
Journal/Magazine Scheme FAQs

March 2015

Why do you hold money for journal/magazine writers and where does it come from?

In addition to books ALCS also collects royalties for UK published journals and magazines. Royalties are generated by the Copyright Licensing Agency's (CLA) photocopying licensing scheme which allows institutions to obtain a licence to photocopy a limited amount from any book or journal/magazine. Institutions vary from universities and colleges to government bodies and businesses.

The CLA divide photocopying royalties between the publishers and the authors, with the publishers' share being distributed via the Publishers' Licensing Society and the authors' share via the ALCS. As long as the journal has an ISSN it is eligible to be included in the photocopying scheme.

How much do you hold for me?

ALCS operates a claims scheme whereby writers register their published articles with ALCS and receive a share of the total photocopying royalties collected. This means that writers will receive a payment for their articles being potentially photocopied rather than based on actual photocopying evidence. Because the amount ALCS receives from the CLA differs each year and because the number of people claiming and what they claim for varies each year we cannot accurately say how much an individual may receive.

Why can't you be more accurate?

The main problem faced by ALCS in distributing royalties collected for journals is that the data received only lists the journal titles which have been photocopied and not the individual articles copied. This means that the article writer cannot be identified. The data also does not specify the edition of the journal as the ISSN remains the same each time the journal is published.

Do different types of journals/magazines earn more than others?

To reflect trends in photocopying each journal is categorised by their subject matter and separate funds are available for each category. Similarly ALCS classify each article submitted by writers depending on their subject matter. For example a 'Medicine' article payment will generally be larger than a 'Lifestyle' article payment as medical journals tend to be photocopied more than lifestyle magazines.

The categories are: Business and Administrative Studies; Computer and Library Sciences; Education; Engineering and Architecture; General Science; Humanities, Languages and Arts; Law; Lifestyle; Medicine; Social, Economic and Political Studies and Unclassified (usually general interest periodicals).

What about online articles?

Yes, Members can claim for the copying or re-use of their digital articles as long as it meets the same criteria as print publications – i.e. the publication has an ISSN and was published within the eligible 3-year claims period. Where the same article is claimed for in both its print and electronic formats then it is treated as one single claim. The fee per article is the same for both print and digital publications.

What about newspaper articles?

We don't currently collect any income for the copying of newspaper articles.

Does ALCS collect photocopying royalties for journals and magazines from overseas?

Yes. The CLA has reciprocal agreements with a number of countries which allows photocopying for any UK published journals and magazines to be transferred to the CLA on behalf of UK publishers and contributors to UK journals/magazines. Please note, only UK publications are eligible for payment regardless of where the copying or re-use takes place.

What if I am resident overseas but write for UK journals and magazines?

Yes, you can register with ALCS and claim on the same basis as a UK resident, but any resultant payment will be subject to a UK Withholding Tax of 20%. A double tax exemption certificate would need to be obtained and forwarded to ALCS to make you exempt from this tax deduction.

How far back should I go when registering my works with you?

We accept claims going back three years, the current period that we're accepting claims for is 2012-2014.

How do I register?

Simply download the application for membership form from our website and return it to us, or alternatively contact Membership Services on 020 7264 5700. Those applying for membership to receive royalties from journal/magazines articles will also need to submit details of published articles. Please use the journal and magazine article form to do so.

When can I expect royalties?

ALCS operates two distributions per year (currently March and September) with the journal distribution taking place in March. The previous calendar year to the distribution cannot be included to allow enough time for both writers to register their articles and for ALCS to receive royalties generated. The next payment scheduled for March 2016 and the deadline for claims is 30th November 2015.