



# British Library Act 1972

## 1972 CHAPTER 54

### 1 The British Library

- (1) This Act shall have effect with a view to the establishment for the United Kingdom of a national library, to be known as " the British Library ", consisting of a comprehensive collection of books, manuscripts, periodicals, films and other recorded matter, whether printed or otherwise.
- (2) The British Library shall be under the control and management of a public authority, to be known as " the British Library Board ", whose duty it shall be to manage the Library as a national centre for reference, study and bibliographical and other information services, in relation both to scientific and technological matters and to the humanities.
- (3) The Board shall make the services of the British Library available in particular to institutions of education and learning, other libraries and industry ; and—
  - (a) it shall be within the functions of the Board, so far as they think it expedient for achieving the objects of this Act and generally for contributing to the efficient management of other libraries and information services, to carry out and sponsor research ; and
  - (b) the Board may contribute to the expenses of library authorities within the meaning of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, or of any other person providing library facilities, whether for members of the public or otherwise.
- (4) The Board may, subject to such restrictions and conditions as they think necessary to safeguard their collections, lend any item, and make any part of their collections, or of their premises, available in connection with events of an educational, literary or cultural nature:

Provided that in deciding whether or not to lend any such item and in determining the time for which and the conditions subject to which any such item is to be lent, the Board shall have regard to the interests of students and other persons visiting the national library, to the physical condition and degree of rarity of the item in question and to any risks to which it is likely to be exposed.