

Voluntary deposit scheme for offline digital and microform publications

Guidance notes for publishers

Why voluntary deposit?

Under the Government's 'better regulation' guidelines, it is important to establish whether or not a voluntary arrangement is adequate before proceeding to legislation. The purpose of this re-launched voluntary scheme for offline (i.e. hand-held) digital and microform publications is, therefore, to discover whether or not legislation (a Regulation subsequent to the Legal Deposit Libraries Act, 2003) is necessary. We need to find out:

- How well does the voluntary scheme work for publishers?
- How well does it work for legal deposit libraries?
- How much of the applicable material is in fact deposited?
- What does it cost?

The purpose of voluntary or legal deposit is to make sure that the nation's published output is collected systematically and as comprehensively as possible, both to preserve the material for the use of future generations of researchers, as part of the national published archive, and to make it available, with certain exceptions, to current researchers within the six legal deposit libraries (British Library, National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, University Libraries of Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin).

Under this scheme, deposit is requested of all United Kingdom microform and offline electronic publications which are primarily text-based and which are intended as information rather than entertainment products.

Publications originally published abroad, but distributed in the United Kingdom, are liable for deposit, as well as those first published in the United Kingdom.

What doesn't need to be deposited?

Deposit is not required:

- if a publication substantially duplicates the content of a print publication from the same publisher which has already been deposited¹;
- if a publication is published only for private internal use within an organisation (such as a house magazine);
- if a publication has already been deposited under a separate agreement with one or more of the deposit libraries;

¹ At present, deposit of the print version is the default. However, this is at the libraries' discretion and may well change in future.

- if the publication belongs to a category of publications not required for deposit - e.g. computer software, computer games.

Delayed access

If the publisher so requests, reader access to deposited publications may be delayed to ensure that the market for products with high value/low volume sales is not undermined. The publisher may set an embargo period upon deposit.

Online form

To assist the monitoring of the voluntary scheme, publishers are requested to provide some basic information about their offline/microform publishing programme via a simple online form which is located at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=510403154336>

Deposit address

In the first instance please deposit one copy within one month of publication to:

Legal Deposit Office
British Library
Boston Spa
Wetherby
West Yorkshire LS23 7BY

On receipt, the Library will contact you to ask for any detailed information which it requires in order to manage access to and preservation of the publication.

Other legal deposit libraries will request their copies subsequently.

Further information

If you have any queries about the scheme, legal deposit generally or the Legal Deposit Advisory Panel please contact your trade association or follow the links to the British Library and/or the Legal Deposit Advisory Panel.

- What is Legal Deposit? http://www.llgc.org.uk/ald/Legal_Deposit_Leaflet.pdf
- Legal Deposit at the British Library
<http://www.bl.uk/about/policies/legaldeposit.html>
- About the Legal Deposit Advisory Panel
http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/Libraries/legal_deposit/
- The Agency for the Legal Deposit Libraries acts on behalf of five libraries to ensure that they receive legal deposit copies of British and Irish publications
<http://www.llgc.org.uk/ald/>