advertising, etc.
- Advertising must state: “no copyright infringement is intended” and “event is for educational purposes only”.

For “public” events

- Proof of permission must be provided.

For further information

Contact the Bond University Library Services Manager for Publications & Copyright (Ph: 5595 1523))

¹ Australian Film Societies Federation