

PRS and PPL Schemes

What are they?

PRS and PPL licensing are two independent schemes that represent the interests of different rights holders for the use of recorded and live music in public performances.

If recorded music is audible in a public space at your premises, you need both licences. The PPL scheme is also for live music performances.

PPL licences:

These permit the use of recorded music on behalf of the record companies and the performers.

This covers bought CDs, music played through a television, the radio and playing music on the internet in public.

Playing recorded music anywhere except in a purely domestic environment and in front of an audience is considered to be a “public performance”.

An audience can be one person, if they are in a public space.

PRS licences:

These permit the use of the lyrics and composed music in any public performance of music, on behalf of the song writers, composers and publishers.

This includes using the radio, CDs, and streaming on the internet, music on television and also live music performances.

Again a public performance is considered to be anywhere except a purely domestic environment in front of an audience, which can be one person.

Summary

If you are playing recorded music in any public space through any kind of device to an audience, you will need to have both the PPL and PRS licences (and a TV licence if this applies). It does not matter if the device the music is being played on is owned by you or is a personal possession of a staff member or visitor: the licence applies to the playing of music in public, not to *how* it is played.

Justin Nelson: 14 February 2012