



## IS THAT FILE LEGAL?

In the most recent issue of LfN Bulletin, there was a Book Review of Sandy Norman's new edition of *Copyright in Further and Higher Education Libraries*. The reviewer posed the question that there was a grey area in relation to keeping files of photocopies in the library and asked for enlightenment from fellow readers.

Sandy Norman kindly answered this question for me, herself. It is legal for a library to obtain a photocopy of an article from another library and add it to stock, in the case, for example, that the library has an item missing from a journal and wants it replaced to complete the collection. Such a photocopy could then be photocopied legally by an individual using the library.

However, a health studies librarian is frequently asked, by tutors, to gather a collection of photocopies from a reference list which relates to a course. The inference in this instance is

that these articles will be placed in a file and can be consulted by students on that particular course. In such a case there is a strong possibility that this would result in multiple photocopying - by individuals on the course. Therefore this is illegal under the terms of Fair Dealing.

I hope this blows the fog away from that particular grey area. I found it easy to understand my legal position when Sandy Norman explained the underlying rationale. I trust this helps other health librarians.

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#### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT IMPACT FACTORS . A note

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The explanation of how impact factors are calculated given in volume 19 issue 2 of the Bulletin is not quite correct. JCR defines the journal impact factor as "a measure of the frequency with which the average article has been cited in a particular year. It is calculated by dividing the number of current citations to articles published in the two previous years by the total number of articles published in the two previous years."

For example, if in the period 1997/8 300 articles appeared in the Journal of Advanced Nursing and in the following year, 1999, there were 600 references to those articles, the journal's impact factor would be 2.

Impact factors tend, on the whole, to be quite low and the overall distribution is highly skewed. In 1997, for example, JCR analysed citations to ca 5000 Science periodicals. The highest impact factor was 40.782 for the Annual Review of Biochemistry. However, the median impact factor was 0.7 and many periodicals have a zero impact factor.